

## IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?

***“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger”. (Lamentations 1:12 (KJV)***

Jeremiah is known as the “weeping prophet”. He had warned the people of God but no one listened. Now his predictions had come true and Jerusalem was in ruins. Judah had gone into captivity, and Jerusalem was covered with ashes and wet with human blood. Divine punishment had been experienced, but no one seemed to care. With tear stained eyes Jeremiah watched people nonchalantly passing by. With a shrug of their shoulders they accepted what they saw as the “new normal”. No one cared! No one seemed to grasp the magnitude of the tragedy. That’s why Jeremiah lamented: “Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by”?

But now let us fast forward to our own generation. It is the plan of God to unite all the divergent factions of heaven and earth into One Body with Jesus Christ as the Head (Eph. 1:10). There is to be only to be One Body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Eph. 4:4, 5). In this glorious unity in Christ all racial, social, and gender distinctions are gone. It doesn’t matter whether we are male or female, bond or free, Barbarian or Sythian, we are One in Christ and the world can tell that we belong to Jesus because of our love for one another. (Jn. 13:35).

One major obstacle to unity in the early church was the long standing animosity between Jews and Gentiles. The Jewish church began in Jerusalem, and the Gentile church in Antioch. Two churches, however, is one too many. Finally, with the help of the Apostles, elders, and the Holy Spirit, the wall separating Jews and Gentiles was broken down and God created One New Man out of the two so making peace (Eph. 2:15). While believers met in different locations and even in different countries, there was still only One Body! On the night before Calvary Jesus prayed that all who believed in Him would be one, just as He and the Father were one (Jn. 17:21). The importance of this unity cannot be over emphasized! Unity needs to be as important to us as it was to Jesus!

When word came to Paul about divisions at Corinth, he responded: “Is Christ divided? (1 Cor. 1:13). The very idea that Christ could have more than One Body was diabolically absurd. Yet today, the wicked one has divided the Body of Christ into thousands of differing denominations. Please consider this quote: “Wikipedia (quoting **Christianity Today**) says **there** are ‘approximately 38,000’ **Christian denominations**. The World **Christian Encyclopedia** of 2001 counted 33,830.”

The word “denomination” involves “naming”. When one group divides from another they frequently choose a new name to clarify that they are different. Sometimes these new denominations are designated with the name of some human leader or doctrinal distinction. Other times denominations assume new names based on loyalties unique to that denomination. Thomas Campbell, for example, was a member of the “Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church”. Like blind surgeons theologians proudly divide the Body of Christ with impunity!

The ancient question of Jeremiah is therefore still relevant. Is it nothing to you? Have you become so calloused and insensitive that you can pass by division in the church with a shrug of your shoulders? Please remember that Jesus associated the unity of believers with the evangelization of the world. He prayed that we might be one so that the world may believe! There is obviously some connection between a divided church and an unbelieving world! If this means nothing to you, it should!

Jesus said that His sheep recognize His voice and follow Him! (Jn. 10:1 - 21) Are you one of His sheep? If so you will obey Christ regardless of what denomination you belong to!