

Article: “Are there Christians in false-teaching churches?”

In last Sunday’s sermon, the point was made that there are many different Christian denominations. This is the direct result of sin. The point was also made that even though there are many different denominations, we do still share some things in common with them. The question has been asked, “Are there Christians in false-teaching churches?”

The answer to this is simple: Wherever the gospel is proclaimed, there we shall find believers. Isaiah writes, “*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My Word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it*” (Isaiah 55:10-11). Thus, we shall find believers also in false-teaching churches.

As long as a church believes the triune God as the only true God, as long as it proclaims Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Son of Man, as long as it teaches that Jesus has died to pay for our sins and has risen again from the dead, there will be believers in that church. God will be at work bringing people to faith through that gospel.

There will be believers in that church, not because of the error of that church but in spite of it. Error is never helpful to faith. It is always harmful to faith. Error undermines faith. Every error will ultimately have a detrimental effect on the central doctrine of the Christian faith, that we are saved by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ. When people deny the inerrancy of Scripture, they ultimately will undermine what Scripture teaches about Jesus Christ, who is the centre of Scripture.

Thus, we may not join a church that teaches or tolerates error in its midst. We do not join it as a testimony against its error. We do not join it lest we cause people to stumble in their faith, giving the impression that the error is not objectionable. We do not join a false-teaching church lest we expose ourselves to error that could destroy our faith. People have at times accused us of saying that we are the only ones who are going to heaven. We do not teach this. We believe that all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour from sin will go to heaven. Yet, in obedience to our Saviour and in love for the souls of those threatened by error, we do not join churches that teach or tolerate error.