

# ***Christian Theology***

## Distinctions among Christians

August 30, 2009

### ***The Restoration Movement: Theological Specifics***

- **Churches of Christ:** *Autonomous* congregations in association with each other, sharing the goal of *restoring* the New Testament church through basing doctrine and practice on the *Bible* alone.
  - Singing occurs without *instruments* because the New Testament does not mention them.
  - This group rejects specific *creeds* and practices Communion *weekly*.
  - Old Testament laws are not *binding* unless the New Testament repeats them.
  - Christ established *one* church, so churches should not be named after *people* or *doctrines*.
  
- **Independent Christian Churches/Churches of Christ:** These congregations are basically the same as the Churches of Christ, except this group uses *instruments* in worship.
  - This group broke away from the Disciples of Christ because of its concern that the Disciples of Christ were becoming too *liberal*, especially in terms of biblical criticism and social justice. Another major concern was the quickly growing denominational *structure* of the Disciples of Christ.
  - Christ established *one* church, so even denominational language and activity is sinful.
  - Churches in this group strive for *unity* in the essentials, *liberty* in opinions, and *love* in all things. (The next group claims this, too!)
  
- **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ):** A *mainline* Protestant group.
  - The most important practice of this group is weekly *Communion*, which is *open* to people of all denominations.
  - No *creed* is required, nor is there a standard *interpretation* of the Bible.
  - One must *accept* and *follow* Jesus (including *baptism*); all else is optional.
  - This freedom of interpretation leads many people in this group to question or even deny doctrines such as the *Incarnation*, the *Trinity*, and the *Atonement*.