A CHURCH DIVIDED

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The existence of more than 40,000 denominations in the world is not only a measure of flagrant disobedience with respect to God's desire for the Church. Working together in mission is one way to overcome these artificial barriers.

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> *Even more regrettably, modern denominational divisions are often driven by crass motives of money, power, and pride. Often, new denominations are created simply as ways to exercise control and power by a person or faction, and then justified by some obscure doctrinal rationale. All this makes a mockery of the church's witness. So the existence of more than 40,000 denominations in the world is not only a measure of flagrant disobedience with respect to God's desire for the Church; the paths that have led the church to this reality are littered with sin. Our contemporary practice shamelessly violated biblical teachings in ways unimaginable to those who wrote the New Testament Â and to leaders of the early church.*

From Times Square to TimbuktuÂ by Welsey Granberg-Michaelson (p.15).

One of the reasons I enjoy working in Bible translation is that our work generally does not have a denominational basis, indeed it can serve to bring believers from different backgrounds together; I wrote this in a blog post 8 years ago, but it is as true today:

> *Bible translation is one area in which Christians from different confessions can unite in order to advance the Gospel. The Scriptures are above our theological differences; there is no premillenial Bible as opposed to a post or amillenial one. The faithful translator strenuously avoids placing their personal slant or theological spin on their work â€“ and where inevitable mistakes occur there is a rigorous checking procedure to ensure faithfulness to the original. If we are truly Christians, of whatever background, our concern must be to make Godâ€™s revealed word available to the millions of people around the world who still canâ€™t read the book in their own language. Placing the Bible and Godâ€™s desire to communicate through it, above our own theological and cultural convictions is a liberating experience. It allows Christians who might never meet or who might, in other circumstances, be hostile to one another to work together towards a cause that is bigger than them and their secondary convictions.*