

# Significant Differences

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Many people who contemplate the idea of “church” get stuck on the outward questions and choices of “pastor,” “denomination,” building vs. home, etc. But these are mere distractions designed to keep the genuine seeker of Christ from recognizing and addressing the underlying deceptions that make the “church” so very different from the kingdom of God. Only if one buys into the deceptive “church” paradigm do these significant differences seem unimportant and even trivial. But for those who have spiritual eyes and ears to see and hear, the differences are as important as whether one worships God or worships an idol and the false demonic “god” behind it. (1 Cor. 10:20)

Perhaps the most readily discernible of these significant differences between the “church” – referring here not to the ekklesia (the assembly of genuine believers obediently attending to the needs and issues of Christ’s kingdom of light and love) but rather referring to the institutional and organized “churches” (the mere “mixed multitudes” or worse those truly apostate and fallen away from the true faith) – is that of whether the works are *of* God or done *for* God. We must admit instantly that the lines between these two categories can become rather fuzzy but to say there is no distinction whatsoever is to be deceived.

- A work done *for* God is often done as a means to appease or please God or to earn a blessing, even one’s justification and salvation. A work done *of* God is simply an act of obedience to a clear Scriptural command or to the inner leading of God’s Holy Spirit.

- A work done *for* God can be done in ignorance or error if one mistakenly believes that God intends men to do these things as a matter of course. Deists, for example, wrongly believe that God only “wound up the universe” or “sets the stage” and then “walked away” allowing men to do as they please. “Church”-ites, as another example, build and finance their “church” buildings and call it “God’s house” even though He will never live in any building built by human hands. (Acts 7:48) Perhaps the single-most motivator for doing a work *for* God is because He is helpless and needs our assistance and expertise – we’ll never say it that way, of course, but this is the subconscious belief expressed behind every action justified by the non-Scriptural “verse,” “God helps those who help themselves.” A work done *of* God is done in obedience to God even when the purpose, plan and intent of God is not fully understood. (Acts 9:13-15)

- A work done *for* God is characterized by our doing what *we* want to do and then asking God’s blessing on what we’re about to do, what we’re doing or what we’ve already done. A work *for* God, simply put, is our plans, agendas and purposes done in His name whether He approves of it or not. The vast majority of churchianity falls under this indictment. A work *of* God is a fulfillment or “installment” of His timeless and ageless purposes that furthers His kingdom of light.

As was already said, the lines between these two categories can become blurred and indeed the contrast of carnality and righteousness is only apparent in its fruit. (Mt. 7:20, etc.) Corrie Ten Boom has rightly said, “When we work in God’s Kingdom, we work for and with God. If you work *for* God, have a committee. If you work *with* God, have a prayer meeting.” (*Each New Day*, April 24) Only the Spirit of God can reveal to our hearts whether our works done *for* God are done in His grace (power) or done in our own carnality, that is enmity against God. (Rom. 8:7)

We must not underestimate the power and the ability of our flesh to corrupt us away from the purity of following God in spirit and truth. Knowledge, especially “theology,” can be an expression of that which is merely “right and good and true” in our own eyes – a mindset or philosophy the New Testament calls lawlessness (*anomia* [458]) that stands in complete distinction from righteousness (what is right and good and true in *God’s* eyes. – 2 Cor. 6:14) If we believe, for example, that authority has been given (delegated) to us to beneficially rule over our brothers and sisters in Christ, then – quite apart from Christ and His Spirit and very often with the aid of a different spirit (2 Cor. 11:4) – we will have no qualms making decisions that (both positively and negatively) affect and impact other believers. Indeed we will think we are doing “the work of God” and never realize that the New Testament calls this abomination “Nicolaitanism,” a sin which Christ and God *hate*. (Rev. 2:6, 15)

The question then is not “What church should I go to?” but rather “To whom do my soul and my life belong?” Is my life my own to do with as I please or have I been bought with the blood of Another and now live under an obligation to live for Him who died for me? (2 Cor. 5:15) The question is not whether a particular “church” “lines up” with my views and ideas about doctrines (teachings) and “theology” but rather who are the particular individuals with whom God has linked me (1 Cor. 12:18) so that together we might attend to some aspect of His kingdom of light and love. The question is not whether some “ministry” “serves” my perceived needs for myself or my family – rather what is my duty before God in these issues and dare I allow strangers to shoulder *my* responsibilities? The mere fact that “church” is founded upon and built up with so many dilutions of truth and detours from the will of God should tell us instantly that God is not its Author and Architect!

The real question is: “Whom will you serve?” Paul’s question, “Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?” (Rom. 6:15) is extremely relevant here. John wrote, “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.” (1 Jn. 3:4) This is the central agenda of demonic churchianity: provide a philosophical and “theological” framework, supported and sustained by “ecclesiological” hierarchy, that trains and encourages lawlessness, doing what is right in one’s own eyes (Jdgs. 21:25) in the name of Christ and God. While “sin,” gross wickedness and overtly obvious misdeeds, is certainly not promoted (though in some “churches” certain abominable sins are tolerated, practiced or even made the central feature!), the much more subtle sin of rejecting God’s righteousness, what is right in His eyes, so as to take up one’s own preferences is the usual and routine practice of churchianity. Nothing sums up this mindset more than the marketing slogan: “my church.” The person who will only attend “my church” has rejected almost all possibility of every attaining to the truth and ekklesia of Christ and God.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the “church” and the kingdom of God is that in the “church,” the real king is self – one goes to the “church” of one’s preference, listens to the speaker one likes to listen to, participates in whatever “ministries” one wishes to (or avoids them entirely) and does as much or as little *for* God as one desires to do. In the kingdom of God,

Christ is the King – should He so choose, He may command someone to sell all his riches and give it to the poor (Mk. 10:21), He may require the disciple to die a martyr’s death (Jn. 21:18) and He will certainly lead His followers into situations that bring hardship and persecution upon the disciple. (2 Tim. 2:3, 3:12) The “church” is the apostasy, the great falling away from the faith, that occurs before the return of Christ (2 Ths. 2:3) whereas the kingdom of God, that realm where Christ and God are *obeyed*, is the unchanging way of truth, righteousness and eternal salvation.

These are significant differences indeed!

Let he who has ears hear.

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