

It Is the Differences That Make the Difference

1 Kings 12:32

Introduction:

- A. Jeroboam established a new religion for the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
 - 1. Like the religion in Judah in many ways: Altar, feast, priests, sacrifices & incense.
 - 2. Different in significant ways: Calves, priesthood, place, and feast day.
 - 3. It was the difference that made the difference!
- B. Most churches are alike in many ways — even like the N.T. church.
 - 1. In some basic beliefs: God, Christ and H.S., etc.
 - 2. In some of their basic facilities and operations.
 - a. Buildings for worship and teaching.
 - b. Sunday services, Mid-week, and special meetings.
 - 3. In the makeup of their membership: Sincere and hypocrites.
 - 4. Again, it is the differences that make the difference.
- C. Let us notice three areas where significant differences make the difference:

Discussion:

I. The Plan of Salvation Taught.

- A. Most teach baptism but not essential to salvation (cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:31).
- B. Many teach faithfulness, but not essential to heaven (cf. Rev. 2:10; Heb. 3:12-13; 1 Cor. 10:12).

II. The Activities of the Church.

- A. In Worship.
 - 1. Sing but add instrumental music (cf. Eph. 5:19; 2 Jno. 9; G. wood, peanut butter on L.S.)
 - 2. Lord's supper, but not every Sunday (cf. Acts 20:7).
- B. In Work.
 - 1. Most make effort to preach/teach, help needy, and edify its members.
 - 2. Many also have social, recreational and/or political programs.

III. The Structure of the Church.

- A. Most have denomination names without Bible authority (cf. Col. 3:17).
- B. Most are organized beyond the congregational level.
 - 1. Organizational entities above and below congregational level.
 - 2. Congregation only New Testament organization (Acts 14:23; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).
- C. Most leadership differs from New Testament leadership.
 - 1. In most churches the preacher is the pastor.
 - 2. In New Testament elders, pastors, bishops are same (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
 - 3. In New Testament preacher and overseer not same office.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us not be lulled into thinking being alike in some ways is sufficient (cf. "The worship like us.")
- B. Remember: It is the differences that makes the difference.