



CHRISTIANITY VS THE KINGDOM PART 1

1. Introduction

- Today's Christianity is far from the original idea. Let's compare:

Christianity	Kingdom of God
Salvation is offered through altar calls, heads bowed so no one sees, soft music to soothe the soul, and "repeat-after-me" prayers.	Salvation is by the power of God which convicts the soul through preaching of the Word. People ask, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30) and repent.
Evangelism is a quest to see how many people "get saved" by saying a sinner's prayer. Emphasis is on the number of "converts."	Evangelism is preaching the good news and making disciples. Quantity is not as important as quality (Romans 11:14; I Cor. 9:22).
"Faith" just means believing; a Christian is supposedly anyone who believes in God.	Biblical "faith" is an <i>action</i> manifested through obedience. A Christian is one who actively demonstrates his or her faith in Jesus by obeying His commands (that is, a disciple). Only born-again disciples are true Christians!
The church is a building with services to attend once or twice a week.	The Church consists of disciples who are in fellowship with the Lord all week long (Psalm 55:17) and is made up of "lively stones" (I Peter 2:5).
A person joins the church through water baptism and membership classes.	A person joins the Body of Christ through faith and repentance, then identifies with Christ through water baptism.
Fellowship is based on friendship and is chosen according to likes, dislikes, and common interests.	Fellowship is defined by unity in the Spirit through the common ground of salvation by the blood of Jesus.

Churches are made up of "attendees" who are either too busy or too intimidated to get directly involved in meeting others' needs.	The early church experienced what "church" should be: they shared "all things common" and distributed their goods "to all men, as every man had need." They broke bread together from house to house. Whenever they met, they praised God in "singleness of heart" (Acts 2:44-47).
Church leaders do not know individual members very well.	Church elders know their flock personally and individually.
Biblical truths are customized to one's lifestyle as is convenient. Change is optional.	Biblical truths are the very core of one's lifestyle. Change is necessary to line up with the Word.
Moral decisions are based on choosing good or evil (based on the world's perspective). Those who are morally good can earn eternal life.	Moral decisions are based on choosing life or death (based on God's Word, see Deut. 30:19). Only those who are in Christ will inherit the gift of eternal life.
A person learns about God through an endless stream of books, tapes, and seminars.	A person learns about God through personal study of His Word and by the teaching of the Holy Ghost.
Pastors preach motivational speeches, eloquent sermons, and every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14).	Pastors preach the oracles of God (I Cor. 2:1-5; I Peter 4:11).
Pastors preach recycled sermons, buying them off the Internet and incorporating ideas from the latest sermon trends (see II Tim. 4:4).	Pastors seek to hear directly from the Lord and receive fresh manna for their flock. They preach directly from the Word whatever the Lord is speaking to His Church for that time.
Over 200 "Christian" denominations maintain a wide variety of beliefs about salvation.	God's Word says that there is one way, one truth, one life, one narrow gate to His heaven (John 14:6; Jude 1:3).

Churches lure big crowds through entertaining programs, exciting media, big-name speakers (see I Cor. 2:1-4), and "cutting-edge" worship services.	The light of Christ draws people. The pure Gospel is preached and worship is in the spirit of holiness, even if just two or three are gathered (Mt. 18:20).
Worship services are high energy (fleshy) and emotionally-driven (soulish).	God is worshipped <i>only</i> in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
Worship is with the lips, but the heart is far from God (Isaiah 29:13).	Worship is a daily lifestyle of pleasing God with a pure heart; songs of praise are merely the outflow of a heart in right standing before the Lord.
Beliefs are based on religious traditions and doctrines of men (see Matt. 15:9).	Beliefs are based solely on the Scriptures as the final authority.
Confidence is placed in human ingenuity (man's ideas and methods) to "build the church."	Confidence is placed solely on "Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2), and He will build His Church.

2. Summary

God wants us to operate in the Kingdom