

## WHAT IS SO BAD ABOUT ‘GOING TO CHURCH’?

Opening Questions:

- How much did Joshua teach about the concept “church”?
- Doesn’t the Person who started/invented something have the best understanding of how it is defined?
- If religious leaders define "the church" differently than Joshua of Nazareth, who knows better about what it actually is?
- Other than religious vocabulary, how different is “the church” versus other organizations like the Elks or Moose Lodge or the Masonic Lodge or the Knights of Columbus or other religious organizations like Mosques or Synagogues or other such organizations?
- If I participate in and support something that is a substitute or counterfeit for something that is important, am I doing well?

Christians are all about “going to church.” That is THE main ritual that they believe pleases God or is required to be in good stead with God. And of course, they have their scripture (not Joshua's teachings) and tradition to back that belief up.

When one pictures in their mind a bunch of Christians in their building singing songs about God, hopefully, one doesn't see “people doing evil things,” for in general, they are not. In their “church going,” they are only doing what they know and are taught, and they are not hurting anyone in the process except themselves. Meeting in a building to hear nice speeches with some moral truth and to sing songs about God and other things is not wrong in and of itself. Instead, the problem, error, and fault occur when gathering in a building and singing songs *are done in the name of "jesus" and substituted for what the real, historical Jesus of Nazareth wants.*

Christian religion would be fine if it did not use the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth to justify their religion. When Christians point to the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth to explain their religion – as they use him as the figurehead of their religion - *they then become accountable to him and his teachings.* Christians would be far better off if they left the Light of the world out of their church religion.

To further illustrate the reason why it is destructive for those who “go to church,” here is a little story to consider.

Once there was a governor of Texas, a humble man who genuinely cared about people. He was aware of a significant problem that was occurring in his State. Disabled people were increasingly neglected, abused and mistreated. Many thousands of disabled people were increasingly viewed as worthless, and as merely resource drains on society (consistent with the evolutionary worldview which promotes survival of the fittest). The governor had a disabled child himself, so he was quite sensitive to the handicapped people's plight. So, he decided to create small communities or centers for disabled people around the state. He initially built three - one near Dallas, one near Houston and one near Austin. The intent was to find the disabled people who were being neglected, abused and mistreated and invite them to come and live in these communities. In these communities they could help one another, get what they needed and have the governors state workers help care for them when they could not care for themselves.

The governor asked the state health and medical workers to make this disabled program their top priority. The state health and medical workers were initially enthusiastic about this program the governor was implementing. However, they soon learned that it was more work than expected. They had first to identify the disabled people, find them, approach them or their legal guardians and ask for permission that they leave their current situation and move to one of these communities. Many times they would encounter resistance from the disabled people's legal guardians even when that legal guardian was not involved with the person and had abused them. It did not take long for the state health and medical workers to talk among themselves and come to the conclusion, "we did not sign up for this." They much preferred their prior work that was much easier and restricted from 9 am to 5 pm.

So, the state health and medical workers decided that instead of helping these disabled people, they would build a monument to the governor and sing songs about the governor about once a week at the monument. They figured that would please and satisfy the governor and prevent him from being angry with their refusing to implement his program for the disabled people.

And so it is with the Christian religion.

The governor represents God. The disabled people represent people without hope, not experiencing love and not having a useful purpose to their life. The state health and medical workers represent Christians who are misguided. The illustration is an imperfect analogy, but it does convey the truth that needs revealing. Christians – like all other religious people – make up their religion to serve primarily themselves and what THEY want. They don't want

the challenging work of living out true love and living selflessly and thus sharing their lives with other people. They much prefer building their monuments to their god and singing songs about him and living a life of love for this world instead of love for Him and each other.

Here is another brief illustration to drive the point home. Let's say a dad says to his son, "son, I need you to get water from the stream because our well is dry and your sister has had a bad fever all night and needs to hydrate." But instead of going to the stream and getting the water which is needed, the boy instead decides to sit down and draw a nice picture of angels to give to his little sister. So it is with the Christian religion. That which is important and badly needed (in this story water - in reality, love, compassion, rightness, justice), is ignored while that which is trivial or not needed is practiced (in this story the drawing of angels, in reality "going to church" etc.).

In short, our heavenly Father does *not* want us "going to church", rather, He wants us to be the called out ones (which is what the original language word behind the English transliterated word "church" means) showing the world what love really is and looks like lived out among his people—his called out ones.

(For more on this subject, see *Appendix 9, Church Conversations*.)

### But I'd Rather "Go to Church"...

A substitute is something that changed out for an original item. Merriam-Webster defines the term, "Substitute" as, "a person or thing that takes the place of someone or something else."<sup>50</sup> An example would be a substitute teacher at a high school. If the proper or original or authorized teacher cannot teach a given class, a substitute teacher will take their place. Unfortunately, there is also a wide-spread practice of substituting inferior items for the original. Think about the widely used marketing saying of, "accept no substitutes."

For example, before you can tell if a currency note is counterfeit, you must first know the legitimate or real or standard note very well.

The purpose of this book is to free the Messengers message from a system, and that system's agents who have destroyed that message.

To accomplish that, we must contrast truth with falsehood and right with wrong. Before a person can successfully identify a counterfeit, she must first have a standard to which to compare it. One of the things the Messenger teaches is that we human beings have a profound bias against Light, Life, and love. We prefer darkness, destruction, and coldness of heart. Or stated another way, we are only willing to truly love a small number of people who are related to us by blood or law.

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<sup>50</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018

As previously stated, the Standard for this book is the words/teachings/truths of Joshua of Nazareth as recorded in the four gospel books.

Here is the definition of "substitute" again - "a person or thing that takes the place of someone or something else."

Here is the definition of "counterfeit" - "made in imitation of something else with intent to deceive."

*The substitute deceives most religious leaders. Some religious leaders proffer a counterfeit.*

The Creator sent a Messenger to tell us what he wants for his created beings - we human beings. As we have learned, we humans have a significant problem with pride, fear, and selfishness. We also have a deep dislike of being held accountable for our behavior or words. We desperately want to do whatever we want and generally what we want does not involve losing things we think are valuable. This characteristic makes us strongly independent beings who don't like what is true or right if we perceive we don't get something out of it. We want to decide such things for ourselves, and in our self-pride, we take great offense at even the suggestion that we need help in either knowing what is true or doing what is right. We are all just so sure that we have everything figured out or that we have the best world or existential view possible. Or at least we are confident we are not wrong about significant or critical things about human life.

So, when the Messenger comes and says, "*hey, you are wrong about really important things like, there IS a Creator, what your Creator is like and how he wants you to live*"; what faithless people hear is, "your religion is wrong", or "the understanding you have concerning your existence is wrong". Given our self-pride and fear, what is the natural reaction?

It is to reject the Messenger as wrong or reject the Messenger's messengers as wrong.

Remember the saying, "don't kill the messenger for the news or information he brings." If you know the facts about Joshua of Nazareth, you know that is exactly what happened to him. People killed him out of the offense he caused by telling the truth about people's wrong concepts and understandings of God and how God wants human beings to be and to live.

Do you, dear reader, really believe that human's nature has changed over time? Do you think that people are better and freer from self-pride, fear, and selfishness than people of past times? If the Messenger and his message still offend people, what would be a smart way to handle that; in other words, how could "we" both ignore the Messenger and at the same time use him to gain power or money? How about merely using the Messenger's name while at the same time changing his person and his message? That way, people can have their cake (pay lip service to the Creator the Messenger spoke of just in case He does exist) and eat it too. Meaning, not listen to the Messenger, not do what he says, but rather create a religion in his name and continue to live bound by self-pride and fear and selfishness and thus for the empty things of this world. The Messenger is not like other leaders who you can see and touch, so it is *much*

easier to merely pay him lip service (“oh lord jesus...”) and in reality ignore him and never seriously intend to listen to him or do what he says.

Bible or Christian religion *substitutes beliefs about god* taken from a giant book (the Bible) with its many contradictory statements about God, *for faith in god and his appointed messenger* Joshua of Nazareth. In other words, Christians make a big deal about beliefs that avoid what is important to God and instead deal with stuff that has little to no bearing on how human beings are to live our lives. (Please read that again, slowly, carefully and think about it!)

Or, another version of the substitute is to misdirect what people put their faith in, like the Bible or religious leaders or some ritual or anything else except *the person* OF Joshua of Nazareth. Instead of getting to know the Messenger, listening to him and DOING what he says, the people:

- "Go to church" and songs they call "worship";
- Read and admire the Bible (at least the parts that don't contain the Messenger's teachings they don't want to hear or consider like it is difficult to follow him);
- Place crosses on their walls and around their necks, etc.

In other words, they do their Bible or Christian religious stuff in “jesus” name, all the while not *doing* what the Light says. It is such a smart and effective substitute that it is hard to imagine that it is not also a counterfeit—a counterfeit not created by the men who profit and benefit from it, but rather from a being with the power to propagate falsehoods that serve to deceive both the people and their appointed leaders.

Dear reader, please understand that you will not find the Light in what people call "the church"—that you will not find the Light in Bible or Christian religion. Furthermore, accept the fact that the Light is against religion—he is especially against religion in his name. What he is for is love as HE defines that - caring about each other, caring about what is true and right, standing up against that which is false or wrong, sharing our lives like people who actually, genuinely care about one another (See the upcoming chapter on love). Instead, we choose to be prideful, fearful, selfish, autonomous people who don't see the need to share his Life together.

The simple truth is that that which calls itself some form of "the church," is nothing more than a religious organization run by, and attended by, people who reject Joshua of Nazareth and in his place substitute another “jesus” or “Christ” and their shallow ritual religion. The Light of the world says, "Many will come in my name and will mislead many." *This deception has come to pass ever since he left and it is the Christian leaders who have come in his name.*

The leadership of Bible/Christian religion has taken the place of Joshua of Nazareth, and instead of living the Life he offers, they instead offer the death and darkness that comes with empty, shallow, loveless religion in his name. Of course, they market their death, darkness, and poison with very attractive

“packaging” and spins, and the people eagerly participate in the substitute because they love their lives in this world. It is a mutually serving system - the leaders/rulers get their vocation with their money and their power or influence over people, and the people get the blessing of the religious leaders who say they are good with God and heading to heaven.

The current Biblical/Christian religious system is both foreign and alien to Joshua, as well as against him. The model of “ministry” or “church” has one or a few people “at the top” (minister, pastor, reverend, priest, and other paid staff) and the majority of the people doing virtually nothing except listening to speeches, singing songs and giving the leadership money. That model is anathema to Joshua's new command and the Families he came to build. Truly, that which calls itself “the church” is not significantly different than any of the other world religion's sects or social clubs or “societies” like the Rotary Club or the Elks Lodge or the Masons or the Moose Lodge or the Knights of Columbus, etc. The only significant difference between those organizations and “the church” is the God vocabulary used. The actual primary difference is that those people who call themselves Christians are much more accountable than the people in non-Christian organizations.

The simple truth is that we talk about whatever we love supremely. If we have in fact been saved from ourselves and out of the darkness of a life with little or no love or faith, then we will be compelled, out of love, to talk about our Father and our savior/master. All disciples tell other people about the Light, and all disciples seek to build and be part of the Family and thus the Kingdom of God—the kingdom of love, truth, and rightness. If we are not actively working to bring his Kingdom to pass, then we are not submitting to God's Leader (His Son), and we are not serving him, all our justifications and excuses notwithstanding.

The Light and Truth has said, "This is the condemnation, that people loved the darkness rather than the Light because their deeds are evil." It is evil to reject God's Leader Joshua and instead substitute other men and women in his place, which men and women do not listen to or follow Joshua, but instead encourage people - encourage **you** if you are participating in Bible-church religion – to stay in the darkness that is ignorance, falsehoods, and lovelessness.

I know this is hard to understand for many readers since you have been taught and believed that there is no significant difference between “jesus christ” and Christian or Bible religion you experience in that name—in truth “jesus christ” is merely the figurehead of your religion - the bait to draw you in. However, if you can see the difference between the historical person of Joshua (Jesus) of Nazareth and HIS words and teachings and deeds as found only in the four “gospel” books - and religion in his name - you have taken one simple but critical step in the right direction.

So many who ask good questions about God stuff can never get past throwing the baby (that which is valuable, Joshua of Nazareth) out with the bathwater (that which is worthless, Christian and Bible religion). Or, they

cannot distinguish the baby from the bathwater, having believed for years that they are the same thing.

In sum, religious organizations – that which calls itself “the church” - cannot fix basic problems because they are essentially a business or social club, **not** a living, organic group of friends who actually care about one another (truly love one another) and thus work to solve their own, and then others, problems in as much as it is possible. Religious organizations – what people call “the church” - are largely dead and useless. Being merely social clubs that don’t want to “rock the boat” – whose members very much want to conform to the ways of this world - they are powerless to bring change. They cannot bring significant life change within their organization’s membership let alone bringing change to those outside of it.

In the next chapter, we will look at a significant problem – how to fix “sin” and the Christian's remedy for that problem.

(For more on "church," see *Appendix 10, Christian Church Doctrine Debunked*.)

#### Chapter Summary:

- Joshua of Nazareth only used the term “church” twice in all his teachings, and his definition of “the church” is very different from the current common understanding of the term;
- "The church" as Joshua of Nazareth defines it, are his people who allow themselves to be chosen out of the world by Joshua and into the Kingdom of God; who submit to King Joshua as their only spiritual Leader and Teacher; and who live together as actual brothers and sisters;
- “The church” is *not* a building or an organization or clergy/religious leaders or programs or ministries or rituals;
- The organizations that call themselves “the church” are nothing more than religious, social clubs which have as much power to bring a person into Life as a McDonalds can bring a person into dietary health;
- Those who participate in a religious organization are actively contributing to hiding The Light of the world and thus are working against him since they support and promote the substitute/counterfeit.