

DENOMINATIONS VERSUS THE KINGDOM MATTHEWA.DANIEL.

This is the third article in the series “church of the living God” looking at the state of the church of God worldwide in areas that will benefit from much needed change. This is looking at our present state against the backdrop of what God intended the kingdom to be.

Denominations

I have to start by saying that there is nothing wrong in having denominations. It's another way of having order in the kingdom of God. Humans are attracted to different things and because of free will, we have the innate need to choose. God gave us this right and expects us to exercise it. The church was first Catholic and then split into two in the 15th Century with the emergence of Protestants. The split has continued ever since. We have orthodox churches like the Anglican, Methodist, etc. We also have Evangelicals who largely believe in the propagation of the gospel and the Charismatics who emphasise the power of the Holy Spirit. It can be confusing to navigate the maze of the different churches in existence today more so for an unbeliever. Apart from the Catholic and the Protestants, the other denominations exist because of little variations in doctrines or interpretation of what the Bible says but essentially, their message is the same. (Please take note that some so called “churches “do not practise anything the Bible commands and so not included in this discourse.)

The Kingdom

This was the embodiment of what Jesus taught in his earthly ministry. He said that it came with him and reasoned with all to enter into it by

faith. He also demonstrated the benefits of the kingdom by meeting the needs of all who came to him. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, set the captives free. The kingdom has a king (Jesus) and elevated subjects (You and I) and for now, it's invisible but real. It's made up of all who have hitched their lives to Jesus and are pressing towards a better life. This clearly shows that all members

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of the church of God by default belong to the kingdom of God.

Denominationalism

This is the evil right here. This is when denominations are run exclusive of the contributions of other like minded denominations. The messages often send subliminal signals to the members that they are doing better than others and do not need to interact with others so that they will not be contaminated. These denominations end up becoming cults of exclusive members and often end up in error. The problem of exclusivity is that it robs us all of the power of synergy which would have provided better and more suited quality in our output as Christians. It prevents accountability especially in the leaders and deeply fragments the kingdom.

**REV JIM JONES****Word for the Month**

“ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1John 4:1.

Diagnosis

Jesus publicly activated his ministry and immediately invited others to help him. He adequately taught them and empowered them to function. When Jesus went back to Heaven, the Apostles spread the gospel around the known world in less than forty years. Apostle Paul never physically met Jesus and did not move in the circles of other Apostles but radically impacted his world and ours till now. He heard from Heaven and was clear about his call. When a church is completely built on a personality other than Jesus, it's usually a good sign that it will become a cult. Many of these churches will not survive the death of that personality. There are clear leaders in every organisation but the primary function of these people is to replicate very quickly and get out of the way for Jesus to be seen. Shalom.

God's City Assembly
SUNDAYS-3PM.
 Guidhall, High Street, High
 Wycombe. HP11 2AG
 0044 7886-128-898.
 ww.Gcity.org