

Does It Really Make a Difference?

Chuck Northrop

While talking with a fine old gentleman, the subject of religion came up in the discussion.

After making several statements about Christ and the church he attends, he said, "But that doesn't really make any difference, does it?" He like all people who are sincerely seeking to do the will of God and of Christ Jesus are asking that age old question, "Does it really make a difference?" It is my conviction that many people have tried to answer that question by the knowledge and traditions of man rather than the wisdom of God.

Our Only Source

The Bible is our only source of religious authority. God said through the inspired writer Peter, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). Paul, also, being inspired by God said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Thus far, we have only established the fact that the Bible is a source of religious authority and not the only source. Clearly, the Bible establishes that it is the only source. In Galatians 1:8-9, Paul wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." John recognized this fact as he scribed the sacred pages of the book of Revelation. In Revelation 22:18-19 he said, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Therefore, since we are not to add to or to take away from the Holy Scriptures, it is our complete and only source of religious authority.

Our Only Savior

Our only source provides us knowledge of our only savior, Jesus Christ. Some men would have others to believe that they can be saved through any religion. However, the Bible says in Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." To those who would lead others astray, Paul said in Romans 3:4, "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." John says in 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Even Jesus Himself taught that the only way to the Father was through Him. Jesus told His disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). On another occasion, Jesus asked His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" The disciples no doubt realized Jesus as their only savior and responded by saying "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the

words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:67-68). Thereupon is the fact that Jesus is our only Savior.

Our Only Settlement

By settlement we mean agreement or resolution. Now that we have established the facts that the Bible is our only source of religious authority, and Jesus Christ is our only Savior, our only settlement must be to serve Jesus Christ according to the precious word of God. Therefore, “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22). We must serve God as Paul instructed the Romans in Romans 12:1-2. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Yes, it really does make a difference! If it does not make a difference, then there would be many sources of religious authority, many saviors, and many settlements by which to live. Because there is one source of religious authority, one savior, and one settlement by which to live, it does make a difference.