

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

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## It Makes a Difference

*by John Isaac Edwards*

This billboard caught my eye. Does it make a difference where you go for joint replacement? Would one place be as good as another? If it's your joint being replaced, it makes a difference where you go, right? Most would agree that it makes a difference where you go in such cases. Yet, when it comes to spiritual things, many think it really makes no difference where you go.

**It Made a Difference Where Israel Went.** The Lord expected Israel to go to Jerusalem to worship (Dt. 16:5-6; 1 Ki. 11:36). King Jeroboam came along and said, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem...” (1 Ki.



12:28). So, they went to Dan and to Bethel to worship. This became a sin! (1 Ki. 12:29-30). One city wasn't as good as another!

**It Made a Difference Where Naaman Went.** He was told, “Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean” (2 Ki. 5:10). He thought he knew a better place to go. “Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of

Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?...” (1 Ki. 5:12). It wasn't until he dipped seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, that his flesh was made clean! (2 Ki. 5:14). One river wasn't as good as another!

**It Makes a Difference Where We Go.** It makes a difference as to...

1) *The standard of authority.* Some go to the Pope, the Watch Tower Society, the creeds of men, their preacher, their parents, the majority, the law of Moses or any number of other places in establishing authority for their religious beliefs, teachings and practices.

There is “one Lord” (Eph. 4:5). Christ has all authority (Mt. 28:18). As Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (Jn. 6:68). His word will judge us in the last day (Jn. 12:48). One standard of authority isn’t as good as another!

2) *The church we are members of.* There is only one church predicted in the Old Testament (Is. 2:2-3) and revealed in the New Testament (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). It is the church planned by God (Eph. 3:10-11), built by Christ (Mt. 16:18), purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), and headed by Christ (Eph. 1:21-23). It is the only circle of the called (Col. 3:15), realm of the reconciled (Eph. 2:16), and sphere of the saved (Eph. 5:23). This church alone will be “delivered up” to God (1 Cor. 15:24). All others will be “rooted up” (Mt. 15:13). One church isn’t as good as another!

3) *The name that we wear.* Does it make a

difference as to the name of your child? Why would we think it makes a difference as to the name given to those within our family, but when it comes to God’s family, it really makes no difference what name we wear? Paul penned, “Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Eph. 3:15). Does it make a difference whose name your bride wears? The church is the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22-32) and wears the name of Christ (Rom. 16:16). “...the disciples were called Christians...” (Acts 11:26). What are you called? One name isn’t as good as another!

4) *What we believe.* If the water contains deadly poison, but you *believe* the water is pure, does it make a difference when you drink it? If the high voltage wire is live, but you *believe* it has been disconnected, does it make a difference when you touch it? It made a difference what Eve believed (Gen. 3; 1 Tim. 2:14). It made a difference what the

young prophet believed (1 Ki. 13). He believed a lie and was slain by a lion by the way (vv. 18, 24). It makes a difference what we believe! “There is one faith” (Eph. 4:5). The Holy Spirit revealed about those who believe a lie, “That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Th. 2:11-12). One faith isn’t as good as another!

In the end, it makes a difference where we go. Have a little talk with the rich man and Lazarus, if you think it makes no difference. Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom, while the rich man in hell lifted up his eyes being in torments (Lk. 16:19-31). The sooner we learn “where you go makes a difference”, the better off we will be!

## **Gospel Meeting** with **Various Men Preaching** **September 13-18**

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