



Are All Churches of
Christ the Same?

Matthew 16:18



Are All Churches of
Christ the Same?

- Churches are Drifting

(Heb.2:1)

- Terms like *conservative* or *non-institutional* do not necessarily mean sound or spiritually healthy



Are All Churches of
Christ the Same?

- Churches are Compromising...
- The Gospel Message
- Their Sanctification
- Their Fellowship

An open Bible with a bookmark is placed on a dark wooden surface. The pages are slightly aged and the text is visible but out of focus. A black semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, containing the title and reference text.

COMPROMISING OUR FELLOWSHIP

1 John 1:1-7

1 JOHN 1:1-7

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life –

1 JOHN 1:1-7

² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us –

1 JOHN 1:1-7

³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

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⁵ This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

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⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

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FELLOWSHIP

- What is *Fellowship*?
- Who determines the bounds of our fellowship?
- Who may we fellowship?
- How can we compromise our fellowship?

WHAT IS FELLOWSHIP

- koinōnía - κοινωνία
 - Partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse (**Strong's**)
 - Close association involving mutual interests and sharing, association, communion, fellowship, close relationship (**BDAG**)

WHAT IS FELLOWSHIP

- koinōnia - κοινωνία
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2 CORINTHIANS 6:14-16

¹⁴ Do not be unequally **yoked together** with unbelievers. For what **fellowship** has righteousness with lawlessness? And what **communion** has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what **accord** has Christ with Belial? Or what **part** has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what **agreement** has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: *“I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”*

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- Who determines the bounds of our fellowship?
 - God calls us into fellowship with Him and His Son (1Cor.1:9) (2Cor.5:18-20)
 - We desire to be reconciled to Him and enjoy the blessings of His fellowship (2Cor.5:17) (Eph.1:3-11)
 - We have no standing to make demands or negotiate terms (2Cor.5:14)
 - The Lord sets all the terms for reconciliation (2Cor.5,6,7)

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- What are the bounds of our fellowship?
 - God is the basis of our fellowship
 - We may be in fellowship with those who are in fellowship with God
- The bounds of our fellowship are the bounds of God's fellowship

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- God has no fellowship with sin
 - *(1 Jn. 1:5-6)* This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and **in Him is no darkness at all**. If we say that we have **fellowship** with Him, and **walk in darkness**, we **lie** and **do not practice the truth**.

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- God has no fellowship with sin
 - *(Matthew 7:23)* "And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew you'**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- God has no fellowship with sin
 - (2 John 1:9-11) ⁹ Whoever *transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God*. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- We cannot have fellowship with God and continue in fellowship with sin
 - (2 John 1:10-11) ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹ for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- We cannot have fellowship with God and continue in fellowship with sin
 - *(2 Timothy 3:5) having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- We cannot have fellowship with God and continue in fellowship with sin
 - (Eph.5:6, 7, 11) ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them.

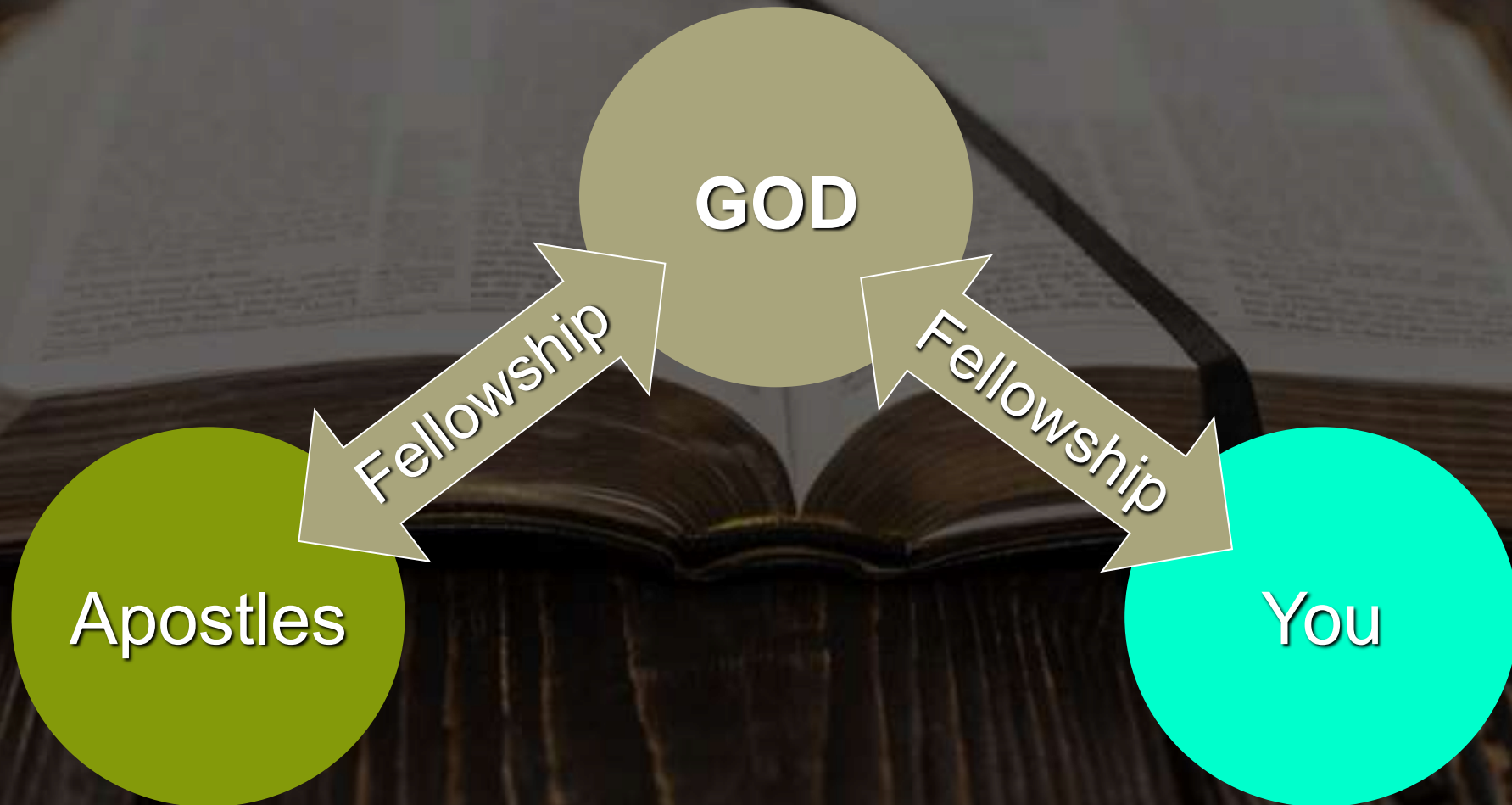
BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- We cannot have fellowship with God and continue in fellowship with sin
 - (Eph.5:6, 7, 11) ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP

- Fellowship with God and one-another
 - (1 John 1:3) *that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

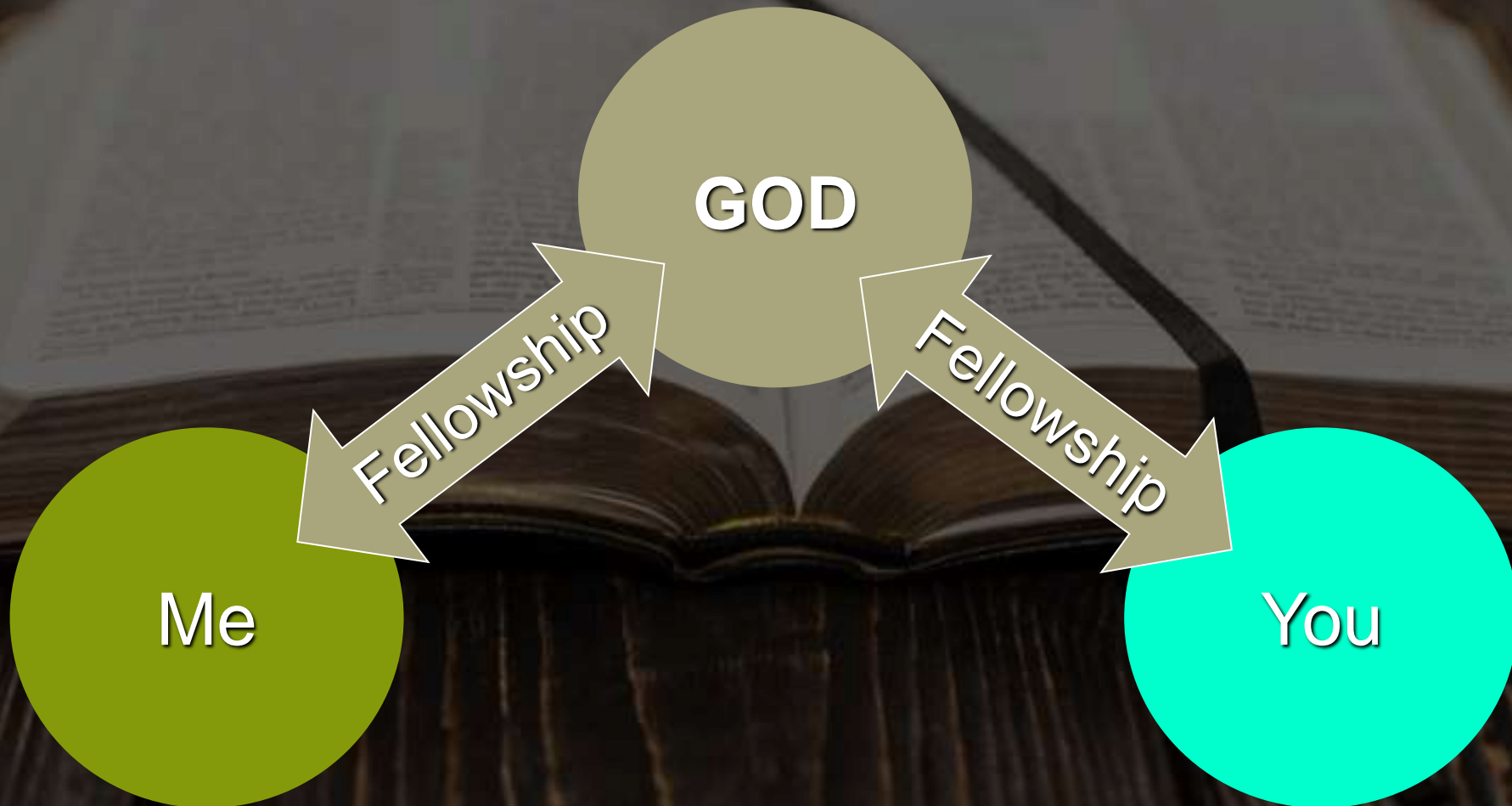
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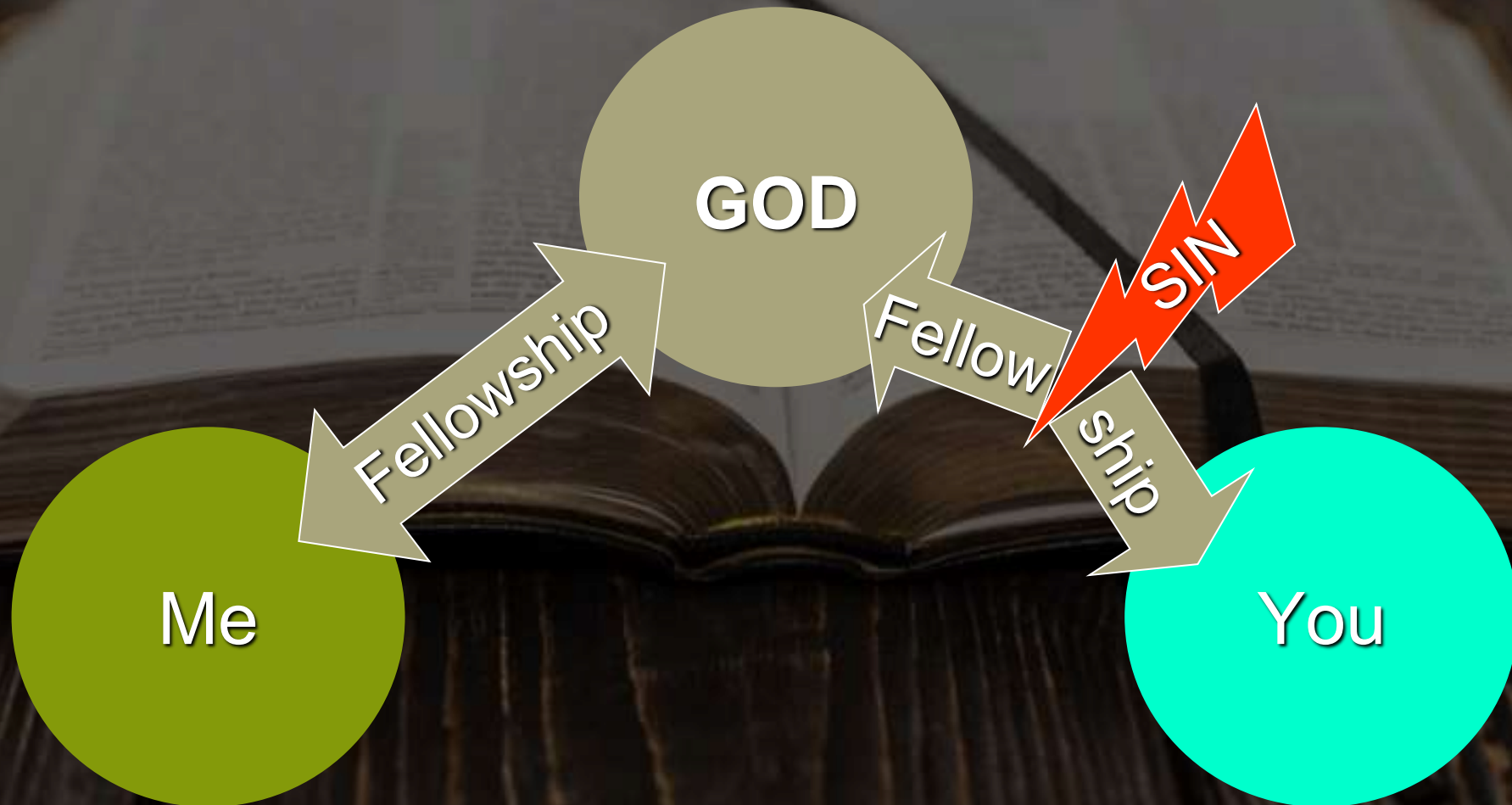
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BASIS AND BOUNDS OF FELLOWSHIP



FELLOWSHIP COMPROMISES

- The Gospel / Doctrine Distinction
- The Imputation of Christ's Righteousness
- Re-interpreting 2 John 1:9-11
- Continuous Cleansing
- Unity in Doctrinal Diversity
- Misuse of Romans 14

GOSPEL / DOCTRINE DISTINCTION

- Claims that we must agree on “gospel” but can disagree on “doctrine”
- Gospel and Doctrine used interchangeably in Scripture (Rom. 1:15-16; 6:17-18; 10:16)
- *A distinction without a difference*

IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

- Claims that the perfect obedience of Christ is transferred to the believer – Covers sin and “sinful nature” like an umbrella (Borrowed from Calvinism)
- Romans 4 teaches that God imputes or accounts our faith as righteousness, but says nothing at all about imputing Christ’s personal righteousness to us
- Necessarily leads to Once Saved – Always Saved

REINTERPRETING 2 JOHN 1:9-11

- Limits “the doctrine of Christ” to the doctrine about Jesus as the Christ
- Applies limits of fellowship only to those who deny the humanity of Christ
- Does the immediate context limit our application of a general truth? (Matt. 15:3-9) (Gal. 5:1-4) (Jas. 2:1-5) (Ac. 15:24)

REINTERPRETING 2 JOHN 1:9-11

- The “doctrine of” Christ...
 - (Matt.16:6, 12) doctrine of the Pharisees
 - (Ac.2:42) apostle’s doctrine
 - (Col.2:22) doctrines of men
 - (1Tim.4:1) doctrines of demons
 - (Rev.2:15) doctrine of the Nicolaitans
 - Doctrine of Christ (Matt.7:28) (Lk.4:32) (Mk.11:18)

CONTINUOUS CLEANSING

- Claims that Christ's blood automatically cleanses a Christian of sin, before and without repentance
- **1 John 1:6 – 2:1** is used to defend this claim
 - Text plainly conditions forgiveness upon confessing one's sins which necessitates the recognition of what one is doing
 - Clearly states that we cannot have on-going fellowship with God while continuing to practice sin (**1 Jn. 1:6**)

UNITY IN DOCTRINAL DIVERSITY

- Claims that we cannot all understand the Bible alike
- Has no objective standard for determining which parts of the Bible will allow this diversity of faith
- This concept makes man a judge of the law (Jas.4:11)

UNITY IN DOCTRINAL DIVERSITY

- Violates the Scriptures that forbid the extending of fellowship to those who are not teaching the truth
 - (Rom.16:17-18)
 - (1Cor.15:33)
 - (1Tim.1:18-20)
 - (2Jn.1:9-11)
 - (Titus 3:10)

MISAPPLICATION OF ROMANS 14

- Claims that Romans 14 applies to matters of “faith”- to matters of considerable moral and doctrinal import
- Immediate Context (**Rom.13:11-14; 16:17-19**)
- Remote Context
 - Moral sin condemned (**Gal.5:19-21**)
 - Doctrinal error condemned (**1 Jn.1:9-11**)
 - Fellowship with sin condemned (**2Cor.6:14-17**)

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Are All Churches of
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- There IS a Difference
- Does it matter?
- Are These Churches Sound?