

## The Church: Institutionalism vs. Kingdom of God

- “Churches” or congregations are not purely “institutional” or “kingdom,” but tend toward one or the other.
- Some things mentioned under “institutional” may be used effectively in the “kingdom” if they are subservient and in service to “kingdom of God” values and dynamics.

	<u><b>Institutionalism</b></u>	<u><b>Kingdom of God</b></u>
<b>Definition of Church</b>	Organization, Institution, Building, Place	“Called Out Ones” (literal Biblical Greek word for church) Ordinary People Called by Jesus Out to Transform the World Body of Christ      Body of Disciples      Family of God
<b>Language</b>	“I go to church.” Church is a “what”	“I am the church 24/7.” “We are the church 24/7.” Church is a “who”
<b>Goal</b>	Maintain & Grow Organization	People... disciples bringing Jesus’ rule, reign, redemption and resurrection power to people, problems and places Making & mobilizing disciples of Jesus through teaching & baptizing
<b>Values</b>	Organization’s Activities & Programs Meeting Members’ Needs Being Nice	Prayer (talking/listening), Holy Spirit, Call, God’s Word, Faith, Salvation, Renewal, Mission, Discipleship, Healing, Hope Law & Gospel, God’s Love, Mutual Kingdom Accountability
<b>Primary Focus</b>	“In” (focus on what happens “in” side of walls)	“In” for the sake of “Out”
<b>Measure of Effectiveness</b>	Attendance, Buildings, Cash “Butts, Buildings, Bucks”  Growth of Organization Analyzing & Projecting Organization’s Numbers (on paper & in meetings)	Where is the rule and reign of Jesus increasing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit of Spirit &amp; Character of Jesus</li> <li>• Salvation of Souls (not people switching churches)</li> <li>• Individuals: Is the rule and reign of Jesus greater in one’s life than last year?</li> </ul> <b>ONLY God (not humans) can “add numbers” (Acts 2:47).</b>
<b>Method &amp; Definition of “Out”reach, Mission &amp; Evangelism</b>	Do something to “attract” more people “in:” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering the right services &amp; activities</li> <li>• Employing people who can perform and produce more people</li> <li>• Right location &amp; type of building</li> <li>• Right kind of worship</li> </ul> Marketing, Websites, Social media Demographics Waiting for people to arrive “in” & Welcome Getting People Involved “in” Conclusion: Get more members	Mission (Latin: Sent “Out”) Witness & Sharing Gospel (repentance & forgiveness of sins) with those who don’t trust in Jesus Healing Our Broken World & Works of Compassion Expectation of Miraculous from God “I am a Missionary 24/7” What is my mission field? Sending & Supporting Foreign Missionaries Church Planting/Transplanting City & Culture Transformation Bringing “Good News” where there is “Bad News” Making what is “Wrong” ... “Right”
<b>Jesus</b>	Sometimes: allergy to “J” word (Jesus)	Jesus: “Only name by which we can be saved” Still ALIVE & ACTIVE because of resurrection
<b>Source of Guidance &amp; Power?</b>	Books, Programs or Methodologies Especially the Latest Greatest or Trendy Copycat Church Human Excitement Enthusiasm & Energy	God’s Word: Written (Bible), Spoken, Revealed & in the Flesh Call & Power of Holy Spirit Spiritual Vision: God Revealing Creative Wisdom & the Future Earnest Prayer: Intercession & Listening Prayer
<b>Discipleship</b>	Offering Education & Spiritual Growth Options  Sunday School  At “church”  Including Children & Youth Options	<b>DISCIPLE:</b> Apprentice of Jesus, being transformed & trained <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Repentance &amp; Conversion</li> <li>• In the Word (Scriptures)</li> <li>• Spiritually Formed through Prayer &amp; Disciplines</li> <li>• Called by Jesus, 24/7</li> <li>• Inviting the Holy Spirit ... Continually</li> <li>• Producing &amp; Reproducing: More Disciples &amp; Fruit</li> <li>• Living relationship with Jesus &amp; His followers</li> <li>• Endlessly &amp; to the End of Time: Know Follow Serve</li> </ul>
<b>Definition of Member</b>	Name on a list to be tallied Consumer of the Church’s activities & services Pew-Sitters	Person with Important “Part” in Jesus’ Kingdom Purposes & Empowered by Holy Spirit to be that Part & Function, 24/7 (1 Corinthians 12 & Romans 12)
<b>In Charge?</b>	People	Living “Lord” God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

<b>"Preacher"</b>	Ordained Pastor or Priest	ALL Followers of Jesus: Preacher is a Proclaimer of the Gospel
<b>Missionaries, Priests &amp; Ministers</b>	Those who receive wages or financial support for this role	ALL Followers of Jesus are Missionaries, Priests & Ministers Missionaries (Latin: "Sent"): Those "Sent" by Jesus, 24/7 Priests 24/7: (from Latin: "Bridge-builder"), 1 Peter 2:5 Ministers (from Latin: Servants): Servants of Jesus, 24/7
<b>Congregation's Role: The Gathered Church</b>	Weekly Worship Services Social Gatherings Philanthropy: Community Service Being Nice to Others Offering Activities and Services to Members	Word & Sacrament Worship: Bowing down to the Living God Relationships: Healing, Encouragement & Accountability Saving, Transforming, Training & Mobilizing Ordinary People for Kingdom Purposes (through Discipleship)
<b>Operations</b>	Operate like business or community organization Methodologies: trendy programs; gimmicks; business plan; meetings; committees; finding the "right" ideas, structure, programs, location & kind of building; employing the "right" people; assigning tasks; schedules; timelines;	Prayer, Call of Jesus & Recognizing His Voice, 24/7 Waiting upon the Lord Spiritual Vision Revealed by God: Seeing with God's Eyesight Calling & Mobilizing Ordinary People to be Body of Christ Inviting, Equipping & Empowering of Holy Spirit Wise Stewards ALL: Operating According to God's Word
<b>Structure</b>	"Like it was done in the past" Filling Slots & Getting people involved Committees (or equivalent) Whatever is trendy	Form follows Kingdom Function in Body of Christ Making Unique "Members" Effective for Kingdom, 24/7 Conclusion: Every Gathering of Believers is Unique Unique Structure that facilitates unique people, time & place
<b>Leadership</b>	Most Capable: Those with Worldly Success Oftentimes business people  Top-Down  Control	Servant Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating: Making Others Effective (Bottom-up)</li> <li>Most Capable: Mature in Christ (any career)</li> <li>Empowered by Holy Spirit</li> <li>"According to Scriptures": God's Word ways &amp; voice</li> <li>Leadership Spiritual Gifts</li> <li>Reproducing Oneself</li> </ul>
<b>Pastor's role</b>	Lead & run a successful organization Preach & Lead weekly services Meet members' needs Omni-competency Employee of Congregation	Tending the Flock: Word & Sacrament Ministry Lead using one's unique spiritual gifts, ensuring the ongoing mission of Jesus happens within a gathering of believers One part of the Body, called & set apart for a designated role Mobilizing the Body of Christ to know follow serve Jesus Called by Congregation in Covenant Relationship
<b>Stewardship</b>	Using time, talent, treasure for the sake of a church organization Filling Slots for "Church" tasks Getting funds for the church's budget needs Tithing: A practice designed to get people to give more to church	Followers of Jesus Wisely Managing ALL that God has given to each of them, 24/7 & Spending it according to God's call Generosity works against greed (wanting more). Tithe: Giving one's first and best 10% in thanksgiving to the living God who is the only Provider; Practice initiated by God to keep people in the knowledge that He is their Provider
<b>Other Congregations?</b>	Competition	Partners in the Kingdom
<b>Faith &amp; Belief</b>	Make-it-up Christianity Religion: Moral Therapeutic Deism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God wants people to be good.</li> <li>The goal of life is to be happy.</li> <li>God solves our problems.</li> <li>Good people go to heaven.</li> <li>God creates and watches over human life on earth.</li> </ul>	Active Relationship of Trust in the Living God, Father Son and Holy Spirit who is revealed in the Holy Scriptures & Summarized in the historic creeds.  Central: Life, Death (Cross) & Resurrection of Jesus the Christ
<b>Congregation Size</b>	Bigger is better	"Where two or three are gathered..." Matthew 18:20 Size of a congregation/gathering is irrelevant.
<b>Enemy</b>	Those who stand up for the truth: God's Word  Those who expose "institutionalism"	Sin, Evil, Death & the Devil Devil, Flesh & World Spiritual Warfare is REAL. Devil is the one who "steals, kills and destroys" through temptation, opposition & possession. ALL are capable of participating in the devil's work.