

# Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:24



## “No God – No Potatoes!”

By Mike Riley

In the former Soviet Union, peasant farmers often enjoyed telling humorous stories to lighten their dreary lives. The following is such a story:

One day, a government commissar visited a farmer and inquired about the year’s potato crop. “Oh, it was wonderful,” the farmer replied slyly. “It was so big, it reached up to the very foot of God.”

The commissar’s countenance quickly changed. With a scowl, he said, “But comrade, this is a communist state and we are atheists. You must not forget, there is no God!”

“Ah, that’s my point,” the farmer replied. “No God — no potatoes!”

Yes, whether we believe it or not, God is the source of all things (Psalm 136:25). The apostle Paul once told a pagan audience, “In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). And in Colossians 1:12-18, Paul gives emphasis to the great creating and sustaining work of God in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. Without His sustaining power, we couldn’t draw a single breath (Hebrews 1:1-3).

As Christians, do we who confess faith in a personal God, to whom we owe our very existence, respond with thanksgiving, worship, and praise? If not, we differ little from that commissar who saw no connection between God and potatoes.

### SUNDAY MORNING

Triple E  
Edify, Exhort,  
Evangelize  
4 Square  
8:30 AM

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Hebrews  
9:30 AM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship Service  
10:30 AM

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Romans  
7:00 PM



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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Northside Church of Christ  
4217 Highway 39 N  
Meridian, MS 39301

Place  
Stamp  
Here

# Let There Be No Substitutions!

By Mike Riley

Not long ago, my wife and I decided to eat breakfast at one of our local restaurants, I wanted bacon instead of sausage, but the menu said “No substitutions.”

Often when it comes to God’s will for our lives we desire our way over His way. As a result, many have made substitutions in God’s arrangement of things.

Consider the example of Jeroboam. He did not want Israel reuniting with Judah, so he developed his own religion to replace God’s. The Bible says, “Now this thing became a sin” (1 Kings 12:30). What substitutions did Jeroboam make and what lessons can we learn? (Romans 15:4).

1) Jeroboam substituted the place of worship — Instead of the people returning to the temple at Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:32; Deuteronomy 12:5-14) altars were set up at Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:27-29). Today, men have replaced God’s temple, His church (1 Corinthians 3:16-17) with denominationalism, cultism and spiritualism. Jesus said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). God adds all the saved to it (Acts 2:47).

There is only one church over which Jesus is head and of which He is the savior (Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:4; Ephesians 5:23). This is the church purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28). No other church belongs to Christ. Jesus did not die for any substitute!

2) Jeroboam also substituted the priesthood — God had ordained the sons of Aaron and the other Levites as priests (Exo. 28:40-41; Numbers 3:3; Leviticus 8). Jeroboam consecrated whoever wished to be a priest from every class of people (1 Kings 12:31; 1 Kings 13:33-34).

There is a priesthood in the New Testament church, but it is not the Pope, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests of Catholicism. Nor is it the clergy of any other religious organization. Every Christian is a priest (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5-6)!

As priests we offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15-16). Jesus is the only head of the church in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18; Colossians 1:18) and the one mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). Let us appreciate the responsibility we have as Christians and do away with all these other substitutions!

3) Jeroboam substituted the object of worship — Like the golden calf Aaron made for the people (Exodus 32), Jeroboam made two calves of gold and said to Israel, “Here are your gods” (1 Kings 12:28-29). Men still bow before images and statues. Some kiss the feet of men or worship at the shrine of Mary. Others worship the angels of heaven.

Jesus said, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve” (Matthew 4:10). When John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, he was told, “Do not do that... Worship God” (Revelation 22:8-9). Cornelius fell at Peter’s feet and worshipped him. “But Peter lifted him up, saying, Stand up; I myself am also a man” (Acts 10:25-26). Idolatry or image worship is specifically condemned in Scripture (Romans 1:20-25; 1 John 5:21).

Whenever we put our desires above God’s, we have substituted the true and only worthy object of worship (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5; Matthew 6:24).

4) Jeroboam substituted the pattern of worship — He ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month (1 Kings 12:32). This was like the feast of Judah, but not on the same day and month which God had ordained (cf. Leviticus 23:33-35; Numbers 29:12). Rather, it was something “he had devised in his own heart” (1 Kings 12:33).

It had always been important to follow the pattern God gave (Exodus 25:9), and even more so in regards to the new and better covenant of Christ (Hebrews 8:5-6).

Yet, men have taken unlawful liberties and changed God’s pattern:

1) They have devised many different baptisms, but there is only one baptism (Ephesians 4:4) authorized by Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). It is a burial in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 8:35-39; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21). Only in obeying this “form (pattern) of doctrine” can one be set free from sin (Romans 6:17).

2) The church met on the first day of every week to partake of the Lord’s Supper (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 1 Corinthians 11:17-20; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), yet men have changed the day and the frequency according to their own wishes.

3) Mechanical instruments, choirs and solos, handclapping and foot-stomping have been added to the music God commanded in His worship (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Congregational singing is the only kind of music ever used by or authorized by God for the church you read about in the New Testament.

4) The Lord’s church was never financed by the fund raising, money-making schemes so popular in churches today. Christians supported the church by their offerings (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Car washes, rummage sales, spaghetti suppers or concerts were unheard of, not to mention bingo (or other forms of gambling) used to raise money today. These substitutes are not according to God’s pattern.

Conclusion:

Any religion of substitutes is a false religion, because it has its origin in men and not God. Such is “vain” and will be “uprooted” (Matthew 15:7-14). We must not change God’s way for our own way (Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:6; 1 Corinthians 4:6; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9; Revelation 22:18-19).

In the restaurant where we went for breakfast, the waiter allowed me to have my bacon, but when God says, “No substitutions,” that’s exactly what He means! (Leviticus 10:1-2).

## Announcements

- Holiday Meal at Diamond Jim’s Meridian Dec. 20 @ 6pm
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## Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments
- Terry Wooldridge (kidney surgery, Tuesday)
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## Communion Preparation

- December - Rowell
- 2023 Sign up sheet is in foyer

## December Birthdays & Anniversary’s

- Connie Montgomery - 3rd • Crimson Rowell - 31st
- Rick Carlberg - 7th
- Dwight & Sandra Callens - 23rd

DON'T LET YOUR HEARTS BE  
TROUBLED. TRUST IN GOD,  
AND TRUST ALSO IN ME.

JOHN  
14:1

## Sermon Notes

## Men to Serve

Announcements/Opening Prayer - Don Potts  
 Scripture Reading - John 14:1 - 3  
 Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell  
 Head of Lord’s Table - Dwight Callens  
 Assist on Lord’s Table - Mark Potts  
 Scripture Reading - Mark 15:25 - 32  
 Closing Prayer - Shay Cooper

## Every Sunday Morning

@ 8:00 AM

on WTOK-TV



<b>Comcast Cable</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Comcast Cable</b>	<b>431</b>
<b>Comcast Cable</b>	<b>1011</b>
<b>DirecTV</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>DirecTV</b>	<b>396</b>
<b>Dish Network</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Over-the-air</b>	<b>11.3</b>