

Some Very Earnest Pleas From People Who Care

On more than one occasion the apostle Paul preceded his discourses with the words, 'I beseech you.' In essence, the apostle was pleading, desiring, or longing for his words to be carefully and prayerfully considered. Today, faithful churches of Christ everywhere beseech our religious friends and neighbors to carefully and prayerfully consider some very earnest pleas.

First, churches of Christ plead with our religious friends to renounce all denominational dogmas and man-made creeds and humbly meet with open hearts on the one, true foundation of religious unity, the Bible. That sacred, verbally inspired volume is God's single tool of communication to modern man (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3). By honestly studying and applying the Scriptures, sinful, selfish, and senseless religious division will cease (Jno.. 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 1:10).

In addition, churches of Christ long for our religious neighbors to restore simple New Testament Christianity. Be not interested in reforming Catholicism or Protestantism (neither of which have biblical authority to exist), but go all the way back to Jerusalem in A.D. 33 to reproduce in our day the church which began in that day (Acts 2).

Also, churches of Christ beseech our denominational friends to exalt Christ. Possessing all authority, Jesus is King over the kingdom, the head of the church, and the savior of the body, having purchased the redeemed with his own blood (Mt. 28: 18; 1 Tim. 6:15; Eph. 1:22; 5:23; 20:28). Based on these facts, how dare any group claiming to be his, call themselves anything that exalts mere men or religious practices! The early disciples were known simply as 'Christians' (Acts 11:26) and the congregations to which they belonged were known simply as 'churches of Christ' (Rom. 16:16).

Finally, churches of Christ desire for everyone to know and obey Christ's plan of salvation. Humanly devised plans of salvation such as grace only, faith only, and the sinner's prayer are nowhere found in the Bible. These doctrines are without Christ's authority (Col.3:17) and provide salvation for no one. Christ's plan of salvation consists of faith (Jn.8:24), repentance (Lk.13:3), confession of Christ (Mt.10:32-33), baptism (Mk.16:16; Jno..3:3-5), and faithfulness (Rev.2:10). Note that these items are not works of merit (Gal.2:8-9), but actions produced by biblical faith (Gal.2:10; Jas.2:17, 24).

Though numerous other pleas exist, in essence the churches of Christ long for all men to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent; to call Bible things by Bible names and do

Bible things in Bible ways. Let all who claim to follow Jesus have no creed but the Christ and no book but the Bible.

The Fort Valley church of Christ beseeches you to consider these matters carefully and prayerfully. If you have any questions, comments, or should you desire to study further, please feel free to contact us.