

What Is The Plea Of The Churches Of Christ?

Bible Answers About The Church

The plea of the churches of Christ is to restore the apostolic church, which simply means a complete return to the original ground of the New Testament church, and take up things just as the apostles left them. Such an appeal involves going back beyond all human creeds, councils, synods, and ecclesiastical authorities, to Christ and the inspired apostles, and restoring all things wherein there has been an apostasy, or departure from the Scriptures. What the world needs is the apostolic church, the original church of Christ, in all of its primitive faith, worship, and practice.

Our plea is for the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the central figure in Christianity in New Testament times and must be today. The fact that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, was the central truth in all the preaching of the apostles. The only article of faith imposed upon those who became Christians in New Testament times was the personal belief that Jesus was the Christ. In the conversion of the Eunuch we read, "Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:36-39 NKJ Cf. Acts 15:31; Rom. 10:9-10).

Our plea is for the Word of Christ. The Word of Christ is eternal (Mk. 13:31; I Pet. 1:25). The Word of God is sufficient to give us all the religious and spiritual instruction that we need as Paul pointed out when he said, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17 NAS Cf. 2 Pet. 1:3).

Our plea is for the Authority of Christ. The Bible teaches that God delegated all authority to Jesus, who in turn authorized the apostles to teach everything He commanded, "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20 NAS). Jesus then gave the apostles the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth and protect them from error in revealing the Word of Christ (Jno. 16:13). This authority was never given to anyone else. Divine authority ended with the work and revelation of the apostles (Rev. 22:18-19). Therefore, the church/kingdom of Christ is an absolute monarchy. It needs no councils, conventions, or synods to make, amend, or revise its laws. Christ is the head of His church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).

Our plea is for the Church of Christ. With all of the divisions in modern Christendom we have just about forgotten that Christ built His church. It belongs to Him (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25). The New Testament church was simply the local church with elders to oversee and deacons to serve. There was a plurality of elders in every church (Acts 14:23). Christ ordained baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:15-16; Jno. 3:3-5) and this baptism required a burial in water for all believers (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39; Mk. 16:16). This plea involves also the worship of the New Testament church. The God given pattern of true worship is not complex. We must assemble on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7) to teach (Acts 2:42), to eat the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; Matt. 26:26-28), to give of our means (I Cor. 16:12), to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), and to pray (Acts 2:42). The early Christians continued steadfastly in these things (Acts 2:42).

Our plea is also for a Personal Consecration to Christ. In baptism we put on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). Baptism is not the end, but marks the beginning of the Christian life. The Bible requires men to crucify the works of the flesh (Col. 3:5-11) and live for Christ. No person is free to develop his own life style. Repentance requires the changing of an immoral lifestyle for righteousness. Christians are required to completely surrender self and substance to Christ (Lk. 9:23; Matt. 10:38). The crown of life is promised to only those who endure to the end (Mk. 13:13; Rev. 2:10).

Our plea is for the Name of Christ. He who says there is nothing in a name is not familiar with the Scriptures. Salvation is in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). Remission of sins is in the name of Christ (Lk. 24:47). Christians are those who wear Christ's name, and who seek to reproduce the life, and teachings of Jesus Christ in their lives (Acts 11:26; I Pet. 4:16). Why should anyone wear a name that honors some man (Lutheran Church), some aspect of church government (Presbyterian Church) or some other human name? Paul wrote, "The churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16).

It is our most earnest desire that all professed Christians shall be content with no name but Christian; no creed but the Christ; no book but the Bible. Will you join us in making this plea to the religious world?

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