

Recapturing the Plea for New Testament Christianity

Introduction: Restoration has been natural to man. There are many who have sought to restore certain biblical aspects (Pentecostal: restore the gifts - Amish: restore a separation from the world), but they have tried to restore the wrong things.

The plea of the restoration has been right all along: "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent" The call has been rightly focused on 1 Pet. 4.11, "*If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.*"

Our plea is to restore and hold to N.T Christianity, to have a "pure and undefiled religion before God." There are a few key things that are important to recapturing the plea for N.T. Christianity.

Transition: We recapture the plea for N.T. Christianity by...

I. RESTORING OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORD OF GOD

- A. There are attitudes that hinder people in their understanding of God's Word.
 - 1. Traditionalism - set in our ways
 - 2. Phariseeism - Letter of the law without the spirit of the law.
 - 3. Focus on what the bible doesn't say rather than what it does say.
 - 4. Liberalism - focus on change for the sake of change, to counter traditionalism
 - 5. Denominationalism - you choose your religion.
 - 6. Culturalism - adjust biblical practices and principles to that of our times.
- B. Look into the perfect Law of Liberty. (Jas. 1.21-25) [EX: Mustard spot on face]
To fail in applying the word of God is a great folly.
- C. Honor the word of God. (II Tim. 3.16-17)
 - 1. Treat the scriptures as if they can be understood. If they are profitable for doctrine... then we know we can understand.
 - 2. Honoring the word of God takes conviction.

II. RESTORE TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

- A. Let Christ live in us.
 - 1. We are called to walk in Christ. (Col. 2.6-7) A disciple is like his master. (Mt. 10.24,25)
 - 2. You have to know who you are. (Col. 3.1-11) Is Christ in you? Are you risen with Christ through baptism? Does He live in you and you in Him? Remember who you are.
 - 3. Is Christ alive in our singing and other aspects of worship? (Col. 3.16)
 - 4. True disciples do "all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (vs. 17). Because our loyalty is to Christ and His authority, not to men, their creeds, and their doctrines. (Gal. 2.20)

5. True disciples center Christ in their relationships with others. (Col. 3.18-25) If Christ is living in us it will make us better at relationships & ultimately better disciples.
- B. A true disciple has a faith that works.
1. The book of James is a book of wisdom and “faith that works.” Applying knowledge we have of the Scriptures to our lives.
 - a. A faith that works is a faith that is applied.
 - b. But how can you apply what you don’t know?
 - c. If we are going to have a working faith we need to apply God’s word. If we are going to apply God’s word we need to get into the word and the word into us. *“RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH.”*
 2. The book of James teaches us valuable lesson of having a faith that works:
 - a. (1.1-4 & ch. 5) Patience in trials
 - b. (1.5-8) Pray for wisdom
 - c. (1.12-15) Endure temptation that you may obtain the crown of life.
 - d. (1.19-20; 26-27 & ch. 3) Slow to speak and a bridled tongue ==> pure religion.
 - e. (1.21-25) Be doers of the word and not hearers only. Be introspective and apply.
 - f. (2.1-13) Don’t show partiality toward brethren.
 - g. (3.13-18) Seek heavenly wisdom and not earthly wisdom.
 - h. (4.1-12) Do not fight and war against each other, but develop a peaceful attitude.
 - I. (5.13-18) Pray fervently and faithfully in regard to self and others.

Transition: We recapture the plea for N.T. Christianity by being...

III. SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

- A. The call to separation. (Jn. 17.14-16) We are strangers and pilgrims.
 1. That’s the primary definition of who we are.
 2. The Amish community is separated from the world (difficult?). Easy compared to being separate from the world and living in it.
- B. Pure undefiled religion demands that we be unspotted from the world. (Jas. 1.27)
- C. Separated Christians in separated churches.
 1. The moral stamina to be different. (Jn. 15.19; 2 Cor. 6.17).
 2. Cultural separation. (Gal. 3.28). [religion by entertainment, baptism?, women leaders, homosexuality] If we become like Christ we are not bound by our culture. We are called to be churches that rise above our culture.

Conclusion: We are committed to the word of God and try to be honest about who we are. Our goal is to be like New Testament Christians.