

What I Like about the 'Church of Christ'

Sunday Morning Bible Class

Summer Quarter

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2. I Like Its Restoration Mission

- Desire to “restore New Testament Church”
- Many buildings to this day have on their foundation the words, “Established in A.D. 33”
- It is Christ’s Church, He is the Builder, Foundation, Head, and Lord – not man
- Get back to the source – the Bible
- It sets clear definable standards – does it look like the Church Jesus built?

2. I Like Its Restoration Mission

- (Mat 16:16-18 NIV) Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." {17} Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. {18} And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

2. I Like Its Restoration Mission

- (1 Cor 3:10-11 NIV) By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. {11} For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

2. I Like Its Restoration Mission

- (Eph 2:19-22 NIV) Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, {20} built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. {21} In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. {22} And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Some Weaknesses

1. Mission to “restore” rather than “be”

– Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:10-11, 20-21

– Col. 1:13-20

– Heb 12:22-29

– 7 Churches of Asia in Rev. 2-3

Some Weaknesses

2. Ignores our place in history (restoration heritage before us)

- Our roots in the Renaissance
- Our roots in the Reformation
- Our roots in “New England” and the “Covenant Theology”

- Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) Scholasticism sought to apply the insights of Aristotelian philosophy to the medieval ecclesiastical thought. Rationalism – argument by clever syllogism.
- Dawn of Renaissance 1300 – effort to recover the wisdom of the ancient world. Individualism. Natural reasoning ability, creativity of human kind, art, literature, music and scholarship flourished 1300 -1517
- In religion this time prompted a profound sense of self reliance. Did not feel God empowered people to do good – rather it was achieved by rigorous and determined effort.

- The quest to return to the wisdom of the ancient world was known as Humanism and the call was *ad fonte* “back to the fountain or source.” Humanism was in itself a form of “Restoration Movement” to the wisdom of a nobler age.
- Prince of Christian Humanist – Erasmus produced a reliable text of the Greek NT
- “If anyone wants to learn piety rather than disputation, let him straight away go to the source and those writers who drank immediately from the sources.” Erasmus of Rotterdam (1520)

- 3 Currents of Reformation

- Martin Luther in Germany “Scripture Alone” 1521
“Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason
– I do not accept the authority of popes and councils,
for they have contradicted each other – my
conscience is captive to the Word of God.”
- Zwingli in Switzerland – put aside all other sources
and preach only the Bible, stripped the church for
simple worship. “Few ceremonies have been left us
by Christ.” He believed that everything not based on
Scriptural precedent should be abolished, for
“everything that is added to the true institutions of
Christ is an abuse...”
- Puritans in England – restoration of the pure
“Constantinian Church” protected by the state holding
covenant with God as the true church.

- Zwingli's Reformation – “Restoration”
 - “The people must be educated in the Word of God so that neither vestments nor songs have a place” in worship.
 - Zwingli was a gifted musician yet excluded all audible music from the Christian assembly. His premise was that whatever Scripture does not explicitly command is forbidden. He believed Scripture taught music should only happen in the heart (Col 3:16).
 - Swiss Anabaptists took up Zwingli's teaching Eph. 5:19 spiritual songs, not audible songs. “Whatever we are not taught by clear passages or example must be regarded as forbidden, just as it is written: ‘This do not; sing not.’” Conrad Grebel

- Response to Zwingli

- Luther did not oppose traditions as long as they helped teach the gospel and felt Zwingli's approach to Scripture developed a new form of legalism
- 2 followers of Zwingli took it even further and are tied to the Puritans of England, Bullinger (1504-1575) and Bucer (1491-1551) introduced King Edward VI to the state church of Constantine restored and protected by God in a covenant relationship was what needed to be restored in England
- John Calvin (1509-1564) between Luther and Zwingli, "back to Bible" did not reject forms that promote Gospel. "Christ Alone"

Some Weaknesses

1. Mission to “restore” rather than “be”
2. Ignores our place in history (restoration heritage before us)
3. Tends to emphasize forms rather than function
4. Tends to emphasize obedience to correct church practice rather than obedience to the Lord in response to His grace
5. Tends to be judgmental and fault finding