

# SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

994 Old Spanish Trail  
Slidell, LA 70458-5016

PHONE/ FAX: (985) 643-4826

June 28, 2015

## *The Restoration Plea*

The Restoration Plea espoused by the churches of Christ--the unification of all disciples of Christ into a single body patterned after the church of the New Testament—is valid for several reasons. Here are some of these reasons. The Restoration Plea is...

**Ephesians 4:4 - The Desire to Be the New Testament Church Today.** The idea here is not to clone the New Testament church in all of its incidentals, but to take the apostolic teaching or ideal about the church as found in the New Testament as our model and guide--not the First Century church as it actually existed with all of its imperfections and historical limitations--and apply those teachings in our modern age.

**Galatians 5:19-21 - The Desire to Practice the Pre-denominational Unity of the Church.** True unity in Christ refuses to recognize the present denominational divisions of Christendom as God's desired condition for his people.

**2 Corinthians 3:18 - The Desire to Restore People to the Image of God.** The restoration of the NT's outward marks of the church is a means to the end of restoring man to fellowship with God. Unless this is achieved, all else is in vain.

*Defenses of the Restoration Plea...*

### **The Idea of Restoration is - -**

*Reasonable.* It has occurred spontaneously to people who didn't know each other around the world, and continues to do so until this day.

Galatians 4:4, 5 - *Has a Spiritual Basis in God's Revealing Himself to Humankind.*

Jeremiah 6:16 - *Has Historical Support. Has Contemporary Interest.*

## *Today's Sermon*

a.m. *"Some Will Abandon the Faith"*

**1 Timothy 4:1-5**

p.m. *Opportunity for discussion and reflection on the morning message*

*Is Practical.*

*Occupies True Ecumenical Ground.* "Take the practice of immersion--all believers agree that immersion is valid baptism; none regard it as wrong. The position of those who practice sprinkling or pouring is that some use of water other than immersion is equally acceptable for valid baptism. But immersion is not a divisive concept; it is the only action that everyone agrees is acceptable. Or, consider vocal music in worship. No one has said *a cappella* singing is wrong; the contention is that instrumental music may acceptably be added. The common ground, universally accepted, is vocal music. The weekly communion is not considered wrong in Christendom. Many religious leaders (Calvin to name one) favored it but were not able to secure its practice. It is once more ecumenical ground in contrast to other practices (daily, monthly, quarterly, annually) which are not universally acceptable."<sup>1</sup>

The plea for Christian unity through a restoration of biblical Christianity is a marvelous thing of beauty. To be "Christians only" is an ideal worthy of our complete devotion and best efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Everett Ferguson, "The Validity of The Restoration Principle," *Mission Magazine*, August 1973, pages 5-10 (37-42).

## Welcome Visitors

We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you to our service. We think you will find our congregation family to be one that enthusiastically embraces newcomers and warmly welcomes them into our fellowship. We hope you feel right at home as you join us in worship, praise and thanksgiving.

### “REMEMBER IN PRAYER & ENCOURAGE”



With Visits, Calls, & Cards

All those bereaved by the horrible mass shooting in Charleston SC.

The flooding victims, and relief workers, throughout Texas.

Those bereaved by the murder of police officer Daryle Holloway in New Orleans.

**Angel Mangus** (of Houston, TX, niece of Carl Mangus) - afflicted with inoperable stage 4 brain cancer.

**Steve Lapinto family** - baby **Anthony** is home but faces several future surgeries.

**Elery Martin** (friend of the Caseys, near Montgomery, AL) - five year old girl experiencing seizures; she was scheduled for tests last Tuesday.

**Zach Steele** - blessed with news that he will receive a long-awaited bone marrow transplant, and that he is qualified to have the procedure done as an outpatient. He began the process on June 1, and currently has no complications. His physician is very optimistic about his prognosis, and the family remains cautiously optimistic. Continue praying for his recovery.

**Cecilia McDonald** (Kate's mom, in Pleasanton, Texas) - her heart seems to be somewhat stronger, and she has returned home, where she is receiving physical therapy and adjusting to new medications.

**Karen Besser** (friend of Kathy Pederson's granddaughter) - has pneumonia and a lung clot.

**Dorothy Bryan** - suffering hearing loss.

**Rosa Nuñez** (good friend of the Vargas family) - having serious painful health problems.

**Ken Cheri** (Courtney's brother) - healing well following recent successful hip replacement surgery. He is getting around with a cane.

**Shirley Fowler** - trying to recover from a stomach virus.

**Sharon Evans** - having equilibrium problems.

**Shirley Ervin** - received her monthly shot in the eye this past week, and trying to recover from a bout of pleurisy.

**Dale Epperley** - has 70% blockages in both carotid arteries, for which he is seeking treatment.

**Gerald Molina** - suffering from multi-faceted lower back pain, and fluid build-up throughout his body.

**Margaret Schillinger** - still experiencing some pain and stiffness following a recent slight fall.

**Jace Roig** (newborn son of Colton Roig) - in precarious health during his extended stay in the NICU at Ochsner-Baptist Hospital in New Orleans.

**Bill Tansil** - most pressing health issue now is pain from arthritis in his back and shoulders.

**Phyllis Tansil** - has not received substantial pain relief in her lower back despite recent therapies.

**Family of Greg Bryant** - bereaved in the recent passing of Greg's father, **Irvin Bryant Sr.**, and Greg's brother, **Irvin Bryant Jr.** In addition Anita Bryant's sister, **Sharon Honoré**, a member at the Crowder Blvd. church, has advanced breast cancer.

**Donald Boudreaux** (Joyce LeBlanc's brother-in-law, of the Barataria area) - fighting cancer in the area of the kidney ureters.

**Kimberly Carter** - recovering from an injured knee.

**Joyce Carter** - waiting to see if she needs to receive further injection treatments in her left eye.

**Maria Aurelia Alsaro** (Marisol's mother, in Costa Rica) - afflicted with kidney problems.

**Clara Leonard** - is suffering much pain and can barely walk, while awaiting results from a recent MRI.

**Bobby Leonard** - seeing a kidney specialist.

**Carl & Steve Mangus** - travelling out-of-state to visit relatives.

**Pray for all who are travelling.**

**Pray for Latino evangelism in our area.**

**Pray for our elders: Courtney Cheri, Dwight Jones and Gerald Molina.**

**Pray for President Obama and all our elected officials.**

**Pray for our men and women in our armed forces, both here and abroad!**

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### **The Epistles: Learning to Think Contextually**

Adapted from Fee & Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

James and 2 Peter both are addressed as letters, but both lack the familiar formal greeting and farewell. Both also lack specific addressees, as well as any personal notations by the writers. These are the closest things in the New Testament to "epistles," that is, tracts for the whole church, although 2 Peter seems to have been called forth by some who were denying the Second Coming (3:1-7). James, on the other hand, so completely lacks an overall argument that it looks more like a collection of sermon notes on a variety of ethical topics than a letter.

Despite this variety of kinds, however, there is one thing that all of the epistles have in common, and this is the crucial thing to note in reading and

interpreting them: *they all arose out of and were intended for a specific occasion from the first century.* This is why they are called *occasional documents*. Although inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus belonging to all time, they were occasioned, or called forth, by some special circumstance, either from the reader's side or the author's. Usually the occasion was some kind of behavior that needed correcting or a doctrinal error that needed setting right, or a misunderstanding that needed further light. For us today this occasional nature *must* be taken seriously if we are to really understand the message of an epistle.

Most of our problems in interpreting the epistles are due to this fact of their being occasional. We have the *answers*, but we do not always know what the *questions* or *problems* were, or even if there was a problem. It is much like listening to one end of a telephone conversation and trying to figure out who is on the other end and what that unseen party is saying. Yet in many cases it is especially important for us to try to hear "the other end," so that we know what our passage is an answer to.

The occasional nature of the epistles also means that they are not just general treatises about God, but *they were written to serve particular needs in First Century congregations*. This is true even of Romans and Ephesians, which are fuller and more systematic statements of Paul's inspired thought than one finds elsewhere.

#### ***Studying the Historical Context***

The first thing one must try to do with any of the epistles is to *form a tentative but informed reconstruction of the occasion or situation that the author is speaking to*. This is what is known as the epistle's historical context. We are going to use Philippians for our example, and for review in our next class session I am giving you the assignment of reading Philippians 1:27-2:13; 4:2-7. Do so several times in different versions, if you can. As you study ask questions like this: What was going on in Philippi that caused Paul to write to them? What kind of relationship and former contacts has he had with them? What attitudes do they and he effect in this letter? These are the kinds of questions you want answered in a study of a letter's historical context. So what do you do?

*First*, you need to consult your Bible dictionary or the introduction your commentary to find out as much as possible about Philippi and its people.

*Second*, and now especially for study purposes, you need to develop the habit of reading the whole letter through in one sitting. You will need to block out an hour or so to do this, but nothing can ever substitute for this exercise. It is the way one reads every other letter. A letter in the Bible should be no different. There are some things you should be looking for as you read, but you are not now trying to grasp the meaning of every word or sentence. It is the big view that counts first.

As you read the whole letter through, it would be helpful to jot down a few, *very brief*, notes with references. This is for the sake of those who have a hard time making mental notes. **READ FOR THE BIG PICTURE.** Remember, the purpose here is first of all to reconstruct the epistle's occasion. These are the kind of things you should note:

1. What you notice about the recipients themselves; e.g., whether Jew or Greek, wealthy or slave, their problems, attitudes, etc.;
2. Paul's attitudes;
3. Any specific things mentioned as to the specific occasion of the letter;
4. The letter's natural, logical divisions.

If all of this is too much at one sitting and causes you to lose the value of reading it through, then read first, and afterwards go back quickly through the letter with a skim reading to pick up these items.

*(to be continued)*

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### ***Our Leaders!***

#### ***Elders***

Dwight Jones  
Courtney Cheri  
Gerald Molina

#### ***Preacher***

Dan Schillinger

#### ***Deacons***

Jesse Fowler  
James Richardson  
Hector Urbina

### ***Our Services***

***Sunday Morning Bible Class***                      **9:30 a.m.**

***Sunday Morning Worship***                      **10:30 a.m.**

***Sunday Evening Worship***                      **5:00 p.m.**

***Wednesday Evening Bible Class***                      **7:00 p.m.**

***Stitches of Love***                      **Tuesday 9:30 a.m.**