

OUR ROOTS

A Concise History of Churches of Christ

Lesson Four: Developing a Theology

If you define theology as “a thoughtful reflection on the Christian faith,” then all Christians have a theology? What might this look like or how can it or has it manifested itself?

UNITY AND RESTORATION

“That the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.”

“A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things”

We all interpret. What makes our interpretation more correct than someone else’s?

Did the Campbells refute everything from their past?

Their understanding was that restoration was an ongoing process.

INTERPRETING THE BIBLE

The Christian System

Christocentricity

Where do we (JSCC) stand today compared to what Campbell wanted?

BAPTISM AND SECTERIANISM

There are Christians in all the Protestant groups

Are their Christians in other faith traditions? What is the definition of Christian?

“ultraists”

How then can the unimmersed be saved or called Christians?

So, if Campbell believed immersion was not absolutely essential to salvation, did he advocate open membership in the church?

QUESTIONS FOR MORE DISCUSSION

What did the early restoration leaders mean when they said, “Christians only, not the only Christians?”

Does accepting others as Christians mean we much abandon our emphasis on believers’ immersion for forgiveness of sins?

Are you aware that JSCC practices open membership? Open membership is a willingness to accept anyone into membership who professes to believe in Christ regardless of their baptism status. We still believe and teach baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, but do not impose that on anyone seeking membership. Our prayer is that anyone who comes to us will see and hear our practice and be convicted by the Spirit to submit to immersion baptism for the remission of sins.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, Our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.