



The View From Here

November 2011 Volume 13, Issue 2

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO RESTORE?

For much of the 20th century, the brotherhood of churches we are a part of was generally known as the “RESTORATION MOVEMENT.” However, we haven’t always been clear throughout our brief history of exactly what it is we are trying to restore.

Many of the heirs of this movement thought in terms of restoring the Church of Christ. At different times and places we have focused primarily on:

- ◇ what we thought the ancient worship of the church looked like
- ◇ what we saw as the “ordinances” of the church (baptism and the Lord’s Supper)
- ◇ what we thought the governing structure of the church should look like
- ◇ how the church should do missions.

If we are going to call ourselves a “Restoration Movement”—we need to be clear about what it is we are trying to restore. There are three areas where the idea of restoration corresponds to a biblical vision of the church and its mission:

- ◇ Its use in the Scriptures

- ◇ The biblical description of the church
- ◇ The grand plan of God’s restoration of all things.

Many of the NT writers discussed the idea of restoration. However, they rarely connected restoration with the book, the order of the church, the Gospel, the life, the worship, the means of missions, or the church. While those items were mentioned throughout the narrative of the NT—the writers mainly describe restoring *right relationships with God and to others* (Hebrews 6.6; 13.9; Galatians 1; 2 Corinthians 13.9; 11.; 1 Peter 5.10). or they talked about *restoring all things as they originally were* (Mark 9.12; 17.11; Acts 3.21)—or *restoring the kingdom* (Acts 1.6; 15.16).

Almost all of the biblical uses of the term “restoration” in these texts emphasize the same context and describe the narrative of the Christian Gospel—that grand unifying story from Genesis to Revelation. God makes all things

new through the proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom. God remakes the world, restoring lost relationships, restoring God’s rule, restoring “all things.”

The biblical focus of restoration was the end of God’s purpose, not the means to that end.

The way we use “restoration” seems to contradict the biblical description of the church’s purpose in God’s great design. After Peter confessed Jesus as “*the Christ, the Son of the Living God*,” Jesus said, “*You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the powers of death shall not prevail against it*” (Matthew 16.18). Jesus built His church on people just like Peter—fallible, mistake-prone, short-sighted—but who were bold enough to bear witness to the lordship of Jesus. And nothing could destroy such a church. Paul said the same thing in Ephesians 3.9-10 and then in the next chapter stressed unity in the church for this goal to be fully realized.

But the church—always filled with and led by the imperfect and flawed—doesn’t succeed because it’s perfect. It succeeds because God works through human frailty to accomplish His grand purpose to restore His rule over all creation.

When we talk about restoring the church then—the restoration we seek

is the restoration of God’s purpose for a united, reconciling church—one that’s not necessarily perfect but that fulfills “*the eternal purpose which He realized in Christ Jesus*,” (Ephesians 3.11).

That means the church’s mission must be in terms of its God-ordained purpose. In the end, the biblical concept of restoration is closely tied to God’s mission for His church, His people, and all of creation.

From God’s perspective, it’s not the church that needs to be restored—as though that were an end in itself—it’s the world that needs restored to God. The church’s mission is to help bring about that restoration.

Practices and beliefs are important and are to be informed by Scriptures. Yet—the grand story of the Scriptures is that God through Christ and through His “Body” on earth (the church)—is the one who effects true restoration, not us. The restoration is God’s work of reestablishing rule over all creation—which will be completed at the end of the ages, what the NT writers call the “last day.” Praise God for including us in this ongoing task of restoring all things new as we wait in hope for the last day!

(excerpted from an article by Gary Weedman, President, Johnson University)

Jack

1ST Century Worship in the 21ST Century

November 6TH, 2011

Sunday, November the 6TH, we will be recreating the earliest church's 1ST day worship gathering in the social settings of the 21ST century. We hope that you will be enlightened, encouraged, and uplifted by this special time with God and the simple honest adoration of him.

Tables and chairs will be set up in the auditorium much like we set up for Turkey Talent.

10:00am—Welcome

◇ Announcements/Explanation

10-10:15am--Song Worship

◇ Singing of well known songs (either A cappella or simple accompaniment)

10:15am—Prayer and Blessing

◇ for the fellowship meal

10:15am-10:45am—Meal Time

10:45am-11:05am—Bible Readings

◇ and teachings from the Bible

11:05am-11:10am—Invitation

◇ Reading from Acts 2

11:10am-11:30am—Lords Supper

◇ Reading of the enactment with the elders passing the cups with the directions not to drink yet. (Luke 22.7-20)

◇ Breaking matzo at the table heads and then passing the basket.

◇ Raising the cup and drinking after the second reading (Matthew 26-29).

◇ Offering reading and passing the baskets

◇ Prayer time

◇ Closing Song

**** Families whose last names begin with A-K please bring a main dish and vegetable ****

**** Families whose last names begin with L-Z please bring a side and a dessert ****

By the way—this would be a great service to invite friends and guests to attend.



The Word of Truth



November 6	1ST CENTURY WORSHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY	
November 13	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>Fan or Follower?</i>
November 20	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>The Open Invitation</i>
November 27	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>Choosing Intimacy</i>
December 4	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>The Comfortable Cross</i>
December 11	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>More Than Rules</i>
December 18	not a fan. completely. committed. follower.	<i>Is Jesus Enough?</i>
December 25	CHRISTMAS DAY	
January 1	GUEST SPEAKER	<i>(Jack is on vacation)</i>



Honored, humbled, and appreciated clear to the bone (that's deep!). That's how Denise and I felt about Pastor Appreciation Sunday. What an amazing family we have here at Community Christian Church. We can ask for or seek none better than you all. Thanks so much for the outpouring of love and friendship. Thank you for all the gifts—especially the 1/2 of beef! That is a marvelous (and very useful) gift. Thank you doesn't seem to be enough—but that's the best we can do. We look forward to each day of being a continuing part of this loving fellowship as long as God allows us.



THE NATURE OF BIBLICAL FAITH

Philosopher Nicholas Beale and scientist John Polkinghorne use the following story to illustrate the nature of biblical faith:

A philosopher, a scientist and a simple man—none of whom could swim—were trapped in a cove with sheer cliff faces. They split up, but the tide kept coming in. Rescuers lowered a rope with a safety harness. The philosopher said, *“Ah, this looks like a rope, but I might be mistaken—it could be wishful thinking or an illusion.”* So he didn't attach himself, and he was drowned.

The scientist said, *“Ah, this is an 11 mm polyester rope with a breaking strain of 2800 kg. It conforms to the MR 10-81 standard,”* and then proceeded to give an exhaustive, and entirely correct, analysis of the rope's physical and chemical properties; but he didn't attach himself, and he was drowned.

The simple man said, *“Ah, I'm not sure if it's a rope or a python tail, but it's my only chance, so I'm grabbing it and holding on with my whole life.”* He was saved.

Of course other things being equal, it is better to have an enlightened faith in God than an unenlightened faith, but mere intellectual understanding that does not lead to trust and action is not what God is after.

not a fan.

COMPLETELY. COMMITTED. FOLLOWER.

follower's journal

“not a fan” is the new sermon series that starts November 13th. Jesus issued a compelling and challenging invitation to follow Him. He's not interested in mere fans. He doesn't want enthusiastic admirers. He wants completely committed followers.

It costs little to be a fan; it costs everything to be a follower. Jesus commands His followers to take up their crosses daily. There is a follower's journal available as a companion resource to the “not a fan” sermon series. This thought provoking 42 day devotional is designed to challenge you and grow you on your journey from fan to follower.

If you want a copy—please sign the list on the bulletin board and we will order them for you. The cost is \$10.00 each and will be available before November 13th.

not a fan.

COMPLETELY. COMMITTED. FOLLOWER.

the movie

The *not a fan* Movie, “**A Follower's Story**” will be shown in our auditorium on **Wednesday evening November 9th at 7 PM on the big screen.**

The *not a fan* Movie, “**A Follower's Story**” is an adaptation of the original 6-episode DVD series to a full-length feature film. The movie includes scenes from the original study, as well as teaching by Kyle Idleman.

Follow the journey of Eric Nelson, a man leading a compartmentalized triple life as a pleasure-seeking rebel, a cutthroat corporate executive, and a nominal Christian. But when confronted with a near death experience, Eric embarks on a spiritual journey that transforms his commitment to Jesus Christ and tests the faith of his friends and family.

We encourage everyone to attend this family friendly, thought provoking, challenging film.