

Can We Be New Testament Christians Today?

- Introduction:
1. This quarter we are going to talk about the church of Christ.
 - a. Its nature.
 - b. Its uniqueness.
 - c. Its authority.
 - d. Its mission.
 - e. Its organization.
 - f. Its worship.
 2. Sometimes simple questions can be quite difficult to answer due to the influence of our historical and cultural setting.
 3. For example.
 - a. The Book of Knowledge - 1912.
 - b. That answer is a far cry from how one would answer today.
 4. Likewise, to ask the question, "Can we be New Testament Christians today?" or "Can we simply be the church we read about in the Bible today?" would be difficult for some to answer.
 - a. The reason is that all they have ever known of Christianity is a branded, sectarian, denominational arrangement
 - b. But what exists today bears very little resemblance to what existed in the first century.
 5. Therefore to answer this question, we have to broaden our perspective beyond our personal experience and return to Scripture for an answer.

I. Can We Be N.T. Christians Today

- A. The answer is yes!
- B. There is no reason why one living in the 21st century cannot be a N.T. Christian.
- C. If we believe what they believed, practiced what they practiced, then why wouldn't we be what they were?
- D. Grandmother's bread illustration.
- E. God has given us his revelation (2 Timothy 3:16-17), yet men have tweaked it to their own liking (2 Timothy 4:3-4) and today we are the recipients of nearly 2000 years worth of tweaks.
- F. Ills. of Coins.
- G. Going back to the pattern is really the answer.

II. Steps to Being a N.T. Christian

- A. Acknowledge the authority of Scripture.
 1. (Matthew 18:8-9) We cannot elevate tradition to the level of Scripture.
 2. Shrink from presumptuous sin (1 Sam. 13:8-14).
 3. (1 Peter 4:11) BCV.
 4. (Romans 4:3) What does the Scriptures say?
 5. Can the Bible be understood?

- a. If not, it's an indictment against God (1 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - b. It will be our judge (John 12:48) Surely he then expects us to understand it.
 - c. (Eph. 5:17) Understand what the will of the Lord is.
 - d. (John 8:32; 7:17) We can know the truth.
 - e. Disagreements aren't over what the Bible says, but what men say (Acts 2:38).
- B. We Must Be In Christ
1. What is a Christian.
 2. A Christian is one who is of Christ.
 - a. (1 Cor. 1:12-13).
 - b. (Romans 6:3; Gal. 3:27).
 3. It's not enough to be a follower or an admirer, or to be like him...we must be in him.
 4. Sad reality (Matthew 7:13-14, 21-23).
- C. We Must Reject Denominationalism
1. Division is sinful (1 Cor 1:10; John 17:20-21; Eph. 4:4; Matt. 16:18).
 2. A denomination is any religious body larger than a local church while at the same time, smaller than the universal church. No such organization exists in Scripture.
 3. We must diligently seek (Heb. 11:6).