

**CHRISTIAN ONLY,
BUT NOT THE ONLY CHRISTIANS**

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

I have been asked many times if we of the "Christian Church" and the "Church Of Christ" teach that we are the only people going to heaven. In fact, in one of my articles I plainly state that we are Christians only, but not the only Christians. This comment has frightened some of the brethren.

Please allow me to explain my comment briefly. I truly believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and it needs to be believed and obeyed, as far as a person understands it.

In **Acts 18:24-26** A Jew named Apoll^os, a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great ferv^or and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptis^om of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. Now, here is an example of a Christian helping a religious person to understand the Scripture^s more completely.

I contend that there are many religious people in various churches who believe the Bible, pray regularly, yet have not understood that they need to be obedient to the Lord by being immersed for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:38**). It is the Christian's responsibility to teach them. However, this must be done in the spirit of love and kindness. Yet, many make the mistake of ridiculing them and condemning them instead of working with them and teaching the Scriptures.

It is God's Call to say whether or not this person is a Christian or not and whether he ends up in heaven or hell. Recall what Jesus said about judging one another. May we be good students of the Word and allow Jesus who knows all hearts to make that judgment. Let us never be so "heavenly minded that we are to earthly good". In other words we shouldn't have a holier than thou attitude toward others.

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We have the Scriptures to lead us. May we try to understand and obey them. May we never forget that if one is not taught the truth, he will believe a lie. I contend that many lies have been started in the realm of religion. Some of these do not amount to much and others do. Such is the case on how one is saved. I disagree with the commonly used "**Sinners' Prayer**". That is - admit you are a sinner and pray to the Lord to forgive you, and He will. **This does not mention the need to repent and confess Christ, and be immersed, and live a Christian life, which involves being a faithful church member.**

Under Christianity (The religion of Christ) there are many things that His followers agree on. However, division among Christ's followers has resulted into hundreds of denominations. Many of them have slight differences and others are miles apart. Churches of the "Restoration Movement" (Churches Of Christ and Christian Churches) were started by people who desired to fulfill Jesus' prayer for unity among His followers (John 17:21-23). However, some seem to think they are the only Christians. Whereas, others believe they are Christians only, but not the only Christians. They say, "**Let God do the judging, it is 'His Call.'**"

Some do not want to have anything to do with other Christian faiths. However, if we stick with only "Restoration Movement" books, videos, DVD's, singers, speakers, then we are limiting ourselves, and often cheating ourselves. **I in no way am endorsing that we have interdenominational gatherings.** However, can we not learn from someone who has excelled in a particular field, without surrendering to their erroneous ways in some areas. May the Lord have His way in helping us to see the need to leave all the judging up to Him.

Plainly, don't get short changed. Let's be ready to meet our Maker. The Bible (in Acts) teaches that to avoid hell and gain heaven - one must:

- 1) Believe In Jesus As Savior (16:31)
- 2) Repent Of Sins (17:30)
- 3) Confess Christ Audibly (8:37)
- 4) Be Baptized In Water (2:38)
- 5) Live A Christian Life (14:22)
- 6) Be Active In the Church (2:47)

KYOWVA Evangelistic Association
1541 S. 7th Street * Ironton, OH 45638
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