

# **Christians Only, But Not The Only Christians**

**Glenn Bourne**

Whether you are assigned a topic or a text, it is important to know the context. Context is important in all communication. A person may be quoted accurately, yet be totally misunderstood because the context in which the statement was made is not known. Some Bible verses are misunderstood because they are not seen in the correct context. We open the door for misunderstanding when we fail to ask certain basic questions: Who said this? To whom did they say this? When did they say this? What were the circumstances under which this was said?

Christians only, but not the only Christians, is a topic assigned in the context of the Restoration Movement. The Restoration Movement seeks to restore the New Testament church and Christianity as it was practiced by the apostles and revealed to us in God's word. It is with this in mind that references will be made to the Scriptures and to Restoration leaders in this message.

Those who plan programs may be pleasantly surprised or bitterly disappointed in the way the assigned topics are handled. You may anticipate being disappointed when the speaker begins by informing you that he has spoken on this subject many times but never with this topic.

I know what it is like to misunderstand an assigned topic.

Several years ago I received a hand-written letter inviting me to speak for a missionary rally. The one writing the letter must have received the same grade in penmanship that I did. I had great difficulty reading his writing as I often do when trying to understand what I wrote just a few days earlier. I finally concluded that the topic was "The Demetrius of Missions." Though it seemed like an odd topic, I assumed that he probably wanted me to develop this topic using 3 John where we are introduced to Gaius, who was a strong supporter of missions; Diotrephese, who strongly opposed missions; and Demetrius, who was a missionary. When I arrived for the rally and was handed a bulletin I looked to see when I was scheduled to speak. It was at that moment I discovered that my assigned topic was "The Dimensions of

Missions.” I immediately apologized to the preacher for misunderstanding my assignment, but being very gracious he told me to preach what I had prepared.

My concern on this occasion is not understanding the topic but understanding the choice of a speaker to address this topic.

I do not know all the persons, places or circumstances that have prompted these words to be uttered. I do know these words have special meaning to those of us who are a part of the Restoration Movement. Because this gathering is sponsored by the Christian Restoration Association and attended by those who are concerned to bring about the unity of all God’s people for which Christ prayed, it is my responsibility to clarify and emphasize the truth expressed in these seven words: Christians only, but not the only Christians.

Three words will guide our study — clarification, comparison, and challenge.

## **I. CLARIFICATION**

Words only have meaning when you know what is in the mind of the person using those words. Do you remember the first time someone said, “I dig” and they didn’t have a spade or shovel in their hand. How did “I dig” come to mean “I understand” or “I get it”? Do you remember when somebody expressed their excitement over what they had just heard by saying “That’s tough”? When you told them there was nothing hard about it, they explained “I mean that’s cool”? You knew the temperature had nothing to do with it and it dawned on you that words mean different things to different people.

In his journal, “Mission Messenger,” Carl Ketcherside stated that the motto “love conquers all” was used before the time of Christ by the Romans. He then asked the question, “Do you agree or disagree?” Be careful before you answer. If your understanding of the word “love” is the same as was in the mind of the Romans, as a Christian you would have to disagree. In the mind of the Romans love was defined by emotions influenced by circumstances. However, if you give a Christian meaning to the word “love” as Paul did in Romans 8:35, “*Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*,” then you

would agree that “love conquers all.”

How many misunderstand 1 Thessalonians 4:15 when they read the word “*prevent*” in the King James Version. The same word in the New American Standard Version is “*precede*.” In 1611 the word “*prevent*” meant “to go before,” but that’s not the way we use the word today

A few years ago a man responded to the gospel invitation to place his membership with the local Church of Christ. When asked if he had been baptized he answered “Yes.” He was received into the fellowship of the congregation. Several years later he was asked if he would be willing to serve as an elder. His response shocked the people. He said, “I thought you had to be immersed to be an elder.” He had been sprinkled but not immersed. It was some time after he became a member of the congregation that he learned the meaning of the word baptism as used in the Bible is not sprinkling.

We cannot assume that others will understand what we say until they know what is in our mind when we say it.

Who are Christians? What makes one a Christian only? What is the difference between a Christian only and an only Christian?

A few years ago a church planter in New England encountered difficulty in securing advertising space in the “yellow pages.” When he gave the name, address, and phone number of the church for the ad he was asked to identify the kind of Christian church. He replied that we are just a Christian church but the one with whom he was speaking didn’t understand that concept. In her mind all churches are Christian.

The news media uses the word Christian in such a broad way that the biblical meaning is lost in the minds of many who hear and use the word.

Judgment Day will likely be a day of surprises. Those who thought they could serve two masters will be surprised to learn that’s not true. Jesus said, “*No one can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve God and wealth*” (Matthew 6:24). Those who thought everyone would be saved will be surprised to learn that many followed the way that leads to destruction and

only a few followed the way that leads to life (Matthew 6:13,14).

Perhaps the greatest surprise will come to those who thought they were saved only to learn that they are lost. *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’”* (Matthew 6:21-23).

Who are Christians in the biblical sense of the word? Though the topic speaks of Christians plural we must understand this individually as well as collectively. The name “Christian” occurs three times in the New Testament — Acts 11:26 *“and when he (Barnabas) had found him (Paul), he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”* Acts 26:28 *“Agrippa replied to Paul, ‘In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.’”* 1 Peter 4:16 *“but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.”*

*We are first introduced to the name “Christian” in Antioch located in Syria.* As a result of the persecution and death of Stephen some followers of Jesus were scattered to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch. They spoke the word of God only to Jews (Acts 11:19). At this time men of Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch and began to share their faith with the Greeks. The Lord was pleased and blessed their evangelistic effort with many believers (Acts 11:20-21). When the church in Jerusalem learned what was happening in Antioch they sent Barnabas to Antioch where He witnessed the grace of God at work. He rejoiced in what he saw happening and encouraged the believers to remain true to the Lord. Because the work was thriving it became apparent that more evangelists were needed, so Barnabas left for Tarsus to look for Saul. When he found him, he brought him to Antioch where the two of them worked together for a year preaching and teaching (Acts 11:23-26).

It was at this time that *“the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”* Prior to this time the followers of Christ were designated as disciples,

believers, saints, witnesses, and brethren. Each of these designations was and is appropriate and accurate in describing the members of the body of Christ.

*Though there are differences about how the name Christian came to be applied to those who follow Jesus, it was obviously important to the Holy Spirit for us to be informed of when and where this name began to be used. Some believe that pagans were the first to call Jesus' disciples Christians. Those who take this position are just guessing, offering no proof. J. W. McGarvey called such guesses "groundless." Some believe that the new name prophesied in Isaiah 62:2 finds its fulfillment in Acts 11:26. Others question that. Comparing Scripture with Scripture and carefully studying the Greek text has led to the conclusion that God called the disciples Christians through Paul and Barnabas.*

The accuracy of referring to the disciples as Christians is not questioned, for this word clearly defines those who are committed to Christ. Some have suggested the meaning of the word Christian is explained by understanding the suffix attached to the word Christ. Christ is everything. The "ian" suffix means "I am nothing."

**The second time we read the name Christian is when it was** used by Agrippa in response to the testimony of Paul when he said, "*King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do.*" 28) *Agrippa replied to Paul, 'In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.'* 29) *And Paul said, 'I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains'"* (Acts 26:27-29).

There is not agreement on the meaning of Agrippa's answer to Paul. Was he being sarcastic or was he sincerely admitting the effectiveness of Paul's testimony? Apparently the name Christian had become widely used by this time. What is clear is the fact that Agrippa saw Paul in his relationship with Jesus. Paul seized the opportunity to try again to persuade him to become a Christian.

**The third and final time we read the name Christian is in the** context of

suffering for Christ. Peter, addressing those “*who are chosen*” of God, wrote, “*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13) but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation, 14) If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15) Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16) but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*” (1 Peter 4:12-16)

That Christians will suffer for their faith is not in question. Jesus made that clear. In fact, if there is no suffering then one’s relationship with Christ may be cause for concern. Suffering for the Christian should be viewed as a time for rejoicing. “*Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you*” (Matthew 5:11-12).

The word “Christian” is used by Peter in the context of suffering, not being ashamed, and as a name with which to glorify God. It concerns me to see the name Christian being exchanged for something more trendy.

**The name Christian identifies those who belong to Christ and** are members of the body of Christ. Christians are those whose faith in Christ has caused them to repent of their sins and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins that they might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. “*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ*” (Galatians 3:26-27). This is the Biblical criteria for determining what makes one a Christian. A Christian is not determined by status, race, culture or by being born into the right family, but by faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Though the Word of God is clear in answering the question, “*What must I do to be saved?*” there are those who want to make some exceptions. They usually begin with a hypothetical situation in which a man died before he was

baptized. Of course he fully intended to be baptized. Surely his premature death will exempt him from having to be baptized. They wait for my response which is “God is God and I’m not.” God can do whatever he wants to do, but I can’t. I dare not depart from God’s will as He has revealed **it in His word. I must faithfully hold firm to the faith which was** once for all delivered to the saints. God’s word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path. I am called upon to walk a straight line following the leading of the Spirit as revealed in the Bible. Hear again the words of Jesus as recorded in John 12:47,48 *“If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48) He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”* We do well to honor these words of Jesus which underscore the eternal consequences of how we handle the word of truth.

When one claims to be a Christian who has not repented and been immersed into Christ, I am not at liberty to call them a Christian.

Why do we call ourselves Christians only? The word only is explained in light of the comparison that is made in the slogan: “Christians only but not the only Christians.” So we move from clarifying the meaning of Christians to comparing Christians with Christians.

## **II. COMPARISON**

**In the context of the Restoration Movement we are Christians** only when compared with Christians who choose to believe that just being a Christian is not enough. A further distinction is required, not one authorized by God but one made by man, such as denominational creeds and denominational names. Yet every invention of man proves divisive whereas just being a Christian only provides the means whereby all God’s people can be united.

Galatians 2:20 is a Biblical description of Paul who serves as a model of what it means to be a Christian only. *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up*

*for me.*” In describing himself as a Christian only he offers a hint of who others are including the one who is a Christian, but not a Christian only.

**First, there are those who are not Christians and don't claim to be.** They are the ones who say, “Not Christ, but I.” They want nothing to do with God. These people suppress the truth in unrighteousness. God calls them fools.

Second, There are those who acknowledge that there is a God and that Jesus is God's Son but are unwilling to submit their lives to Him. They are in the category of “I and Christ.” If and when Christ is acknowledged in their life it is only after they have done what they wanted to do. They are slaves to themselves, not Christ.

Third, there are those who call themselves Christians, but are unwilling to surrender fully to the Lord's will. They have other loyalties that are important to them such as denominational names, organizations, creeds, and traditions. They know that they are to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, but they struggle with self-denial. Too many times they lean on their own understanding rather than trust in God. They are in the category of “Christ and I.” They still have an “I” problem.

**Fourth are Christians who are Christians only both in the Biblical sense and also in the way the Restoration Movement calls upon Christians to be.** They are in the category of “Not I but Christ.” They take seriously the words of Jesus when He said *“if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (Matthew 16:24- 26). Jesus express it another way in Luke 14:26-27 *“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”*

***Christians only are those who have been buried with Christ*** through baptism into death (Romans 6:4a) and *“live by faith in the Son of God”*

(Galatians 2:20b), ever pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

Now let me speak more to the point of Christians only in the context of the Restoration Movement by citing words from the pioneers in this movement who saw an important difference between Christians only and those they recognized as Christians but not Christians only.

***In 1862, Benjamin Franklin, editor of the American Christian Review*** stated: “There are individuals among the sects who are not sectarians, or who are more than sectarians--they are Christians; or persons who have believed the gospel, submitted to it, and in spite of the leaders, been constituted Christians according to the Scriptures.” Later he wrote, “That there are Christians among the sects, a people of God in Babylon, we have believed and admitted, and committed to print many years ago, and we believe the same now. That these have a right to commune, and, enjoy in common with all Christians, all the blessings of the house of the Lord, we presume is not doubted by any brother.”

In 1864, Moses Lard wrote in “Have We Become a Sect?” “Against the individual members of these parties we cannot have even one unkind feeling. Many of them we regard as true Christians, and love them sincerely. But as they occupy a place in bodies holding traditional and other unsanctioned tenets, holding practices unknown to the Bible, and supporting humanly imposed names, we must tell them plainly that they stand on apostate ground.”

***David Lipscomb, editor of the Gospel Advocate, wrote in his*** book “Questions Answered”: “There are some in sectarian churches who will obey God and follow Him in spite of the churches in which they find themselves. As examples, there are persons in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches who are baptized to obey God rather than to please the sects. In this they rise above the party spirit, despite the parties in which they find themselves. They ought to get out of the sectarian churches, but they see so much sectarianism in the non-sectarian churches that they think they are all alike.”

Jesse Sewell, replying to the accusation that we claim to be the only Christians in the world, said: “We do not; we claim to be Christians only, and our plea is that all believers should be Christians only, and not denominational Christians.”

*Thomas Campbell recognized Christians who were affiliated* with various partisan titles. He wrote, “We speak to all our Christian brethren, however diversified by professional epithets, those accidental distinctions which have unhappily and unscripturally diversified the professing world. By our Christian brethren, then, we mean the very same description of character addressed in our Declaration published at Washington, Pa., in the year **1809--namely, ‘All that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,** throughout the churches.’ If there were none such at that time throughout the churches, then Christianity was dead and gone. And if there be none such at present within the same limits, it still continues extinct.”

In the “Declaration and Address” Thomas Campbell proposed: “That the church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures, and that manifest the same by their tempers and conduct, and none else, as none else can be truly and properly called Christians.”

*Isaac Errett in his tract “Our Position” wrote, “The Church of Christ--not sects--is a Divine institution. We do not recognize sects, with sectarian names and symbols and terms of fellowship, as branches of the Church of Christ but as unscriptural and anti-scriptural and therefore to be abandoned for the One Church of God which the New Testament reveals. That God has a people among these sects, we believe; call on them to come out from all party organizations, to renounce all party names and party tests, and seek only for Christian union and fellowship according to apostolic teaching. . . . It will thus be seen that our differential character is found not in the advocacy of new doctrines or practices, but in rejecting that which has been added to the original simple faith and practices of the Church of God. Could all return to this, it would not only end many unhappy strifes and unite forces now*

scattered and wasted, but would revive the spirituality and enthusiasm of the early Church; as we should no longer need, as in the weakness of sectism, to cater to the world's fashions and follies to maintain a precarious existence. Zion could again put on her beautiful garments and shine in the light of God, and go out in resistless strength to the conquest of the world."

***These statements by Restoration leaders reflect the same concern*** Paul had as illustrated in the first chapter of I Corinthians. Paul addressed his first letter to the church in Corinth with these words: "*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:*" (1:2). In verse ten Paul wrote, "*Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" This was Paul's exhortation for the Corinthian Christians to be Christians only.

He then described those who are Christians but not Christians only in verses 12-13 "*Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I of Apollos,' and 'I of Cephas,' and 'I of Christ.'*" 13) *Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*" Paul identified these divisions among the Christians in the church in Corinth as quarrels (verse 11).

***One thing is obvious: names divided the members of the church.*** To correct this Paul asked, "*Has Christ been divided?*" Is Christ the leader of a party on a par with other party leaders? Obviously not. Christ is properly honored only when He is recognized as the only Head and Leader of the church.

To put Christ on a par with Paul, Apollos, or Cephas is to ***make the same mistake that Peter almost made on the Mount of Transfiguration.*** Earlier Peter had made the good confession in Caesarea Philippi. What he said was true, for God had revealed it to him. However, his understanding of what he had said was lacking. Peter, James, and John were taken by Jesus to a high mountain where Jesus was transfigured and was seen in the company with Moses and Elijah. Peter was impressed and suggested that they build three

tabernacles, one for each of them. To do so would suggest that the three of them were in the same category. To correct this misunderstanding God said, “*This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!*” (Matthew 17:5b). The disciples were terrified and fell down to the ground. When they opened their eyes they saw Jesus only. Moses and Elijah were gone. God’s object lesson on this occasion magnified the supremacy and uniqueness of Christ who is never understood in the category of men, but rather as the only God-Man!

Paul was urging the Corinthians to be Christians only and avoid party names which divide.

***Consider the letters to the seven churches in Asia. The Ephesians*** left their first love (Rev. 2:4). In Pergamum some held to the teaching of Balaam and others to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. In Thyatira some were led into immoral practices by tolerating a false prophetess. The Lord warned them of the serious consequences of their sin and called them to repentance urging them to be overcomers, meaning that they were to maintain their loyalty to Christ in all things. In these churches were Christians but they weren’t all Christians only.

***Christians only are those who reject any and everything that*** divides the body of Christ. In his book “Christians Only,” James DeForest Murch wrote: “It was only selfish insistence on other loyalties, secondary considerations, or human interpretations of divine truth, that led to the creation of parties and sects. The tyranny which grew out of creedal controversies broke this essential unity and put the emphasis upon doctrines instead of the person of Christ. If these ‘middle walls of partition’ are to be removed, there must, first of all, be a return to a renewed commitment to Christ as God and Savior.”

Frederick D. Kershner wrote, “False names are apt to lead to false ideas of things. Beyond any question, the denominational terminology of modern Christendom has largely aided the progress of sectarian divisions. The denominational names help to perpetuate and keep alive the denominational ideas. Moreover, names which emphasize only partial features of the gospel are inadequate and misleading.”

Christians only, but not the only Christians, is a challenge for each of us to examine ourselves to make sure we are not carrying baggage that hinders the unity for which Christ prayed in order that the world might know Christ through us. *“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?”* (II Corinthians 13:5). Christians only will be effective in the ministry of uniting all Christians only when those who consider themselves Christians only are really **Christians only**. *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall”* (1 Corinthians 10:12).

With the clarification of Christians only and the comparison of Christians who identify themselves with denominational distinctions we are left with the challenge to do what we can to unite all Christians.

### III. CHALLENGE

***On the night of His betrayal before the day of His crucifixion*** Jesus prayed for His disciples, *“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth”* (John 17:17) and then He added this further request; *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me”* (John 17:20-21).

This prayer was prayed at a very important moment in history. Jesus was nearing the end of His earthly ministry and was about to finish what He had come to earth to do so that lost mankind might be redeemed. His concern was that God be glorified and that His earthly ministry would not have been in vain.

Jesus prayed for Himself, for His disciples, and for all those who believe in Jesus because they have heard the good news of His death, burial, and resurrection. This means that you and I were in His thoughts when He prayed to the Father. I can think of no more important item on our agenda than to do

all within our power to bring an answer to His prayer insofar as we are able to do so.

Following Christ's resurrection, the concern of His prayer was still on His mind and was expressed in what we call the great commission. Luke recorded it this way: *"Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem"* (Luke 24:46-47). It was necessary for Jesus to die, be buried and rise again. It is equally necessary that the world hear this good news that is God's power to save those lost in sin.

Jesus knew that the good news would be hindered if the trumpet sound was not clear. He prayed that all Christians would be united so that when the gospel is preached the message will not be garbled and the people hearing will believe.

Paul gives the detail of the challenge we face in Ephesians 4:1-6 *"Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance for one another in love, 3) being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4) There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6) one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all."* Observe that he called for dispositional unity and then for doctrinal unity. Both are essential.

There is but one church — the body and bride of Christ! The church is built on the *"foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21) in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, 22) in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit"* (Ephesians 2:20-22). *"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14) For the body is not one member, but many"* (1 Corinthians 12:13-14).

We have but one message to proclaim to all mankind. *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9) As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!”* (Galatians 1:8-9).

When Carl Ketcherside was asked “What do you consider to be our most serious problem today?” he answered, “I have no hesitancy in saying it is the traditional misapplication of the Scriptures to justify division in the family of God. When we interpret the written word to deny and defeat the prayer and purpose of the Living Word, there is something wrong with our interpretation.”

Believers who have repented of their sins, confessed their faith in Christ, and have been immersed into Christ would contribute significantly to the unity for which Christ prayed if they would cease to be identified with any sectarian or denominational group by choosing to be Christians only.

God revealed Himself and His will in His Son. He is the example in whose steps we are to follow. Jesus made it clear that He only said and did what His Father willed for Him to say and do. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to bring to their remembrance all Jesus said and did. They in turn were to share this message with the world. The message they preached was the message the Holy Spirit gave to the apostles and prophets who in turn put it in writing so that we, today, might prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Only as we cease being conformed to the world and become transformed by the renewing of our minds will we be able to know and prove the will of God in all we say and do. Our challenge is to be the people God wants us to be, living to the praise of His glory. It is only when we are Christians only that we will be effective in urging others to cast aside all their identifications and traditions that divide, and bring about the unity for which Christ prayed.

When the lost see that Christians are one, they will more likely be won. When the unity for which Christ prayed becomes a reality, the topic for discussion will no longer be “Christians only, but not the only Christians;” it

will be simply “Christians Only!” May God help us to make this a reality.  
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