

December 30, 2004

Dear brethren of the NASU Steering Committee:

Greetings in the Master's Name,

We, the brethren of the Richmond Christadelphian Forest Hill Ecclesia, do not accept NASU as a legitimate vehicle for re-uniting the Amended and Unamended Christadelphian fellowships, and therefore, cannot endorse the plan that you propose. We are not opposed to brethren striving for unity, but believe that NASU, from the beginning, has not properly represented the community on either side of the question.

At this point in time, seeing that a significant number of Unamended Ecclesias have already publicly announced their opposition to NASU, it is obvious that NASU cannot fully accomplish its goal, but rather, will become an instrument of further division in the body, in essence forming a "third fellowship" or inter-ecclesial league that is divided from those Ecclesias not having endorsed the process on either side.

Furthermore, we do not recognize the NASU committee as having any authority or jurisdiction to legislate these matters regarding fellowship and inter-ecclesial relations among Christadelphians. Additionally, the NASU committee has no right to request "statistics" as to whom in each respective ecclesia is for, or who is against NASU. Such interfering in the internal affairs of other Ecclesias is tantamount to sowing discord among brethren that would otherwise meet in harmony. Such things the LORD hates (Proverbs 6:19).

In the Ecclesial Guide, a stern warning is given by Bro. Roberts against extra- ecclesial organizations, such as, NASU, and others that circumvent the authority of the ecclesia, and in some cases, seek to relieve ecclesial and individual members of responsibility for carrying out their duties in the LORD's vineyard.

*"Ecclesial independence should be guarded with great jealousy... To form 'unions' or 'societies' of ecclesias, in which the delegates should frame laws for the individual ecclesias, would be to lay the foundation of a collective despotism which would interfere with the free growth and the true objects of ecclesial life. Such collective machineries create fictitious importances, which tend to suffocate the truth. All ecclesiastical history illustrates this. These inter-ecclesial leagues do rob ecclesias of independence. Collective resolutions can be adopted by participating ecclesias which intimidate dissenting parties. Some, to the detriment of truth may participate in inter-ecclesial arrangements only to escape intimidation. Given time, the power vested in inter-ecclesial groups (by precedent) could be used for "collective despotisms".*

The NASU process continues to by-pass the principle of ecclesial autonomy and ecclesial authority by stirring up the individual members through mass mailings of its continuing

agenda, hence “playing both sides of the fence” as it were. Based upon the information requested in the last mailing (that we have no intention of providing) it is obvious that the NASU Committee’s objective is not about unity of the brotherhood, but that it is seeking to create the widest group of ecclesias possible, or parts of ecclesias severed off from their brethren, and form a third fellowship, and that at such time it is highly in doubt that you will consider any dissenters as your brethren.

We, as an ecclesia dedicated to uphold the principles of Christ, will not take part in this divisive process.

For the Richmond Christadelphian Forest Hill Ecclesia,

In Israel’s Hope

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Calvin Dodl".

Calvin Dodl, Secretary

Copies: Unamended Ecclesias in North America