No. 8550

RESOLUTION CONCERNING REWRITING SCRIPTURE

The General Assembly did NOT ADOPT this resolution because of ambiguous wording, inaccurate treatment of inclusive language, and inadequate scriptural interpretation.

No. 8550

RESOLUTION CONCERNING REWRITING SCRIPTURE

WHEREAS, throughout the ages the Holy Scriptures have inspired and guided people of faith, and
WHEREAS, the lives of many martyrs were given in the struggle to preserve the Scriptures and to make them available to all the people, and
WHEREAS, during the entire history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) the Bible has been of paramount importance, and
WHEREAS, revising or censoring the work of any author to suit the preferences of the revisionist or censor is an unacceptable infringement upon the rights of that author, be he/she living or dead, and upon the rights of the readers, and
WHEREAS, the Division of Education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. has produced two volumes of "An Inclusive Language Lectionary," which rewrites portions of the Bible to make it fit into 20th century modes of thinking, and
WHEREAS, once the churches indicate acceptance of rewriting and censoring the Scripture, there are no limits to changes that persons might make to force the Bible to say what they want said, and
WHEREAS, the Bible, if understood in light of the customs of the times in which it was written, is amazingly inclusive of women and children and of persons of all races, and
WHEREAS, issues of inclusiveness should be dealt with in sermons, study sessions, and discussion groups rather than by such tampering with the Scripture as calling God "Our Father (and Mother)" and making the adult Jesus sound juvenile by referring to him as "Child of God" rather than Son of God,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, go on record as opposing the rewriting of Scripture, and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly encourage local congregations to study and discuss questions of inclusiveness and to continue to read the Scripture as translated with as much faithfulness to the most ancient manuscripts as possible, and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly ask representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the National Council of Churches to express the opposition of this Assembly to the rewriting of Scripture and to request that no money contributed by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be used to further the project of rewriting Scripture.

Diamond Springs Christian Church
Virginia Beach, Virginia

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly NOT ADOPT Resolution No. 8550 for the following reasons:

1. The phrase "rewriting Scripture" is ambiguous and could be construed to include new translations of original texts and paraphrases of scripture.
2. The resolution contains material that inaccurately reflects the intent and content of the Inclusive Language Lectionary.
3. The resolution fails to clarify significant issues concerning the translation of scripture. For example, some of the sexist terminology in many translations is an accident of modern English and is not inherent in the original language.

(Debate time 12 minutes)