New Apostolic Church International

umenism means approaching one another and talking together!

Oe

Castrop-Rauxel. Ecumenism means approaching one another and talking together. Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber made this position known at the end of a divine service for ministers on Sunday, 23.10.2005, which was transmitted from Castrop-Rauxel to the congregations of the District Churches of North Rhine-Westphalia and Northern Germany. He also went on to address changes in the doctrine of the New Apostolic Church.

Sunday, 23 October 2005: All ministers and their wives from the District Churches of North Rhine-Westphalia and Northern Germany were invited. For a summary of the divine service, please click here.

At the end of the service, Chief Apostle Leber addressed two special subjects: ecumenism and doctrinal change. On the subject of ecumenism, he said: "I strive to cultivate an open relationship with other Christian denominations on the basis of mutual respect. To this end, we as a church must approach other churches and talk to them." Talking together is important, noted the international leader of the New Apostolic Church. However, he was quick to add: "This endeavour will not affect or call into question the fundamentals of our faith. It is simply a matter of discussing and exchanging ideas with others."

In this regard, he is most concerned with "strengthening the Christian front, i.e. the totality of all Christianity." After all, he reasoned: "Christian fundamentals are quickly disappearing among the population. We must take this into account." For this reason, he seeks to emphasise commonalities and not dwell on divisive issues. Despite this, the New Apostolic Church will not take part in ecumenical divine services or common ministrations.

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber also took time to address the doctrinal changes of the last years. On this subject he said: "Divine truth is always absolute. That which comes from above never needs to be changed, however the Lord chooses to speak through people. That is and will remain the case." He explained that as human beings, we always understand God's will from our own perspective. Thus our understanding will be marked by our experiences and the circumstances of our time, said the chief apostle. As a result, we cannot deny the need for adaptation. He emphasised however: "This should not irritate anyone in their faith. The foundation remains unchanged."

At the same time, he expressed the thought that it is a very positive thing if the church also implements the changes that have been deemed necessary.

24 October 2005