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A Study of

# CHURCH HISTORY



**Cane Ridge Meeting House**

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# Preface

It is said that those who are ignorant of history tend to repeat it. While I do not know if that is always true, I do know that it is important to have a knowledge of church history.

I believe that one can make it to heaven without ever knowing many of the facts related in this study for all one needs to know in order to safely reach the eternal abode is the inspired word of God—its facts to be believed and its commands to be obeyed. At the same time, though, a study of the material found in these lessons will help one avoid many of the errors that have led others away from the Lord and cost them eternity. For, in reality, our study is not of church history, per se. Rather, it is mostly a study of the digressions that have plagued the cause of Christ down through the ages and how man struggled to overcome those apostasies.

This study is by no means exhaustive. There are many other sources for in-depth consideration on nearly every aspect of this work. Instead it is meant to be an overview of the events which have affected the religion of Christ from the first century unto this present day.

This material was first presented as a series of lectures at the Centerville Road church of Christ in Tallahassee, Florida, during the winter of 1997-1998. It has been published in the hope that it will help someone understand more about the true church, the one which is being built by and belongs to Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. (Matthew 16:18)

May God bless you in your studies.

*Gene Taylor*

# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	1
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	2
<b>Lesson One:</b> The Establishment of the Church .....	3
<b>Lesson Two:</b> The Church: Growth and Apostasy .....	5
<b>Lesson Three:</b> Internal and External Causes of Apostasy .....	9
<b>Lesson Four:</b> The Fruits of Apostasy .....	13
<b>Lesson Five:</b> The Reformation .....	17
<b>Lesson Six:</b> The Causes and Roots of the Restoration .....	22
<b>Lesson Seven:</b> Early Leaders of the Restoration in America .....	26
<b>Lesson Eight:</b> The Campbells and Walter Scott .....	30
<b>Lesson Nine:</b> The Convergence of the Stone and Campbell Movements .....	40
<b>Lesson Ten:</b> Cooperation Meetings and the Missionary Society .....	43
<b>Lesson Eleven:</b> Pacifism, the Civil War and the Instrumental Music Controversy .....	47
<b>Lesson Twelve:</b> Major Controversial Issues of the 20th Century .....	51
<b>Lesson Thirteen:</b> The Need for Continued Restoration .....	54

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# Lesson One:

## The Establishment of the Church

### I. The Importance of Knowing When the Church Began

- A. It is a matter of identity so that one may be able to distinguish it from Old Testament agencies and from religious institutions of modern human origin.
- B. In order to identify its laws so that one may see when the law governing the church of God went into effect.

### II. The Church Was Foreshadowed in the Old Testament

- A. The New Testament speaks of those things in the Old Law which were “copies” and “shadows” of “the good things to come.” (Heb. 9:11, 23; 10:1)
- B. The church was not in existence in Old Testament days. Acts 7:38 refers to the host of Jews who were in the wilderness not to the church built by Jesus Christ. (Matt. 16:18)
- C. Old Testament worthies desired to see its time. (1 Pet. 1:10-12)

### III. The Establishment of the Church Is a Subject of Prophecy

- A. Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-2 both prophesy of its beginning. It was to be established:
  - 1. In Jerusalem.
  - 2. In the “last days.” The age ushered in by the New Testament is the “last days.” (Heb. 1:1-2; Acts 2:16-17).
- B. The prophetic dream of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (604-562 B.C.), indicated the time of its establishment. (Dan. 2:31-35)
  - 1. The four kingdoms of the vision.
    - a. Babylonian, the head of gold. The Babylonian Empire fell in 536 B.C.
    - b. Medo-Persian, the breasts and arms of silver. Established by Cyrus, king of Persia (538-530 B.C.), it fell in 330 B.C.
    - c. Greek or Macedonian, the torso and thighs of brass. Formed by Alexander the Great in 336 B.C. after his father, Philip of Macedon, had laid the foundations for it, it was divided among Alexander’s generals after his death in 323 B.C.
    - d. Roman, the legs of iron and feet of iron and clay. It was established as a world power by Octavius Caesar in 30 B.C.
  - 2. “In the days of these kings” (v. 44), therefore, refers to the time of universal empires and “struck the image upon its feet” signifies the establishment of God’s eternal kingdom which would take place after the beginning of the Roman empire and during its existence.
  - 3. The New Testament begins its accounts while the Caesars still ruled the world.
    - a. “In those days John the Baptist came preaching.” (Matt. 3:1-2)
    - b. “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” (Luke 3:1-3)

4. The church was not established by John.
  - a. He preached that the kingdom was “at hand” or approaching. (Matt. 3:1-2)
  - b. He was not in the kingdom. (Matt. 11:11)

#### **IV. The Church Was Not Established During the Personal Ministry of Jesus**

- A. The church was yet in the future while Jesus was upon the earth.
- B. While Jesus was on the earth:
  1. The kingdom was “at hand.” (Mark 1:15; Matt. 10:7)
  2. The kingdom had “come near.” (Luke 10:9)
  3. He taught His disciples to pray for the coming of the kingdom. (Matt. 6:9-10)
  4. He promised to build His church. (Matt. 16:18)
  5. His disciples were not in the kingdom. (Matt. 18:1-3)
  6. He promised the kingdom would come in that generation. (Mark 9:1)

#### **V. The Beginning on the Pentecost Following the Ascension of Jesus**

- A. The kingdom was to begin and the law to go forth from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2:2-3; Luke 24:47)
  1. The law went forth from Jerusalem on the Pentecost following the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:37-38)
  2. That day of Pentecost was the beginning of Christ’s kingdom and church. (Acts 2:1-4; 11:15)
- B. The “power” is evidence the kingdom came on Pentecost.
  1. The kingdom was to come with power. (Mark 9:1)
  2. The power was to come with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8)
  3. The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4)
  4. Therefore, the kingdom came on Pentecost.
- C. The law going forth from Jerusalem is evidence the kingdom came on Pentecost.
  1. The law was to go forth from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2:2-3)
  2. The apostles were commissioned to preach (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16), but had been instructed to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come and guide them before beginning. (Luke 24:49)
  3. The Spirit came on Pentecost and the preaching of the Gospel, the law of the kingdom, began on Pentecost. (Acts 2:31-34, 36-38)
- D. After that Pentecost, both the church and kingdom were always spoken of as in existence. (Acts 2:47; 5:11; 8:1; 11:22; 13:1; 14:27; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9)

# Lesson Two:

## The Church: Growth and Apostasy

### I. The Reality of the Church

- A. In the city of Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after His ascension, Jesus established the church. Acts 2 records the activities that took place on that day and the prophecies which those activities fulfilled.
- B. Being originally designed by Jesus, the church is, therefore, divinely organized and constituted.
  1. Since Jesus is its head (Eph. 1:22) and chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:9-10), only the characteristics He has set forth for it in His supreme authority (Matt. 28:18) are approved of God.
  2. No authority has been given to any man, body of men, or ecclesiastical body to change any of its features.
- C. Identifying Christ's church.
  1. Designations.
    - a. House of God. (1 Tim. 3:15)
    - b. The body of Christ. (Col. 1:18, 24)
    - c. The "called out." (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:23-25)
    - d. The temple of God. (1 Cor. 3:9, 16-17; Eph. 2:19-22)
  2. Government and organization.
    - a. Jesus is the supreme ruler. (Col. 1:18)
    - b. Serving under Jesus were the Apostles whose ministry was perpetual through the inspired writings. Since that revelation is complete (1 Cor. 13:10; 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16), they have no successors (Eph. 4:11-16).
    - c. The sole collective functioning unit is the local congregation.
      - 1) Each congregation is free from ecclesiasticism, synods and councils and is independent and autonomous.
      - 2) The authority of the local congregation is vested in a plurality of elders (aka bishops, pastors, overseers). (Acts 14:23)
      - 3) Deacons are servants within the congregation who work in conjunction with the elders. (Phil. 1:1)
  3. Creed. Its creed is Christ. Its sole rule of faith and practice is the New Testament.
  4. Terms of admission. Obedience to those things which put one into Christ and grant remission of sins—faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

### II. The Growth of the Church

- A. Just prior to His ascension back to heaven, Jesus instructed His disciples to take His gospel to the whole world. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16)
  1. Beginning in Jerusalem, they were to take His message to "the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts 1:8)
  2. The apostles executed the commission with promptness and zeal, the rapid growth and influence of the church under their direction gives evidence of this fact.

- B. From its establishment as recorded in Acts 2 to the end of its recorded history in the New Testament, the church enjoyed phenomenal growth. According to the book of Acts:
1. Three thousand were added to it. (2:41)
  2. People were being “added daily” to it. (2:47)
  3. “Many...believed” and “the number of men came to be about five thousand.” (4:4)
  4. “And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.” (5:14)
  5. “The number of the disciples was multiplying.” (6:1)
  6. “Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (6:7)
  7. In Samaria, “And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip.” (8:6)
  8. “Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.” (9:31)
  9. In Joppa, “Many believed on the Lord.” (9:42)
  10. In Antioch, “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.” (11:21)
  11. The spread of the church among the Gentile world is seen in the preaching journeys and subsequent activities of the apostle Paul which begin in Acts 13. Its growth is such that by the time Paul writes the Colossian epistle, the influence of the gospel and the presence of the church is felt throughout all the known world. (Col. 1:23)
    - a. The book of Acts, along with numerous epistles, tells of churches in major cities and villages.
    - b. At the end of the first century, because of the work, commitment and loyalty of the Apostles and many other faithful Christians, the church stood strong in many parts of the world.

### III. The Beginning of Apostasy

- A. With the passing of the apostolic age, Christians gradually drifted into a state of apostasy.
1. Though the church was a united body for some time after its establishment, the passing of time found many of its members falling under the influence of false teachers and other factors resulting in general and widespread apostasy.
  2. Even in Apostolic days, the influence of Satan was at work trying to change the identity of the church. The Apostles saw this and foretold of its coming. (Acts 20:28-30; 2 Thes. 2:1-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; 2 Pet. 2:1-2)
    - a. That evil was already at work is evident from the fact that Apostolic writings referred to these conditions as fact and not as some remote development in the distant future.
    - b. “The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.” (2 Thes. 2:7)
      - 1) Corrupt teaching was already present but it was more of a “mystery,” i.e., it was hidden.
      - 2) It would not show itself until “he who now restrains” it would be “taken out of the way.”
    - c. Galatians 1:6-9 shows how quickly the influence of false teaching was being felt.

- B. The first great apostasy. Beginning in the 2nd century, a distinction was made among the elders of the churches.
1. Instead of retaining the New Testament pattern of a plurality of elders in every congregation, each of which had equal authority with his co-laborers, one elder in each church was chosen as the leader, or Bishop, and the others were called Presbyters.
  2. Later the presiding elder of a city church was considered more important than the elders of country churches and thus it was determined that a city Bishop could give instructions and rules to the elders of smaller churches. Such an idea continued to grow until the presiding elders of churches in the capitals of the world were given authority over all others.
  3. There were five leading Bishops, or Patriarchs as they were called. They lived in Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople.
  4. This was a gradual departure from the simple New Testament pattern where by the close of the third century, there were five leading Bishops who lived in the capital cities of the world over the “church.”
- C. Doctrines which contributed to apostasy.
1. Asceticism. Rigid self-discipline by which the spirit was able to overcome the flesh.
    - a. It held the idea that the more one suffered and denied himself, the nearer he was to God.
    - b. This doctrine led to the building of monasteries where monks lived isolated from the world.
    - c. Other forms of asceticism were fastings, poverty, and later celibacy.
  2. Montanism. Taught during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, Tertullian, who was converted to Christianity in 201 or 202, was said to be its leader.
    - a. Montanists taught the possibility of miracles, revelations, prophecies, gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc.
    - b. Montanists were among the first to teach the theory of a 1000 year reign of Christ upon the earth.
    - c. Montanists were also strong believers in asceticism.
  3. Ebionism. This was a doctrine held by Jewish Christians.
    - a. Being Jews, they held to the Old Testament and considered themselves God’s chosen people and better than the Gentiles.
    - b. Two parties held this belief.
      - 1) One, known as the moderate ones, was charitable to the Gentiles and considered them members of the church.
      - 2) The other group was more rigid and would have no fellowship with the Gentiles.
    - c. Ebionists considered Christ a prophet but not the Son of God.
    - d. They considered the command of fleshly circumcision still binding as well as other parts of the Law of Moses.
    - e. Much of the trouble Paul and the churches he established experienced was because of the doctrines of ebionism.
  4. Gnosticism. This doctrine was a combination of Christianity and paganism.
    - a. It was an attempt to answer the origin of God, the world, etc., and to explain the existence of good and evil.
    - b. According to gnosticism, all matter is evil, hence it and God are opposed to each other.
    - c. This doctrine was popular in the 2nd century but by the 6th century it had practically disappeared.



#### **IV. The Nicean Creed**

- A. Around the year 318, there arose a controversy in Alexandria about the person of Christ.
  - 1. Arius taught that Christ was not eternal but that He was a created being.
  - 2. Athanasius taught that Christ was eternal and divine, just as God the Father.
  - 3. There arose two parties in the “church” over these conflicting doctrines.
- B. Constantine, emperor of Rome, though not a Christian himself, was kindly disposed toward Christianity and finally consented to be baptized before his death.
  - 1. The trouble caused by these two doctrines worried him and he was anxious to have peace in his kingdom.
  - 2. In an effort to settle this issue, he called the council of Bishops to be held in the city of Nicea in June of 325.
- C. About 318 Bishops and a number of “church” leaders attended this meeting. Constantine presided over it with great displays of pomp and power.
- D. During this meeting a decision was made in which it was held that Christ was eternal with the Father.
  - 1. A creed was written, the first “official” creed to be written.
  - 2. These men had met and decided a point of “church” doctrine which others were expected to accept.
- E. Men had now formed a doctrine for the church instead of following the word of God.

#### **V. Is Apostasy a Failure in the Lord’s Plans?**

- A. Who would dare to forward the standard by which God measures success or failure? Who would dare affirm that what we call triumph or defeat is accounted so by God?
- B. Religious history abounds with instances of the temporary “triumph” of evil and injustice, when the purposes of God have been opposed and their consummation seemingly delayed.
  - 1. What would have been the world’s verdict regarding the earthly mission of Jesus had the vote been taken at the time of His death? Here, “failure” becomes the triumph of the ages!
  - 2. Consider the church in the book of Revelation. See through the conflict and tribulation to the brighter day of restoration and the ultimate expression of the church glorified. (Rev. 21)

# Lesson Three:

## Internal and External Causes of Apostasy

### I. External Causes of Apostasy

#### A. Jewish persecution.

1. Since the early church was exclusively Jewish, Jews who rejected it boldly defended the law and bitterly opposed those who embraced Christianity.
  - a. The Jews viewed Christianity as a rival. They also realized if it were true, they were guilty of the murder of the Messiah.
  - b. “Looking at the great mass of the Jewish people, we find that the predominance of the worldly spirit, which would apprehend the divine under notions of sense, the rage for the wonderful described by St. Paul, confidence in the inalienable rights of their theocratic descent according to the flesh and in the outward show of legal righteousness, constituted the chief obstacles to the reception of the gospel.” (Augustus Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I, p. 62)
2. Judaistic persecution had been predicted (Mark 13:9; Matt. 10:16-18), even before the Lord’s death (John 15:18-20).
  - a. Its early stages. (Acts 5:17, 33; 6:8-15; 7:54-60)
  - b. The death of James. (Acts 12:1-2)
  - c. Persecutions of Paul prior to his conversion. (Acts 26:9-11)
  - d. On Paul and the other apostles. (1 Cor. 4:9,11-13)

#### B. Roman persecution.

1. The Roman world.
  - a. The Roman Empire was ruled by men placed at its head by the army. Most of the emperors were cruel, wicked and extravagant.
  - b. The population consisted of three classes.
    - 1) The wealthy, the slaves and the middle class of free-citizens.
    - 2) “The poorer classes only lived for bread and circuses. The circuses were brutal, debasing and bloody;...The nation groaned under heavy taxation that went for such a waste and extravagance...The state came first, the home had little place in Paganism. Women were considered as chattel property; and little children were often cruelly mistreated; and if born deformed, or their parents did not want them, they were exposed to die, or killed.” (Homer Hailey, “The Church in the Ante-Nicene Period,” *Abilene Christian College Lectures 1934*, p. 18)
  - c. “It was into such a morally degenerate, sensual, and cruel world that Christianity was thrust to conquer and raise to a fit place in which to live.” (Hailey, 19)
2. Persecutions against the early church.
  - a. In the lifetime of the apostles, the two main waves of persecution which swept over the church were by Nero (65-68) and Domitian (89-96).

- b. “The first marked instance of heathen enmity on record was the persecution under Nero. It is described by the Roman historian Tacitus. From his account we see that the Christians were then well known as a distinct sect. Nero, who was justly detested for his brutal tyranny, in order to avert from himself what was, perhaps, a groundless suspicion of having set Rome on fire, accused the Christians of having kindled the flames which had laid in ashes a great part of the city... (in quoting Tacitus - GT) a ‘vast multitude were convicted...And in their deaths they were made the subjects of sport, for they were covered with hides of wild beasts and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when day declined were burned to serve for nocturnal lights.’” (George P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 31)
  - c. The persecution under Domitian reached its height in about A.D. 95.
    - 1) He is described by historians as a cruel, worthless ruler with a jealous temper.
    - 2) He caused hundreds of believers to be put to death.
3. Some principal persecutors and prominent martyrs after the close of the New Testament period.
- a. Pliny, governor of Bithynia and Trajan, emperor of Rome.
    - 1) About A.D. 111, he wrote letters to emperor Trajan calling his attention to the problem in his district created by the increasing number of Christians. He called Christianity a “superstition” and expressed concern because so many had become Christians that the temples of the heathen gods were almost forsaken. He wanted instructions as to how to treat these Christians.
    - 2) Trajan replied the Christians were to be left alone unless they were prosecuted by accusers who would give their names. If convicted, they were to be given the opportunity to renounce their faith. If they refused, they were to be punished. While seemingly lenient, it led the way for wholesale persecutions by unscrupulous individuals who were willing to offer false accusations and testimony.
    - 3) Ignatius of Antioch was one of the most prominent martyrs under the reign of Trajan. While being taken to Rome, he exhorted Christians on the way and prayed that he might have the honor of dying for Christ. He was thrown to the wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatre about A.D. 108.
  - b. Marcus Aurelius, emperor from A.D. 161 to 180.
    - 1) He is described as a just and virtuous ruler, yet, he poured out bitter persecutions on the followers of Christ.
    - 2) He was determined to restore the ancient religious practices and the old Roman way of life so he sought to suppress innovators and he viewed Christians as innovators.
    - 3) Polycarp was a prominent martyr during his reign. Brought before the governor and called upon to curse the name of Christ, he replied, “Six and eighty years have I served him, and he has done me nothing but good; and how could I curse him, my Lord and Savior.” (Fisher, 48)
  - c. A period of peace from persecutions was introduced by Gallienus in A.D. 260.
    - 1) It lasted for 40 years.
    - 2) During this period, large expensive church buildings were erected, the church became rich and its members worldly and contentious.

- d. The persecution by emperor Diocletian in 303 was the most formidable and systematic.
    - 1) He “determined to exterminate Christianity and to reinstate the ancient system of worship.” (Fisher, 50)
    - 2) “In a series of edicts it was ordered that every copy of the Bible should be burned; that all churches—which had arisen throughout the empire during the half-century of comparative rest from persecutions —should be torn down; that all who would not renounce the Christian religion should lose their citizenship and be outside the protection of the law. In some places the Christians were assembled in their churches, which were set on fire and burned with all the worshipers within their walls.” (Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, *The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 56)
  - e. Rest came from persecution in 313 when emperor Constantine issued his Edict of Toleration. “By this law Christianity was sanctioned, its worship was made lawful, and all persecution ceased, not to be renewed while the Roman Empire endured.” (Hurlbut, 57)
4. Reasons for these persecutions.
- a. The Romans recognized a multitude of gods while Christianity opposed all worship except to the one, true God.
  - b. Idol worship was interwoven with all phases of Roman life. Since Christians refused to offer sacrifices to the false gods, they were branded as atheists and enemies.
  - c. Emperor worship was required of all. Since Christians would not “bow down,” they failed the chief test of loyalty to the State.
  - d. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Christianity was identified as an offspring of Jewish fanaticism.
  - e. The secret meetings of Christians in caves and catacombs aroused suspicion and rumors spread about the purpose of their meetings.
  - f. Christianity looked upon all as equals, contrary to the spirit of the Roman world.
  - g. Business interests often caused persecution when those who sold idols and images saw their business hindered.
  - h. Superstition which charged Christians with causing famines, pestilences and plagues aroused persecution.
  - j. The influence of pagan philosophies which were propagated by the Stoics and Epicureans caused people to look down upon Christianity since it was accepted by the common and unlettered class and it preached a system of faith and did not prove anything on philosophical grounds.
5. The behavior of Christians under these persecutions.
- a. Many who lacked the courage to endure, renounced their faith to save their lives.
  - b. Thousands held their faith, refusing to deny Christ, even though suffering untold agony and death.

## II. Internal Causes of Apostasy

- A. Periods of peace were periods of weakness and decline in spiritual devotion.
  1. The rise of the wealthy church can be seen. (Rev. 3:15-19)
  2. Luxury and the amassing of wealth became the chief concern to the neglect of duties and responsibilities to Christ and His people.

3. During these times, neglect of the poor became a common practice. (Jas. 2:1-10)
4. Not until persecutions occurred was there an awakening and renewal of devotion and commitment. (Rev. 3:14-19)

B. Heresies.

1. Judaizing Christians.
  - a. They demanded that many of the commands of the Old Law were to be incorporated into the religion of Christ, such as circumcision. (Acts 15:1)
  - b. Jesus, while on earth, had shown the futility of trying to combine new principles with the old system. (Matt. 9:15-17)
2. Gnosticism. (See previous lesson)

C. Changes in church organization.

1. The change in the rule of local churches from a plurality of elders to that of a Bishop presiding over presbyters which ultimately led to city bishops having more authority than country bishops, capital bishops having even more authority, etc.
2. A distinction between clergy and laity.
  - a. By the end of the 2nd century this idea had begun to take shape.
  - b. Having its roots in Judaism, a distinction was made between the preacher and other members.
  - c. The clergy came to be exalted as a higher order and was separated from the laity.
3. The Council of Nicea where the first formal, written creed was officially adopted. (See previous lesson)

# Lesson Four:

## The Fruits of Apostasy

### I. A Review of the Growth of the Church and the Beginning of Apostasy

- A. In the first century, the church, under the apostles:
  - 1. Was planted in each city by gospel preaching, convincing men and women they were sinners and needed a Savior. Upon their obedience to the gospel, by one Spirit they were baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), constituting the church in their community.
  - 2. Once established in a community, they did their own work.
    - a. It grew from within and attracted people by its very existence.
    - b. The gospel was spread not only by the public proclamation of the apostles, but also by zealous Christians who took it to every neighbor, friend and/or anyone who would listen. (Acts 8:4-5; 2 Tim. 2:2)
    - c. “Justin Martyr spoke of the growth of the religion of Christ saying, ‘There is no race of men, whether barbarian or Greek or by whatsoever appellation they may be designated, whether they wander in wagons, or dwell in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered up to the Father and Creator of all things in the name of the crucified Jesus.’” (Robert H. Brumback, *History of the Church Through the Ages*, p. 29)
- B. The government of the local church consisted of self-governing groups made up of elders, deacons and saints. (Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2)
  - 1. Soon after the establishment of the church, apostasy was introduced into its organizational purity.
    - a. By the close of the first century, corruptions were already taking place even though the apostles had warned of their evil.
    - b. Apostasy began with corruption in organization and spread to doctrinal matters resulting, some 600 years later, in the Church of Rome.
  - 2. The development was gradual, beginning with the seemingly harmless practice of centralization, and then culminated in a complete departure from God’s plan for the church.

### II. Fruits of the Changes in Organization

- A. The first change in the organization of the church was a distinction between bishops and presbyters which became apparent by the middle of the second century.
  - 1. The presiding elder over meetings of the local church was soon looked upon as having more authority than the other elders and was called the “Episkopos” or “Bishop.”
  - 2. “Bishop” came to be exclusively applied to him while the other elders were called “presbyters.”
  - 3. In reality, the two words are used indiscriminately in the New Testament.
- B. Late in the second century, the Bishops began to assume authority over the other elders which led to a distinction and recognition of rank. (cf. 3 John 9-10)
  - 1. The Bishops then extended their authority beyond the local church and created the diocese. This took place when the Bishops of the large and wealthy churches began to “assume authority and dignity above that accorded by them to the bishops of the country provinces.” (James E. Talmage, *The Great Apostasy*, p. 96)

2. Later “the Bishops of the largest cities...took to themselves the distinguishing title of metropolitans...and assumed a power of presidency over the Bishops of more limited jurisdiction.” (Talmage)
  3. As the Bishops began to assume more authority, they began to look upon themselves as successors to the apostles.
  4. By the middle of the third century they held almost absolute authority in the church.
- C. Bishops of leading districts became known as “Patriarchs” (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople).
- D. Due to its prominent position in world and secular affairs, Rome arrogated to itself a preeminence in church matters becoming a leader with its Bishop assuming supremacy.
1. He was looked upon, in time, as the “universal Bishop” (A.D. 606). This completed the change in divine church government.
  2. Their supremacy was challenged by Constantinople. John the Faster assumed the role of “universal Bishop” shortly after the Roman emperor Constantine made Constantinople the capital of his empire.
    - a. Gregory IV, ruling in Rome, rebuked him.
    - b. Shortly after this Boniface III claimed the role of “universal Bishop.”
  3. A sharp split arose between churches in the East and West in the fourth century.
    - a. It became permanent in A.D. 1056.
    - b. Thus is the origin of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.
- E. The rise of synods and councils.
1. Before the close of the second century, small churches called upon older churches to help them with problems they were having.
    - a. These took the form of conventions with leaders assuming ecclesiastical legislative authority.
    - b. This led to presiding officers with district delegates.
  2. The laws enacted by the legislative bodies, called “synods” by Greeks and “councils” by Latins, became the canons and were bound upon all as coming from the Holy Spirit. (Contrary to such teachings as 2 Pet. 1:3, Jude 3; Gal. 1:6-9)
  3. During this time the clergy, as distinguished from the laity (inferior order), exalted itself as those ones through whom the people could have access to God leading to such titles as “Father,” “Reverend,” etc. (cf. Matt. 23:8-10; 1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:5-6)
  4. “The second century was marked by the custom of holding synods or church councils; the practice originated among the churches in Greece, and thence became general. These councils grew rapidly in power, so that in the third century we find them legislating for the churches, and directing by edict and command in matters which formerly had been left to the vote of the people. Needless to say that with such assumptions of authority came arrogance and tyranny in the government of the Church. As the form of church government changed more and more, many minor orders of clergy or church officers arose; thus in the third century we read of sub-deacons, acolytes, ostiars, readers, exorcists, and copiates. As an instance of the pride of office, it is worthy of note that a sub-deacon was forbidden to sit in the presence of a deacon without the latter’s express consent.” (Talmage, 96-97)

### III. Fruits of Departures in Doctrine

A. There were many doctrinal departures. They include:

1. Holy water, A.D. 120.
2. Penance, A.D. 157.
3. Infant baptism, A.D. 175.
4. Latin mass, A.D. 394.
5. Extreme unction, A.D. 588.
6. Purgatory, A.D. 593.
7. Kissing the Pope's toe, A.D. 709.
8. Transubstantiation, A.D. 1000.
9. Celibacy, A.D. 1015.
10. Indulgences, A.D. 1192.
11. Auricular confession, A.D. 1215.
12. Sprinkling, A.D. 1311.
13. Infallibility of the Pope, July 18, 1870.
14. Jurisdiction over civil authorities, A.D. 728-1870.

B. Changes in baptism.

1. At first, only believers were baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:3; Rom. 6:1-6; Col. 2:12), but then infant baptism, unknown before A.D. 175, was adopted as doctrine.
  - a. Tertullian opposed its introduction while Cyprian defended it (3rd century).
  - b. It arose along with the development of ecclesiastical and doctrinal teaching.
  - c. Eusebius, along with others, declares that it is not of Apostolic origin.
2. Affusion, sprinkling and pouring, was made law in A.D. 1311 at the Council of Ravenna.
  - a. The change goes back to Novatian A.D. 253. It was not favored, though, until the 14th century.
  - b. "The change was gradual and confined to the Western churches. The Roman churches, as we have seen, backed by the authority of Thomas Aquinas, 'the Angelic Doctor,' took the lead in the thirteenth century..." (Philip Schaff, *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, p. 51)

C. Purgatory.

1. Well-defined by the 6th century, it was condemned by the council of Constantinople in A.D. 533 but by A.D. 1070 it became part of the doctrine of the apostate church.
2. The doctrine states that "purgatory, where literal fire was conceived to be the instrument of punishment, was the abode of souls guilty of no mortal sins, but burdened with imperfection which needed to be removed, and with dues of 'temporal punishment,' or satisfaction, for sins from the guilt of which they have been absolved." (George P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 226)
3. Those in this state, according to its proponents, are making progress toward perfection, a process of gradual purification. They have been guilty of "venial sins," minor offenses that do not subject one to eternal separation from God.
4. An appeal is made to 2 Maccabees 12:40-46 and several New Testament passages to sustain this view.

### IV. Fruits of Departures in Worship

A. Again, there are many departures in worship such as ritual, liturgy, veneration of saints, etc.



## B. Changes in the Lord's Supper.

1. It was instituted as a simple memorial feast (1 Cor. 11:20-29) using two elements, unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine.
2. Transubstantiation.
  - a. This is the belief that the whole substance of bread is converted into the literal body of Jesus and the fruit of the vine into His literal blood.
  - b. This change is supposedly made when it is blessed by the priest in Mass. The change is not figurative but literal. (cf. Acts 15:28-29; Luke 22:18)
3. Mass.
  - a. "The sacrifice of the New Law in which Christ through the ministry of the priest offers himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine." (*The Baltimore Catechism*, p. 239)
  - b. In this "Sacrifice of the Mass" only the priests are allowed to partake of the cup.
  - c. Called "Holy Eucharist," it became a church law in A.D. 1414 at the Council of Constance.
  - d. The Bible teaches that Christ offered Himself once—there is no need for more sacrifices. (Heb. 7:27; 9:24-28; 10:26ff.)

## Conclusion

1. The apostasy presumed to improve upon the plan of the New Testament by inventing practices and doctrines totally absent in the early church.
2. The development of the Church of Rome and the doctrines which accompanied that development, speak of a single motive behind it all: a desire for power.
3. The authority of Christ is complete (Matt. 28:18). It is expressed in its finality and totality in the New Testament Scriptures. To deviate from His expressed authority in any way, is to sin.

# Lesson Five:

## The Reformation

### Introduction

1. During the “Dark Ages” and at its close:
  - a. Papal authority in religious matters was complete everywhere.
    - 1) Papal domination was sought and gained in political affairs.
    - 2) In many instances, the Catholic Church resorted to carnal warfare in order to increase its power.
  - b. The masses were in total ignorance of the Bible.
  - c. Simony, the custom of selling church offices to the highest bidder was a universal practice.
  - d. Indulgences and confessionals were a source of rich profits to the Catholic Church.
2. “While the Papacy tightened its grip upon the Catholic Church, and set itself against all reform of any king, there arose some dissenting voices, who protested against the immorality among the clergy and spoke strongly against papal interference in political affairs.” (Frank Pack, *Lessons in Church History*, p. 23)

### I. Beginnings of Religious Reform

- A. The reformation had its beginning as individuals attempted to reform the Catholic Church.
  1. One writer referred to these efforts as “Protestantism before the reformation.”
  2. Another writer called them “Reformers before the reformation.”
  3. These early movements for reform were generally repressed with bloody persecution.
- B. The Albigenses.
  1. They became prominent in Southern France about 1170.
  2. They were opposed to traditions as authority in religion and to the doctrines of purgatory and image-worship.
  3. They recognized the authority of the New Testament and circulated it to the extent of their ability.
  4. They were annihilated in a great slaughter as the result of a call for a crusade against them by Pope Innocent III.
- C. The Waldensians.
  1. Founded about 1170 by Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons who appealed to the Scriptures in his opposition to the practices of the Roman Catholic Church, they were noted for their zeal for purity of life.
  2. Under the pressure of persecution, they left France and found hiding places in the valleys of Northern Italy.
- D. John Wycliffe (1324-1384).
  1. English by birth, he was a graduate of Oxford.
  2. He opposed the authority of the Pope, the doctrine of Transubstantiation and auricular confessions.
  3. “The greatest work of Wycliffe for the enlightenment of the world was the translation of the Bible into the English language.” (J.W. Shepherd, *The Church, the Falling Away, and the Restoration*, p. 75)

4. Excluded from Oxford in 1382, he retired to Lutterworth where he died. Years after his death, authorized by the Council of Constance which was held in 1415, in 1428 his enemies had his body exhumed and burned and his ashes scattered on a brook that flowed into the Avon River. This act was carried out by Bishop Fleming at the command of Pope Martin V.
- E. John Huss (1369-1415).
1. Living in Bohemia, he was a priest of the Catholic Church who became a disciple of Wycliffe.
  2. He zealously exalted the Scriptures above tradition and human dogma.
  3. He opposed the tyranny of the clergy and denounced the sale of indulgences.
  4. Summoned to the Council of Constance in 1415, he was tried as a heretic and even though he had been promised safety by the emperor, he was burned to death in July of 1415.
- F. John Wessel (1420-1498).
1. Though not as well known as either Huss or Wycliffe, he attacked Catholicism in some of its principal features.
  2. He avowed many of the same beliefs which were later taught by Martin Luther.
- G. Jerome Savonarola (1452-1498).
1. He lived in Florence, Italy.
  2. He denied the authority of the Pope and made a bitter fight against the immorality of the clergy.
  3. "When the pope found that he could not bribe the powerful preacher with the offer of a cardinal's hat, nor reduce him to silence by repeated admonitions, he excommunicated him. Savonarola pronounced this excommunication void, as contradictory to the wise and just law of God." (George P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 277)
  4. Finally arrested, while in prison he wrote a tract on Psalm 51 in which he set forth his ideas of justification.
  5. He was tried, condemned and, on May 23, 1498, he was burned to death in the square at Florence in front of the church building where he had preached so long.

## II. Forces Which Prepared the Way for the Reformation

- A. An awakening in Europe to a new interest in literature, art and science.
1. This was a change from medieval to modern aims and methods of thoughts.
  2. During the Dark Ages, the minds of people had become darkened with superstition, bigotry and ignorance.
  3. The renewed interest in learning served to lift the veil of ignorance and superstition and inspired independence of thought.
- B. The invention of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg in 1455.
1. This made possible the printing of books by movable type and soon books were being distributed by the thousands, the Bible being the first.
  2. "Before this invention, from the beginning of time, books had been circulated only as rapidly as they could be copied out by hand. A Bible in the Middle Ages cost the wages of a working man for a year. It is significant as showing the desire of that time, that the first book printed by Gutenberg was the Bible. The press brought the Scriptures into common use, and led to their translation and circulation in all languages of Europe. The people who read the New Testament soon realized that the papal church was far from the New Testament ideal." (Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, *The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 56)

- C. A growing spirit of nationalism which affected the thinking of the people and fed the desire for greater freedom in religion.
1. Patriotism caused many to resent the idea of submitting to foreign rule over their own national churches.
  2. Many disliked the idea of the pope, in another country, appointing their church officers.
  3. Many, therefore, refused to contribute to support the Pope and the construction of magnificent church buildings in Rome.

### III. The Reformers of the Reformation

#### A. Martin Luther (1483-1546).

1. He was the first great reformer.
2. Born in Eisleben, Germany in 1483.
  - a. He had begun to prepare for a career in law but shocked by the combined experience of a friend's death and a fearful storm, he entered a monastery at the age of 22.
  - b. He was ordained as a priest, an Augustinian friar, only two years later in 1507.
  - c. He became a lecturer at Wittenburg University and in 1512 was made a doctor of theology.
3. During the winter of 1512-13, his study prompted him to begin to see some errors in the Catholic Church.
4. On October 31, 1517, he nailed his famous 95 theses to the door of the church building in Wittenburg, Germany, proclaiming the errors of Catholicism.
  - a. His three greatest objections were the selling of indulgences, the authority of the Pope and the doctrine of transubstantiation.
  - b. In his theses, he named these objections and asked for a debate with some one who would defend them.
  - c. In 1519 he had a debate with Dr. John Eck in Leipzig which resulted in a declaration of his stand against some doctrines of Catholicism.
5. After much criticism and church trials, he was excommunicated from the Church.
  - a. He continued to preach against the errors he had found.
  - b. The Lutheran Church thus had its beginning even though Luther asked his followers not to call themselves after him but rather after Christ.
6. His greatest error was his teaching that justification was by "faith only" teaching that people are saved at the point of faith without further acts of obedience.
  - a. He overreacted to the Catholic position of justification by works.
  - b. Because James contradicted his teaching of "faith only," Luther rejected the book of James as being part of the New Testament and labeled it a "right strawy epistle."

#### B. John Calvin (1509-1564).

1. He began his reformation work in France shortly after Luther began his work in Germany. He was founder of the Presbyterian movement which included the Covenanters of Scotland, the Puritans of England and the Huguenots of France.
2. Born in Noyon, France in 1509, he began a study of the classics in Paris at age 14.
3. In 1529 he began to study law but two years later cast it aside for the study of religion.
4. In 1533 he renounced Catholicism and embraced the reformation.
  - a. From that time forward he was formulating and teaching the basic five points of his doctrine.

- b. It was in Geneva, Switzerland that he enjoyed free rein to develop his religious system.
- 5. In 1536 he completed his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
  - a. It included his basic doctrines of total hereditary depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and the perseverance of the saints.
  - b. As each of these doctrines is compared to God's word, the true light, all are found to be false.
- C. John Knox (1505-1572).
  - 1. Born in Haddington, Scotland in 1505 and educated at the University of Glasgow, he was a Catholic priest who converted to protestantism in 1542 and began preaching the doctrines of Calvin.
  - 2. He organized, founded and wrote the first articles of faith for what is now called the Presbyterian Church.
- D. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531).
  - 1. Educated at the universities of Vienna and Basel, in 1506 he was ordained a priest.
  - 2. He was an ardent student of Greek so he could read the New Testament in its original language.
  - 3. He "attracted large audiences to the cathedral at Zurich, Switzerland by expounding the original Greek and Hebrew Scriptures chapter by chapter and book by book beginning with the Gospel of Matthew...These oral translations of the original Scriptures broke sharply with church tradition." (*Funk & Wagnall's New Encyclopedia*, Vol. 25, p. 479)
  - 4. He identified six important differences between himself and the Catholic Church.
    - a. The right to preach without human authority.
    - b. The teaching that Christ was the only head of the church thus rejection of the pope.
    - c. Rejection of human doctrines and ordinances.
    - d. Rejection of prayers to the saints and priests.
    - e. The right of priests to marry.
    - f. Rejection of the mass which he called a form of idolatry. He believed the Lord's Supper was a simple memorial of the Lord's death.
  - 5. In 1519 he read, for the first time the writings of Martin Luther.
    - a. Emboldened by Luther's stand against German hierarchy, in 1520 he persuaded the Zurich council to forbid all religious teachings without foundation in the Scriptures.
    - b. The one great difference between him and Luther was in attitude toward religion.
      - 1) "Luther desired to maintain in the Church all that was not expressly contrary to the Scriptures, and Zwingli to abolish all that could not be proved by them. The German reformer (Luther) wished to re-main united to the Church of all preceding ages, and was content to purify it of all that was opposed to the Word of God. The Zurich reformer (Zwingli) passed over these ages, returned to the apostolictimes, and, carrying out an entire transformation of the Church, endeavoured to restore it to its primitive condition." (J.H. Merle D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation*, Vol. III, p. 243)
      - 2) "I will never cease to restore the primitive unity of the Church of Christ." (Ulrich Zwingli, *Ego veterem Christi Ecclesiae unitatem instaurare non desinan*, Opp. III, 47)

E. Henry VIII (1491-1547).

1. King of England from 1509 until 1547, his reign was at first harmonious with the Catholic Church. He strongly opposed the doctrines of Luther during this time.
2. Differences with Catholicism arose in 1527 when he asked for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon so he could marry Anne Boleyn which the Pope refused to grant.
3. In 1532 he obtained from the clergy recognition of his place as supreme head of the Church of England.
4. In 1533 he secretly married Anne Boleyn and then Parliament passed an act abolishing appeals to Rome.
5. He was excommunicated in 1534.
6. He, with Parliament in the Act of Supremacy in 1534, organized what was called the Church of England over which he was head. In America it came to be called the Episcopal Church.

F. John Wesley (1703-1791).

1. He, along with his brother Charles, while studying at Oxford University in 1727-29, was a member of a religious club called the "Holy Club" though it was some-times called the "Methodist Club" because of its methodical religious exercises.
2. He was ordained a priest in the Church of England so, in essence, he was a reformer of the Reformation.
3. From 1736 to 1738 he did mission work in the United States, his mission field being the state of Georgia.
  - a. While in Georgia he met some German Moravian brethren who introduced new thoughts of religion to his mind.
  - b. Upon his return to England, he preached the new doctrines and the result was a division in the Church of England and the formation of the Methodist Church.
4. The two leading doctrines of Wesley were salvation by faith only as it had been preached by Luther and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
5. He never left the Church of England. He was still a member of it when he died.

# Lesson Six:

## The Causes and Roots of the Restoration

### Introduction

1. What history calls the “Restoration Movement” is, in reality, a misnomer because the church needs no restoring—it is perfect.
  - a. When it gets into a condition that needs restoring, it is no longer the church.
  - b. Rather, people who have departed need to return to it.
2. This “return movement” resulted in many people being led out of denominations and in the formation of many congregations patterned after the New Testament order.

### I. What Is Restoration?

- A. As the 18th century drew to a close and the 19th century began, men appeared on the religious horizon who seriously and zealously sought for a return to “the old paths” (Jer. 6:16), the primitive religion of Jesus Christ.
  1. They saw what the reformers had failed to see: that what was needed was not a reformation of the apostate church but a complete and full return to the purity of the church in the first century.
  2. They boldly expressed their dissatisfaction with Protestant denominationalism and its multiplicity of divergent creeds, names, doctrines and practices
    - a. They rejected the idea that man’s religious destiny depended on a choice between Protestantism and Catholicism.
    - b. They held to the ideal that man’s salvation depended on the unqualified acceptance of the pattern of New Testament Christianity.
  3. Their purpose was to go back to the beginning—before all the synods, councils, creeds, disciplines, sects and parties—and restore the church as it is revealed in the New Testament.
- B. “Not until we reach the nineteenth century do we find sweeping movements and efforts to restore the original plan and purpose of God in all its points. There had been many attempts at ‘reformation,’ noble and far reaching in their influence, but there has been only one concerted effort at ‘restoration.’ Christianity had and has suffered more from human leadership and human philosophy than from any other curse.  
“The attitude of those first century Christians was that God had acted for their salvation and through Christ had spoken the final word for their redemption...but as time passed and innovations crept in, as untaught individuals became *nominal* Christians, changes began to be made. The pattern was altered, attitudes were no longer as of former years, until gradually the pristine simplicity was marred and covered, until the original simple plan of God could no longer be recognized. Ambitions began to manifest themselves, pagan philosophies became substitutes for the word of God, until darkness descended upon the face of the earth and the light of truth was covered by ignorance and superstition.” (Homer Hailey, *Attitudes and Consequences*, pp. 12-13)
- C. The principles of restoration.
  1. Recognition of Christ as the supreme authority in religion and the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice. This would naturally do away with creeds and human authority.

2. A proper distinction between the Old and New Testaments.
3. Recognition of the New Testament pattern of the church.
4. The autonomy of the local church.
5. The unity of all Christians.

## II. Causes of the Restoration Movement

### A. Failures of the Reformation.

1. Attempts to reform excesses within Catholicism progressed no further.
2. Some realized the need for reform could only be completely satisfied with a complete reestablishment of the New Testament order not with a redressing of denominationalism.
3. “Since the great apostasy, foretold and depicted by the holy apostles, attained prime, or rather reached the awful climasteric, many reformations in religion have been attempted; some on a large and others on a more restricted scale. The page of history and the experience of the present generation concur in evidencing that, if any of those reformations began in the spirit, they have ended in the flesh...

“A restoration of the ancient order of things is all that is necessary to the happiness and usefulness of christians. No attempt ‘to reform the doctrine, discipline and government of the church,’ (a phrase too long in use,) can promise a better result than those which have been attempted and languished to death...This is what we contend for...to bring the societies of christians up to the New Testament, is just to bring the disciples individually and collectively, to walk in the faith, and in the commandments of the Lord and Saviour, as presented in that blessed volume; and this is to restore the ancient order of things.”  
(Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, Feb. 7, 1825)

4. The reformation developed new and rigid systems of religion which became standards of orthodoxy and grounds for division.

### B. The division in the religious forces of America.

1. There were five or six larger denominations and numerous smaller ones which included only about 10% of the nation’s population.
2. The division, prompted by rivalry and jealousy, resulted in constant warfare designed to devour one another.
  - a. Partisan and sectarian bitterness, it was discovered, could only be cured by a return to the divine standard.
  - b. This became the original emphasis of the restoration.

### C. An arrogant clergy.

1. Through ignorance, they sought to broaden the chasm between themselves and the common people.
2. By making people look up to them and wearing titles such as “Reverend,” etc., they demanded prominence and respectability.
3. They assumed the right of legislation for those in the pews.

### D. Unclear theology.

1. Theology, during the reformation, came to be influenced by English deism and French skepticism.
2. “Throughout the eighteenth century believers and unbelievers held practically identical conceptions of the nature of revelation, inspiration and biblical authority; but the unbelievers denied that any such revelation had ever happened.” (Garrison & DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, p. 57)



- E. Blatant unbelief bordering infidelity.
  1. Denominationalism became straight-laced and tyrannical, producing skepticism that moved from Europe and took roots in America.
  2. By the 19th century, the influence of skepticism and atheism was such that the churches were lifeless and little effort was made to send the gospel into the pagan world.
  3. Men such as Thomas Paine, who wrote *The Age of Reason*, were very influential.
- F. Religious liberty in America.
  1. The breaking of church ties was the result of immigration and the Westward movement.
  2. Men were now free to practice and propagate the religion of their choice.
- G. Increased circulation of the Bible.
  1. This led to increased knowledge of the word of God. As men learned more of God's word, they thought less of human creeds.
  2. The more men studied the New Testament, the more they recognized the sin of religious division.
    - a. They saw denominationalism was preventing the answer to Christ's prayer for unity among his followers. (John 17:20-21)
    - b. They saw religious division was contrary to the pleadings of the apostle Paul. (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:4)
- H. The Calvinistic doctrine of total hereditary depravity.
  1. The idea that all people were born totally depraved and that if a baby died it would be punished in an eternal hell was repulsive to logical minds.
  2. Some reacted to this doctrine by losing all interest in religion, others became infidels but many were filled with a greater desire for pure Bible doctrine.

### III. The Restoration "B.C." (Before Campbell): The Roots of Restoration

- A. The roots of restoration began in Europe even as early as the 13th century.
  1. Balthazar Hubmeyer (1480-1528).
    - a. An Anabaptist, he was a contemporary of Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), but he was not willing to stop where Zwingli did.
      - 1) Zwingli, who was winning the Great Council of Zurich to his Protestant views, which included the control of religion by secular authorities, pleaded with Hubmeyer and his "Brethren" to relax their antipathy to the state and to practice infant baptism but they refused.
      - 2) Anabaptists believed that if baptism is "given in infancy, it should be repeated in maturity, and that still better it should be deferred,...till the mature recipient could knowingly and voluntarily make his profession of the Christian faith." (Will Durant, *The Reformation*, p. 395)
    - b. He rejected sprinkling and infant baptism.
    - c. He is quoted as saying, "I believe and know that Christianity shall not receive its arising aright unless baptism and the Lord's supper were brought to their original purity." (Garrison & DeGroot, 38)
    - d. He and his entire family were burned at the stake by the order of Zurich on March 10, 1528
  2. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). He was a Dutch Armenian who sought religious harmony.
    - a. He was a Dutch jurist and statesman whose legal writings laid much of the foundation for modern international law.
    - b. In 1598 he served on a mission to Henry IV of France and stayed on to study law at Orleans.

- c. In 1607 he was appointed attorney general of the province of Holland.
  - d. His efforts to moderate a bitter doctrinal dispute among Dutch Calvinists had embroiled him in a political clash between his province of Holland and the rest of the Dutch Republic and its orthodox majority.
  - e. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1619 but escaped to Paris in 1621.
  - f. In Paris “he finished *De veritate religionis Christianae (On the Truth of the Christian Religion, 1627)*, a non-sectarian statement of basic Christian beliefs that was widely translated and won Grotius great acclaim.” (*Funk and Wagnall’s New Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12, p. 45)
3. John Drury (1595-1680). He spent fifty years traveling stressing the oneness of the Lord’s church.
  4. “The common tendency to recognize a religious sect as having been founded by a certain personage has customarily identified churches of Christ as owing their beginnings to Alexander Campbell in 1813. Thus, in some circles, we have held the dubious distinction of being referred to as ‘Campbellites.’ In a recent article taken from a bulletin in Duncan, Oklahoma, this interesting quotation appeared as a documentary research of a Dr. Robinson, principal of Overdale College, Birmingham, England.  
 “In the Furness District of Lancashire, in Northwest England, there existed in 1669, during the reign of Charles II, a group of eight churches of Christ. Most of them are not now in existence. An old minute-book has been found of the year 1669, and it shows that they called themselves by the name church of Christ, practiced baptism by immersion, celebrated the Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day, and had elders and deacons. There was also a church of Christ in Dungannon, Ireland in 1804, and in Allington, Dengigshire. In 1735, John Davis, a young preacher in the Fife District of Scotland, was preaching New Testament Christianity twenty-five years before Thomas Campbell (Alexander Campbell’s father) was born.’  
 “Churches of Christ have always traced their origin to the first century, approximately 33 A.D. The Restoration Movement, historically indigenous to America, does indeed owe much credit to the fervor and leadership of men like Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone and others, but the principle of New Testament Christianity, Biblically and historically roots within the soil of Old Testament prophecy and apostolic authority.” (William E. Young, *The Edifier*, Vol. V, No. 3, March 1979)
- B. Evidence of the Restoration Movement in America before Campbell.
1. “In the records of the Burkesville courthouse is an interesting item which seems to indicate that there was an independent church in that place, in 1800, called the Christian Church. This is the item copied by the writer from a photostat: ‘Minister Licensed to S.M. Aug. Term—1800. The Reverend David Haggard produced satisfactory proof of his being in regular communion with the Society called the Christian Church of which he is a member, who thereupon took the oath prescribed by law and entered into bonds with Lucy Haggard his security conditioned as the law directs. Ordered that license be granted him to solemnize the rites of marriage.’” (Alonzo Willard Fortune, *The Disciples in Kentucky*, p. 67)
  2. Evidence from a grave yard. On the grave marker of William Rogers, it states: “Born in Campbell Co., Va., July 7, 1784. Removed with his father to Caine Ridge, Bourbon Co., April 1799. United with the church of Christ at Cane Ridge in 1807. Died Feb. 15, 1852 in the 78th year of his age.”
  3. Men such as James O’Kelley, Abner Jones, Elias Smith and Barton W. Stone all were involved in separate movements to restore the New Testament order.

# Lesson Seven:

## Early Leaders of the Restoration in America

### I. James O'Kelley (1735-1826)

- A. He was a Methodist preacher who labored in Virginia and North Carolina.
- B. He protested against the new and autocratic episcopal policy inaugurated by Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the "Christmas Conference" in 1784.
  - 1. He urged a more democratic government for Methodism.
  - 2. The struggle between Asbury and O'Kelley came to a climax at the General Conference held in Baltimore in 1792.
    - a. O'Kelley proposed that the Conference should have veto power over Asbury's appointment of preachers.
    - b. After long and bitter debate, the Conference voted to support Asbury.
    - c. The very next day O'Kelley sent a letter to it announcing his withdrawal from the church.
- C. O'Kelley and his supporters met at Piney Grove, Virginia, in August 1793.
  - 1. They drafted a resolution which called upon Asbury to call a meeting which would "form a permanent plan for peace and union, taking the Holy Scriptures for our guide."
  - 2. Asbury refused and so O'Kelley and his group had no alternative but to organize a new church.
- D. On December 25, 1793, a new church was formed which was named the "Republican Methodist Church."
  - 1. Several former Methodist preachers helped in organizing it.
  - 2. In 1794 they agreed that the scriptural plan of church government was to ordain elders over each church and also agreed to drop the name "Republican Methodist."
  - 3. A man by the name of Rice Haggard suggested they be called "Christians."
- E. The new "Christian Church" spread throughout the southern and western states.
  - 1. By 1809 it had a membership of 20,000.
  - 2. Its basic beliefs included the lordship of Christ as the only head of the church, the name Christian to the exclusion of all others, and the Bible as their only creed or rule of faith and practice.
- F. O'Kelley refused to be convinced that immersion was the only scriptural baptism and division resulted since those favoring immersion refused to remain in the Christian Church.

### II. Elias Smith (1769-1846) and Abner Jones (1772-1841)

- A. They were leaders in a movement in New England.
- B. The main issue in their movement was their dissatisfaction with Calvinism.
  - 1. Smith was a Baptist preacher who, dissatisfied with Calvinism, came to believe that all theological systems were wrong and that Christians should be guided only by Scripture.
  - 2. Jones, also a Baptist preacher, influenced by Smith's teachings, organized an independent "Christian Church" at Lyndon, Vermont in 1801. By 1807, there were 14 churches and 12 ministers in this church.

- C. In 1808 Smith began publishing the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, one of America's first religious periodicals. It advocated the following principles:
1. No head over the church but Christ.
  2. No confession of faith, articles of religion, rubric, canons, creeds, etc., but the New Testament.
  3. No religious name but Christian.

### III. Barton W. Stone (1772-1844)

- A. He was born in Port Tobacco, Maryland as the son of a well-to-do land planter.
- B. After his father died, the family moved to the Virginia frontier in 1779.
- C. He used his portion of his father's estate, which he received in 1790, to secure an education at David Caldwell's academy in Guildford, North Carolina.
1. Caldwell was a Presbyterian minister so religious influences dominated Stone's life while at the academy.
  2. He determined to be ordained a Presbyterian minister.
- D. He went to Washington, Georgia where he was a teacher in a new school operated by Hope Hull, a Methodist minister.
- E. He returned to North Carolina in 1796 and received his license to preach.
- F. He began preaching for two small Presbyterian churches at Cane Ridge and Concord, Kentucky. In 1798 he received a formal call to be ordained.
1. He had serious misgivings about certain points of Presbyterian theology.
  2. "Knowing that at my ordination I should be required to adopt the Confession of Faith, as the system of doctrines taught in the Bible, I determined to give it a careful examination once more. This was to me almost the beginning of sorrows. I stumbled at the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the Confession; I labored to believe it, but could not conscientiously subscribe to it. Doubts, too, arose in my mind on the doctrines of election, reprobation and predestination, as there taught... The Presbytery came together, and a large congregation attended... They labored, but in vain to remove my difficulties and objections." (*Biography of Eld. Barton Warren Stone*, pp. 29,30)
  3. At his ordination, in response to the ceremonial question of whether or not he accepted the Confession of Faith, he said, "I do, as far as I see it consistent with the word of God." (*Ibid.*)
- G. He continued to have concerns with certain tenets of Presbyterianism.
1. He was especially troubled with total hereditary depravity.
  2. "From this state of perplexity I was relieved by the precious word of God. From reading and meditating upon it, I became convinced that God did love the whole world, and that the reason why he did not save all, was because of their unbelief; and that the reason why they believed not, was not because God did not exert his physical, almighty power in them to make them believe, but because they neglected and received not his testimony given in the Word concerning his Son." (Barton W. Stone, quoted by John Rogers, *The Biography of Elder Barton Warren Stone*, p. 50)
- H. Having visited Logan County, Kentucky, in 1801 where James McGready was conducting a great camp meeting in which, contrary to Old-School Presbyterianism, sinners were called upon to repent, he conducted the Cane Ridge revival, August 7-12, 1801.
1. Estimates of the crowd ran from 10,000 to 30,000.

2. The preaching consisted of “free salvation urged upon all by faith and repentance.”
  3. At times, five men were preaching at once on the grounds.
  4. Stone, in his autobiography, said, “Methodist and Baptist preachers aided in this work...and the salvation of sinners seemed to be the great object of all.”
- J. In September 1803, he and four associates withdrew from the Presbyterian synod and formed the Springfield Presbytery.
- K. June 28, 1804, Stone and his four associates dropped their denominational name and became known simply as Christians. They announced this in *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*.
1. It was a serious document in spirit, yet it was written in a satirical style.
  2. Among other things it emphasized the one Body of Christ, that no men were to make laws for the church, and that the Bible was the only sure guide to heaven.
  3. Rice Haggard, who had proposed the name “Christian” to the O’Kelley movement a decade before, was visiting at Cane Ridge when Stone and his associates agreed to call themselves “Christians.”
- L. After this, Stone began to sign his name “Barton W. Stone, E.C.C.,” i.e., Elder in the Church of Christ.”

#### **IV. John Mulkey (b. 1773)**

- A. Born in South Carolina, he started preaching in East Tennessee at the age of 20.
- B. In 1797 he and his brother Philip moved from Tennessee and settled on Mill Creek, two miles S.E. of Tompkinsville, Kentucky.
- C. In 1809, while preaching for the Mill Creek Baptist Church, he came to believe the major tenets of Calvinism were unscriptural.
1. He announced to his congregation that he was going to take his stand upon the Bible alone and invited them to join him.
    - a. “Five years after the new log church was built, Mulkey was preaching in the home of William Sims on the Cumberland River. He had taken his text from the 10th Chapter of John, and was making a strong plea for predestination, when suddenly he became convinced by his own arguments that the doctrine was false. Of course, this caused great confusion in the Mill Creek Church and led to several heresy trials in the Mero Association. Failing to gain a majority vote against him, the Church decided to ‘choose sides’ which led to the division on that chilly Saturday morning, November 18, 1809...” (Clayton Gooden, *The Old Mulkey Meeting House*)
    - b. “‘Now all of you who believe as I do, follow me out the west door.’ The words reverberated through the rough-hewn beams of the Mill Creek Baptist Church. It was Saturday morning, November 18, 1809. The congregation of some two hundred had gathered for the last time; and the words of John Mulkey were like a broad axe splitting the timbers of the Baptist traditions from top to bottom. All across Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee and South Carolina, there were rumblings of discontent. Congregations were declaring themselves ‘Separate’ or simply ‘Christian Churches.’ The restoration plea was being heard throughout the Western Reserve. And fervent revivals brought thousands to a great awakening of religion on the American frontier.

“John walked slowly to the right of the long pulpit that stood on the north side of the building. Approaching the low door at the west end of the church, he bent slightly to clear a lintel and stepped out into the crisp air of the autumn morning. A snow had fallen leaving the ground a deep rust sprinkled over with a fine covering of white that resembled sugar. Gusts of wind were now blowing the frozen granules across the wooded cemetery where several Revolutionary War veterans lay resting from their struggle to win their country’s independence. John looked out across the rough hewn stones. He was trying to win some independence too...He wondered if the price would be as dear...

“...one hundred-fifty of the two hundred present stood with their preacher in the grey light of a cold November morning in the county of Barren, the new state of Kentucky.” (Ibid.)

2. Mulkey’s church soon became associated with the Christians and became an influence for the restoration plea in that part of Kentucky.

# Lesson Eight:

## The Campbells and Walter Scott

### I. Thomas Campbell (1763-1854)

- A. He was born in County Down, Ireland, February 1, 1763.
- B. His father was Archibald Campbell.
  - 1. He had served with the British Army in the capture of Quebec.
  - 2. Though a member of the Roman Catholic Church in his early years, he returned to Great Britain after the war to renounce Catholicism and become a member of the Church of England.
    - a. He sought to rear his family in the traditions of the Anglican Church but its formal worship lacked warmth and there was a general lack of concern on the part of its members to make Christianity a vital and meaningful part of life.
    - b. Thomas, repelled by the Church of England, sought to hear and associate with the Covenanter and Seceder Presbyterians.
- C. After having a “religious experience,” he resolved to give himself to the ministry and become a Seceder Presbyterian minister.
  - 1. His father, because his son was under age, insisted that he devote his talents to a ministry among the Anglicans.
  - 2. Temporarily prevented from pursuing his own course, he delayed his decision.
- D. Having received a good education at a military school near his home, he answered a call for teachers in southern Ireland and established an academy in the province of Connaught.
  - 1. Although his teaching was greatly needed and well received, his father, still exercising parental authority, called his son home.
  - 2. He began teaching in a school at Sheepbridge near Newry.
    - a. John Kinley, a Seceder Presbyterian, was instrumental in obtaining this appointment for him.
    - b. Knowing of Thomas’ desire to be a Seceder minister, Kinley offered to supply the necessary funds for his ministerial education and Thomas’ father reluctantly agreed and allowed him to enroll at the University of Glasgow.
- E. He attended the University of Glasgow from 1783 to 1786.
  - 1. He then entered a school maintained by the Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterians for further study which was devoted to systematic theology and the *Confession of Faith*.
  - 2. Having completed the required course of study, he was licensed as a “probationer” by the Seceder Presbyterians.
- F. In 1787 he married Jane Corneigle.
  - 1. She was a descendant of the French Huguenots who had located in the area of Ballymena, Ireland.
  - 2. He also conducted an academy in order to supplement his income.
  - 3. Even in Ireland, he was exposed to influences which prepared him for the role he would have in the American restoration.
- H. In April of 1807, at age 45, he left his family behind and came to America.
  - 1. Excessive labors at working three jobs—preaching, teaching, and farming—had impaired his health so his doctor recommended a sea voyage as an aid to restoring it.

2. He instructed his eldest son, Alexander, to take care of the academy and his family.
  3. When he was settled in America, he would send for his family.
- J. The Associate Synod of North America of the Seceder Presbyterian Church was meeting in Philadelphia when he landed there on May 13, 1807.
1. After examining his credentials, it assigned him to the Chartiers Presbytery in southwest Pennsylvania.
  2. Within six months, though he became a respected minister in Washington, Pennsylvania, charges were brought against him in the Chartiers Presbytery and after a series of church trials which dragged on for a year, he renounced his church and its jurisdiction.
    - a. The charges were brought against him because he had visited a frontier settlement and invited non-Seceder Presbyterians to commune with the Seceders.
    - b. The charges included an accusation that he believed there was no divine authority for confessions of faith, that had an erroneous belief about the nature of faith, that he upheld the right of laymen to exhort when no ordained clergy was present, and that he believed in the right of Seceder Presbyterians to hear ministers of other denominations.
- K. The Chartiers Presbytery suspended him from the ministry.
1. He appealed his case to the highest authority in his denomination, the Synod, but in May 1808, after considering the charges against him for a week, it decided he had departed from some of the doctrines and practices of his denomination. They sentenced him to be “rebuked and admonished,” a mild punishment considering the circumstances.
  2. After his public rebuke, he was allowed to preach in Philadelphia for two months.
  3. Upon return to Washington, Pennsylvania, the Chartiers Presbytery made it clear he was no longer welcome.
  4. On September 13, 1808, he “declined the authority” of the Presbytery, thus withdrawing from the Presbyterian Church.
- L. He continued to preach to his friends and sympathizers whenever he had an opportunity.
1. He stressed the sinfulness of sectarian divisions, the need for a wider circle of Christian fellowship, and the importance of following the Scriptures rather than creeds or confessions of faith.
  2. Nearly a year after his withdrawal from the Presbyterians, he and his friends decided to form an organization to “give more definiteness” to their movement.
- M. On August 17, 1809 he and his associates organized the “Christian Association of Washington.”
1. It was never intended to be a church. It did not function like a church for it only met semi-annually.
  2. It was a group of “voluntary advocates for church reformation...formed for the sole purpose of promoting simple evangelical Christianity.”
- N. He was authorized to prepare a formal statement explaining the purposes of the Christian Association.
1. The result was the *Declaration and Address*—the most significant document in the history of the Restoration Movement in America. (See its full text on pages 38 and 39)
    - a. It was intended to set forth the purpose, policy and program of the new religious society.
    - b. The core of the “Address” is a series of 13 propositions which center in three basic concepts:
      - 1) Division and schism in the body of Christ is sin, being anti-Christian, anti-Scriptural, and anti-natural.



- 2) The Bible is all-sufficient as God's ultimate revelation and is the only adequate standard for doctrine, polity, and life.
- 3) A truly Christian spirit is manifested through mutual love and forbearance.
2. When the association met on September 7, 1809, he addressed the group and summarized the Association's purposes in the statement: "We speak where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent."

## II. Alexander Campbell (1788-1866)

- A. Born near Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland on September 12, 1788, he was the son of Thomas and Jane Campbell.
  1. His boyhood was spent on a farm near Rich Hill, some 10 miles from the town of Newry.
  2. His education began in an elementary school at Market Hill, was continued in an academy taught by his uncles, Archibald and Enos Campbell, and was, at all times, supervised by his father.
    - a. In his early years he manifested little devotion to learning and study.
    - b. Because of his lack of interest in educational pursuits, his father set him to labor with those hired to do the farming, hoping that he might benefit both physically and mentally.
    - c. In a few years, he turned his attention to study and, under his father's guidance, read extensively in literature, philosophy and religion.
- B. His parents' home was one which emphasized things spiritual.
  1. The Bible occupied a prominent place in their home and family worship was conducted daily.
  2. "Each member of the family memorized a selection from the Bible each day, recited it during the period of worship in the evening, and discussed it afterward. These verses were given again in the family worship conducted during the evening of the Lord's Day." (Enos E. Dowling, *The Restoration Movement*, p. 44)
- C. Alexander was 17 when his father opened an academy in Rich Hill. There he served as an assistant and continued to study under the direction of his father.
- D. After having a "religious experience," as taught in the Calvinistic Seceder Presbyterian doctrine, he was received into the Seceder Church at Ahorey where his father was minister.
  1. Thomas made known his desire for Alexander to become a minister.
  2. Even though he was not fully persuaded that he should give his life to the ministry, he turned his attention to the reading of theology and church history.
- E. In March, 1808, his father wrote for his family to join him in America.
  1. A smallpox epidemic, which affected the children in the family, delayed their departure.
  2. On October 1, 1808, they set sail on the *Hibernia* from Londonderry.
    - a. It was blown off its course and then brought into a bay of the island of Islay where it anchored for three days.
    - b. On the night of October 7 the winds became so strong the ship's anchors would not hold and it was blown upon a rock and began to fill with water.
      - 1) For a time it seemed that all would be lost.
      - 2) That night, Alexander solemnly vowed that if God spared his life he would dedicate it completely to His service.
    - c. The inhabitants of the island, perceiving the plight of the ship, succeeded in saving all of the passengers.
  3. Since their journey could not be continued immediately, the Campbell family decided to spend the time of waiting in the city of Glasgow.

- F. Alexander enrolled in the university in Glasgow for study in Greek, French, logic and philosophy. While there:
1. He read widely in poetry, ethics, natural history, philosophy and theology.
  2. He taught classes in Latin, grammar and arithmetic thus providing funds to pay for the expenses of his education.
- G. Alexander took letters of introduction with him to Glasgow.
1. He presented one of those letters to Greville Ewing, head of the Haldanean theological institute in Glasgow and minister in an Independent Church. He proved to be a good friend.
  2. He learned of the Haldane movement through Ewing who was a former minister of the Church of Scotland.
- H. The Haldane movement was led by Robert and James Alexander Haldane, wealthy members of the Church of Scotland.
1. They started a movement in the 1790's for an evangelical revival and greater missionary zeal in the Church of Scotland.
  2. Discouraged by a lack of response, they withdrew from the Church of Scotland in 1799 and began establishing "independent" churches.
  3. They practiced congregational independence and the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.
  4. By 1807 they became convinced that the New Testament churches did not sprinkle infants and started practicing immersion.
- J. Alexander's association with the Haldane movement weakened his loyalty to the Seceder Presbyterian Church.
1. Near the end of his Glasgow residence, he refused to participate in a Seceder communion service.
  2. He would never again be a member of the Presbyterian Church.
- K. The Campbells left Scotland aboard the *Latonia* on August 3, 1809, and arrived in New York on September 29, 1809.
1. They took the stage from New York to Philadelphia, arriving October 7.
  2. After spending Sunday and most of Monday in Philadelphia, they departed by wagon for Washington, some 350 miles away.
  3. At the same time, Thomas Campbell had set out to meet his family.
  4. The family was reunited somewhere on the road in western Pennsylvania. Three days later their journey ended at their new home.
- L. At the time of their reunion, neither father nor son knew that the other had renounced Presbyterianism.
1. The father soon recounted his experiences in America, including his trials before the presbytery and synod, his repudiation of both, and his continuing work as an independent minister.
  2. The son shared his religious experiences and his decision at Glasgow.
  3. They rejoiced at their unity of religious convictions.
  4. Alexander was delighted with the principles and program incorporated in his father's *Declaration and Address*.
    - a. He knew he wanted to give his life to the principles stated in it.
    - b. His father had penned this bold call for restoration, but it would be the son who would seek its accomplishment.
- M. Though without a church, Alexander wanted to give his life to simple New Testament Christianity.

### III. The Brush Run Church

- A. Alexander preached his first sermon on July 15, 1810.
  - 1. In the span of a year, he delivered more than 100 sermons.
  - 2. His father, rebuffed by the Presbyterians when he asked to be accepted as a minister in the main Presbyterian Church, saw his only alternative was to transform the Christian Association of Washington into a church.
- B. The Brush Run Church was organized on May 4, 1811.
  - 1. It began with thirty members, one elder (Thomas Campbell) and four deacons.
  - 2. The principle which was its undergirding was the autonomy of each local community of Christians—their right to organize themselves as a church without appealing to any ecclesiastical structure for authority and without subscribing to any creed other than the Bible.
  - 3. Two practices which became distinctive to the Restoration Movement were accepted by the Brush Run Church from its beginning: the weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper and immersion.
    - a. New members were immersed.
    - b. Thomas Campbell believed it was unnecessary for anyone who had been sprinkled in infancy to be rebaptized.

### IV. The Campbells on Baptism

- A. Alexander Campbell spent nearly a year in a study of baptism. He found no New Testament command or example for infant baptism.
  - 1. In a sermon on November 1, 1810, he argued that infant baptism was nowhere expressly enjoined, and that it should be made a matter of forbearance, even as circumcision was in the apostolic church.
  - 2. In June, 1811, he said, “As I am sure it is unscriptural to make this matter a term of communion, I let it *slip*. I wish to think and let think on these matters.” ( R. Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. I, p. 392)
- B. After his study, Alexander approached his father about the subject of baptism.
  - 1. Thomas admitted the New Testament was silent on sprinkling infants but he opposed “rebaptism” and insisted it was not necessary for Christians to “unchurch” themselves and put off Christ just to be able to make a new profession in immersion.
  - 2. Alexander yielded to his father’s views until his marriage to Margaret Brown and the birth of their first child in 1812.
- C. Alexander concluded, by 1812, that sprinkling was not New Testament baptism and that he “was then, in point of fact, an unbaptized person.”
  - 1. He felt he could not conscientiously preach to others what he had not obeyed.
  - 2. On June 12, 1812, Alexander Campbell and seven others, including his wife and father, were immersed by Matthias Luse, a Baptist minister.
    - a. Alexander refused to submit to the usual Baptist examination as to whether he was a proper candidate for baptism.
    - b. He insisted that baptism should follow a simple confession of faith in Christ.

### V. The Campbells as Baptists

- A. Alexander attended the annual meeting of the Redstone Baptist Association in 1812 even though he had no intention of uniting with the Baptist Church at the time.
  - 1. After the Baptists had made several overtures, the Campbells finally consented to unite the Brush Run Church with the Redstone Association in the fall of 1813.

2. They made it clear they were not typical Baptists for they submitted a lengthy written statement saying they would unite with the Association provided they would be free to teach whatever they “learned from the Holy Scriptures regardless of any human creed.”
- B. The Campbells spent 17 years among the Baptists (1813-1830) but the union was always an uneasy one for Baptist leaders sensed from the beginning that the Campbells were spreading non-Baptist doctrine throughout the Association.
- C. During this time, Alexander used three major avenues for pleading reformation among the Baptists:
  1. Sermons.
    - a. He became a popular preacher among Baptists but his sermons mostly reflected important differences between him and the Baptists.
    - b. His most famous sermon was his *Sermon on the Law* delivered at the meeting of the Redstone Association in 1816.
      - 1) Based on Romans 8:3, it pointed out the meaning of “the law,” limitations of “the law,” reasons for these limitations, how God remedied the defects of “the law” through Christ, and how the complete Law of Moses was nullified and superseded by the gospel of Christ.
      - 2) “This unfortunate sermon afterwards involved me in a seven years’ war with some members of the said Association, and became a matter of much debate.” (*Millenial Harbinger*, 1846, p. 493)
      - 3) At the next meeting of the Redstone Association this sermon was brought forth as sufficient cause to try Alexander on charges of heresy. The charges were dropped at that time but were repeated before the Association for several years.
      - 4) “It is, therefore, highly probable to my mind, that but for the persecution begun on the alleged heresy of this sermon, whether the present reformation had ever been advocated by me.” (*Ibid.*)
  2. Debates. Of his five public debates, twice Alexander defended Baptist views in debates with Presbyterians. He debated:
    - a. John Walker in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio in 1820.
    - b. W.L. Maccalla at Washington, Kentucky in 1823.
  3. *The Christian Baptist*.
    - a. This was a monthly journal he published that was soon widely read in Kentucky, Virginia, Ohio and elsewhere.
    - b. Its theme was “a restoration of the ancient order of things.”
    - c. Its real emphasis was on measuring everything by the New Testament and rejecting whatever it did not specifically authorize.

## VI. Walter Scott (1796-1861)

- A. During the winter of 1821-1822, Alexander Campbell became acquainted with Walter Scott who was to become Alexander’s closest fellow-worker in the Restoration Movement.
- B. He was born in Moffat, Scotland, in 1796. His parents were members of the Church of Scotland.
- C. Scott was educated at the University of Edinburgh.
- D. At the request of an uncle, George Innes, Scott came to the United States in 1818.
  1. He found employment in New York as a Latin tutor in an academy.
  2. In 1819 he traveled to Pittsburgh where he became an assistant to George Forrester in the academy that he conducted.

- E. George Forrester, also from Scotland, was a preacher for a small church associated with the Haldane movement.
1. Through Forrester he learned of the restoration concept and was immersed.
  2. Thus when he met Alexander Campbell in 1822, he was already prepared to join in the work of restoration.
- F. When Campbell started the *Christian Baptist* in 1823, Scott suggested its name and then wrote frequent articles for it.
- G. His greatest contribution to the Restoration Movement came as an evangelist in the Mahoning Association.
1. Having moved to Steubenville, Ohio in 1826 to open an academy, he attended the meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association.
  2. In 1827 he was appointed evangelist for the association being encouraged by Campbell to undertake this work who, because his critics in the Redstone Association were bent on excommunicating him, became a member of the Mahoning Baptist Association which was located in the “Western Reserve of Ohio.”
  3. The churches of the Mahoning Association had been more receptive to Campbell’s ideas and several of them had discarded their creed and resolved to follow the Bible as their sole guide and authority.
- H. Several years earlier, Scott read a tract by Henry Errett, an elder in a Haldanean church in New York, which taught that baptism is for the remission of sins.
1. It made such a deep impression on him that when Scott became a Mahoning Association evangelist he saw an opportunity to put it into practice.
  2. He preached that anyone could believe the New Testament testimony that Jesus was the Messiah and upon this faith be immersed for the remission of sins.
- J. Scott began a careful and thorough study of the New Testament discovering the following “order” in conversion: faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, gift of the Holy Spirit (later to be known as Scott’s “five-finger exercise”).
- K. Under Scott’s influence a great evangelistic movement based upon the Messiahship of Jesus and a clear presentation of the “plan” of salvation revealed in the New Testament swept the Western Reserve.
- L. Upon hearing Scott preach, Thomas Campbell wrote that even though they had understood the gospel correctly for a number of years, it was now being put into practice for the first time. “We have long known the former (the theory), and have spoken and published many things *correctly concerning* the ancient gospel, its simplicity and perfect adaptation to the present state of mankind...but I must confess that, in respect to the *direct exhibition* and *application* of it for that blessed purpose, I am at present for the first time upon the ground where the thing has appeared to be *practically exhibited* to the proper purpose.” (Thomas Campbell quoted by William Baxter, *Life of Elder Walter Scott*, pp. 158,159)
- M. Scott’s proclamation of “baptism for the remission of sins” supplied the Campbell movement with an essential it lacked—a successful evangelism.
1. It was an evangelism that emphasized reason instead of emotion and belief in the New Testament testimony rather than the direct working of the Holy Spirit.
  2. It was this evangelism which strained the relations between Campbell’s “reformers” and the Baptists to the breaking point.

## **VII. The Campbell's Break from the Baptists**

- A. The tension between the Campbells and the Baptists came to the breaking point between 1827 and 1830.
- B. One of the most important events in the separation process came in 1829 when the Beaver Association of western Pennsylvania adopted an "Anathema" condemning Campbell and the Mahoning Association.
  - 1. It was published in many Baptist journals.
  - 2. It was used as a pattern by other associations in withdrawing from the "reformers."
  - 3. The "errors" which it condemned included:
    - a. They, the Reformers, maintain that there is no promise of salvation without baptism.
    - b. That baptism should be administered to all who say they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, without examination on any other point.
    - c. That there is no direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind prior to baptism.
    - d. That baptism procures the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
    - e. That no creed is necessary for the church but the Scriptures as they stand.
- C. When the break with the Baptists became final in 1830, the Campbell reformation had churches scattered over several states with well over 10,000 members, most of them ex-Baptists.

## Declaration and Address

Dearly beloved brethren, why should we deem it a thing incredible that the Church of Christ, in this highly favored country, should resume that original unity, peace and purity which belong to its constitution, and constitute its glory? Or, is there that can be justly deemed necessary for this desirable purpose, both to conform to the model and adopt the practice of the primitive church, expressly exhibited in the New Testament? Whatever alterations this might produce in any or all the churches, should, we think, neither be deemed inadmissible nor ineligible. Surely such alteration would be every way for the better, and not for the worse, unless we should suppose the divinely inspired rule to be faulty, or defective. Were we, then, in our church Constitution and managements, to exhibit a complete conformity to the apostolic church, would we not be, in that respect, as perfect as Christ intended we should be? And should this not suffice us?

It is, to us, a pleasing consideration that all the churches of Christ which mutually acknowledge each other as such, are not only agreed in the great doctrines of faith and holiness, but are materially agreed as to the positive ordinances of the gospel institution; so that our differences, at most, are about things in which the kingdom of God does not consist, that is, about matters of private opinion or human invention. What a pity that the kingdom of God should be divided about such things!

Let none imagine that the subjoined propositions are at all intended as an overture toward a new creed or standard for the Church, or as in any wise designed to be made a term of communion; nothing could be further from our intention. They are merely designed for opening up the way, that we may come fairly firmly to original ground upon clear and certain premises, and take up things just as the apostles left them; that thus disentangled from the accuring embarrassments of intervening ages, we may stand with evidence upon the same ground on which the church stood at the beginning. Having said so much to solicit attention and prevent mistake, we submit as follows:

PROP. 1. 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.

PROP. 2. That although the Church of Christ upon earth must necessarily exist in particular and distinct societies, locally separate one from another, yet there ought to be no schisms, no uncharitable divisions among them. They ought to receive each other as Christ Jesus hath also received them, to the glory of God. And for this purpose they ought all to walk by the same rule, to mind and speak the same thing, and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

PROP. 3. That in order to do this, nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith, nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is expressly taught and enjoined upon them in the Word of God. Nor ought anything to be admitted as of divine obligation, in their church constitution and management, but what is expressly enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the New Testament Church, either in express terms or by approved precedent.

PROP. 4. That although the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inseparably connected, making together but one perfect and entire revelation of the divine will, for the edification and salvation of the Church, and therefore in that respect can not be separated, yet as to what directly and properly belongs to their immediate object, the New Testament is as perfect a constitution for the worship, discipline and government of the Old Testament Church, and the particular duties of its members.

PROP. 5. That with respect to the commands and ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, where the Scriptures are silent as to the express time or manner of performance, if any such there be, no human authority has power to interfere, in order to supply deficiency by making laws for the Church; nor can anything more be required of Christians in such cases, but only that they so observe these commands and ordinances as will evidently answer the declared and obvious end of their institution. Much less have any human authority power to impose new commands or ordinances upon the Church, which our Lord Jesus Christ has not enjoined. Nothing ought to be received into the faith and worship of the Church, or be made a term of communion among Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament.

PROP. 6. That although inferences and deductions from Scripture premises, when fairly inferred, may be truly called the doctrine of God's holy Word, yet are they not formally binding upon the consciences of Christians farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so; for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power and veracity of God. Therefore no such deductions can be made the terms of communion, but do properly belong to the after and progressive edification of the Church. Hence, it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truth ought to have any place in the Church's confession.

PROP. 7. That although doctrinal exhibitions of the great system of divine truths and defensive testimonies in opposition to prevailing errors be highly expedient, and the more full and explicit they be for those purposes the better; yet, as these must be in a great measure the effect of human reasoning, and of course must contain many inferential truths, they ought not to be made terms of Christian communion, unless we suppose, what is contrary to fact, that none have a right to the communion of the Church, but such as possess a very clear and decisive judgment, or are come to a very high degree of doctrinal information; whereas the Church from the beginning did, and ever will, consist of little children and young men, as well as fathers.

PROP. 8. That as it is not necessary that persons should have a particular knowledge or distinct apprehension of all divinely-revealed truths in order to entitle them to a place in the Church, neither should they, for this purpose, be required to make a profession more extensive than their knowledge; but that, on the contrary, their having a due measure of scriptural self-knowledge respecting their lost and perishing condition by nature and practice, and of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, accompanied with a profession of their faith in the obedience to him, in all things, according to his Word, is all that is absolutely necessary to qualify them for admission into his Church.

PROP. 9. That all who are able through grace to make such a profession, and to manifest the reality of it in their tempers and conduct, should consider each other as the precious saints of God, should love each other as brethren, children of the same family and Father, temples of the same Spirit, members of the same body, subjects of the same grace, objects of the same divine love, bought with the same price, and joint-heirs of the same inheritance. Whom God hath thus joined together no man should dare put asunder.

PROP. 10. That divisions among the Christians is a horrid evil, fraught with many evils. It is anti-Christian, as it destroys the visible unity of the body of Christ; as if he were divided against himself, excluding and excommunicating a part of himself. It is anti-scriptural, as being strictly prohibited by his sovereign authority, a direct violation of his express command. It is anti-natural, as it excites Christians to condemn, to hate and oppose one another, where bound by the highest and most endearing obligation to love each other as brethren, even as Christ has loved them. In a word, it is productive of confusion and of every evil work.

PROP. 11. That (in some instances) a partial neglect of the expressly revealed will of God, and (in others) an assumed authority for making the approbation of human opinions and of human inventions a term of communion, by introducing them into the constitution, faith or worship of the Church, are, and have been, the immediate, obvious and universally acknowledged causes of all corruptions and divisions that ever have taken place in the Church of God.

PROP. 12. That all that is necessary to the highest state of perfection and purity of the Church upon earth is, first, that none be received as members, but such as, having that due measure of scriptural self-knowledge described above, do profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures; nor, secondly, that any be retained in her communion longer than they continue to manifest the reality of their profession by their temper and conduct. Thirdly, that her ministers, duly and scripturally qualified, inculcate none other things than those very articles of faith and holiness expressly revealed and enjoined in the Word of God. Lastly, that in all their administrations they keep close by the observance of all divine ordinances, after the example of the primitive Church, exhibited in the New Testament, without any additions whatever of human opinions or inventions of men.

PROP. 13. Lastly, that if any circumstantial indispensably necessary to the observance of divine ordinances be not found upon the pages of express revelation, such, and such only, as are absolutely necessary for this purpose should be adopted under the title of human expedients, without any pretense to a more sacred origin, so that any subsequent alteration or difference in the observance of these things might produce no contention nor division in the Church.



# Lesson Nine:

## The Convergence of the Stone and Campbell Movements

### I. That Which Prompted the Merger

- A. While there were differences between the Stone and Campbell movements, there were enough similarities to attempt a union of the two movements since both Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell believed in the unity of all believers.
  1. Stone, in a letter to the *Christian Palladium* in 1840, wrote, “Christian union is my polar star. Here I stand as unmoved as the Allegheny mountains, nor can any thing drive me hence.” (*Christian Palladium*, p. 286, cited by Enos E. Dowling, *The Restoration Movement*, p. 63)
  2. Alexander Campbell, influenced by the principles of the *Declaration and Address*, written by his father, and the teachings of the Haldaneans, also gave emphasis to the unity of all Christians.
- B. The separation of Campbell’s reformers from the Baptists prepared the way for them to unite with the Stone movement.
- C. The movements were strong in essentially the same areas of the country, especially in Kentucky and Ohio.
- D. When Campbell had visited Stone in Georgetown, Kentucky in 1824, he saw the similarity in their pleas for New Testament Christianity.
- E. Three preachers from Stone’s Christian church, after hearing Walter Scott preach “faith, repentance, and baptism,” began preaching the same message and one of them, Joseph Gaston, began traveling with Scott, together the two men preaching through the Western Reserve of Ohio.

### II. The Similarities Between the Two Movements

- A. Both accepted the Scripture as the sole authority for Christian faith and denied that creedal statements should be bound on the church.
  1. From the Stone movement, the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* stated, “We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven...”
  2. Thomas Campbell’s *Declaration and Address* included such phrases as “The Divine word is our standard” and “Nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith; nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is expressly taught and enjoined upon them in the word of God.”
- B. Both pleaded for Christian unity on the basis of a return to the Bible.
- C. Both reacted against the Calvinistic theology of Presbyterianism and denied such doctrines as predestination and limited atonement.
- D. Both rejected infant sprinkling and practiced immersion of believers. Both taught there was some relation between baptism and the forgiveness of sins.
- E. Both refused to wear unscriptural or sectarian names.

- F. Both regarded denominational organizations such as presbyteries, synods and associations as unscriptural.
1. The Springfield Presbytery “willed” that the church resume her right of internal government and those in the Stone movement emphasized the freedom of local congregations from all other sources of ecclesiastical authority.
  2. When the Campbells’ Brush Run Church entered the Redstone Association, it was with the understanding that the Association had no authority to determine its doctrines and practices.
  3. The dissolution of the Mahoning Association because of the influence of Walter Scott, was a repudiation of all extra-congregational bodies.

### III. The Differences Between the Two Movements

- A. They disagreed about names.
1. The Campbell movement, though often called “reformers,” preferred to be called Disciples.
    - a. Any Scriptural name was acceptable to Campbell but he preferred “Disciples” or “Disciples of Christ.”
    - b. He believed that “disciples” was more ancient, more descriptive, more Scriptural and more unappropriated.
  2. The Stone movement insisted on wearing only the name Christian.
    - a. Rice Haggard, who had already influenced James O’Kelley to use the name “Christian,” also suggested the name to Stone.
    - b. Stone and the others who renounced Presbyterianism in Kentucky adopted and used “Christian” to the exclusion of all other names.
- B. They differed in the emphasis which they placed on immersion.
1. Stone’s “Christians” practiced immersion but they did not insist it was essential to the remission of sins.
    - a. Though immersion was the common practice within the Stone movement, it was not made a test of fellowship.
    - b. Stone, through further study, concluded that baptism was associated with the remission of sins and should be “administered in the name of Jesus to all believing penitents.”
  2. Campbell’s “Disciples” believed that baptism was essential to the remission of sins.
    - a. Through study, Alexander Campbell became fully convinced that infant baptism was unscriptural and that immersion was Scriptural baptism.
    - b. The “Disciples” made immersion a requisite for church membership.
- C. They differed on the Lord’s Supper. Stone said, “They insisted also upon weekly communion, which we had neglected.”
- D. Their evangelistic methods were quite different.
1. The Stone movement preachers stressed the emotional side of religion and encouraged sinners to “weep and mourn” as they sought salvation.
  2. Stone emphasized the role of the Holy Spirit in conversion and feared that the Disciples “were not sufficiently explicit on the influence of the Spirit.”
  3. Campbell and Scott emphasized the role of reason in conversion.
    - a. Faith was seen as an act of the reason more than the emotion.
    - b. Faith was defined as an acceptance of the New Testament message that Jesus was the Messiah.

- E. Unity was achieved slowly.
  - 1. Because of their differences and since both movements stressed the autonomy of each local church, unity had to come gradually.
  - 2. The only way unity could be realized would be for congregations of the two groups to extend fellowship to one another or merge.
    - a. The first such merger occurred at Millersburg, Kentucky, on April 24, 1831.
    - b. There was a church representing each movement in Millersburg and they agreed that they were “one as far as faith and practice was concerned” so they simply began meeting together as one congregation.

#### **IV. John T. Johnson (1788-1856)**

- A. Johnson was a Kentucky preacher associated with the Campbell movement who probably did more to bring the Disciples and Christians together than anyone in either group.
- B. Johnson was a lawyer and a two-term Congressman who renounced politics for the pulpit.
- C. Johnson and Barton W. Stone both lived in Georgetown, Kentucky and were close friends.
- D. In November 1831, Stone preached at Johnson’s Great Crossing church and the two men discussed the possibility of unity.
  - 1. Raccoon John Smith and John Rogers joined the discussion and the four men agreed to call a general meeting and see if the members of the two churches desired unity.
  - 2. Two meetings were held. The first was in Georgetown, December 26-31, 1831. The second was in Lexington over New Year’s weekend, 1832.
  - 3. Raccoon John Smith, spokesman for the Disciples at the Lexington meeting concluded: “Let us, then, my brethren, be no longer Campbellites or Stoneites, New Lights or Old Lights, or any other kind of lights, but let us come to the Bible and to the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need.”
  - 4. Smith and Stone exchanged “the right hand of fellowship” which symbolized the uniting of the two groups.

#### **V. Steps Were Taken to Encourage Unity among the Scattered Churches**

- A. Raccoon John Smith (Disciple) and John Rogers (Christian) traveled together through Kentucky urging brethren to unite in every community where there were two congregations.
- B. Barton W. Stone invited John T. Johnson to become associate editor of the *Christian Messenger*, a journal he had founded, in 1826.
- C. The decade following the uniting of the Stone and Campbell movements was a period of consolidation and growth.

# Lesson Ten:

## Cooperation Meetings and the Missionary Society

### Introduction

1. The 1830's were a time of unity, optimism and growth for the church but they were a time when seeds of later controversy were being sown which would eventually destroy the unity of the Restoration Movement.
2. The 1830's saw the appearance of "cooperation meetings" among churches and the 1840's the organization of the American Christian Missionary Society (1849) and controversy which continued until the movement has been divided.

### I. The Cooperation Meeting

- A. In 1831-1832, Alexander Campbell published a series of seven articles on "The Cooperation of Churches" in the *Millennial Harbinger*.
  1. He believed the world would never be evangelized unless churches cooperated in the proclamation of the gospel and these articles were a plea for that cooperation.
  2. He argued that the New Testament provided examples of churches cooperating with one another but insisted that the exact details of "how" were left to the discretion of every generation.
  3. He suggested, as an example of how churches might work together, that all churches in his home county have an annual general meeting at which plans could be made for evangelizing the area, selecting an evangelist and providing for an evangelist's support.
- B. Following Campbell's suggestions, churches in many areas began to organize "cooperation meetings" throughout the 1830's.
  1. Such a meeting was held in Wellsburg, Virginia, near Campbell's home, on April 12, 1834.
    - a. The 13 churches represented there agreed to employ two evangelists, appoint a treasurer to receive funds from the churches for the evangelists' support and set up a committee of 13 to supervise the evangelists and their work.
    - B. There was opposition to the Wellsburg meeting and a year later it was dissolved.
  2. The churches moved slowly in the organization of such cooperation meetings in the 1830's but after 1840 the movement gained momentum.
- C. State-wide cooperation meetings began to be held.
  1. A state-wide meeting was held in Springfield, Illinois in 1834.
  2. The 1840 *Millennial Harbinger* carried announcements of cooperation meetings in six states: Illinois, Virginia, Missouri, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana which indicated that such meetings were gaining acceptance.
- D. Some preachers viewed the cooperation meetings with misgivings.
  1. T.M. Henley, a prominent Virginian, wrote Campbell in 1836 that it seemed to him "like a departure from the simplicity of the Christian institution to have cooperation meetings with *Presidents and Secretaries*, calling for the *Messengers* of churches, and laying off districts."

2. Many, in their opposition, were like Henley who insisted he favored cooperation and proposed an alternative—cooperation through a local church.
  - a. He recommended that if a congregation wished to send out an evangelist but was unable to support him, it could invite other churches to assist.
  - b. There are many examples of churches following the plan of cooperating through one church in the 1830's and 1840's.
- E. Alexander Campbell, and others, believed the cooperation meetings had not gone far enough.
  1. Campbell wrote a series of sixteen articles entitled "The Nature of the Christian Organization" (1841-1843) in which he proposed the establishment of a general organization among the churches.
    - a. He argued that since the church is described as "the body of Christ," a body must necessarily have organization.
    - b. He admitted that the New Testament did not provide for any general organization of the church but he concluded, therefore, the creation of such an organization was left to the judgment of the churches.
    - c. He proposed that the churches hold a convention and devise a general organization.
  2. Walter Scott strongly opposed Campbell's proposal for a general organization.
    - a. Scott did not agree with Campbell's conclusion that the churches were "deficient in organization."
    - b. He insisted that when a church had elders and deacons, it was "already organized" and he claimed that this was the view of the entire brotherhood.
    - c. He also asked, "Who made brother Campbell an organizer over us?"
- F. The first brotherhood organization was the American Christian Bible Society.
  1. It was organized in Cincinnati, Ohio, early in 1845.
  2. D.S. Burnett, a prominent Cincinnati preacher, was its president and wrote its constitution.
    - a. Its purpose, according to its constitution, was "to aid in the distribution of the Sacred Scriptures" throughout the world.
    - b. Its constitution provided for officers, an annual meeting, and the organization of auxiliary societies which would place their surplus funds at the disposal of the society.
  3. It received enthusiastic support from most brotherhood periodicals.
  4. Campbell opposed it because it had been organized by a few Cincinnati brethren rather than by a general convention of the churches.

## **II. The American Christian Missionary Society**

- A. Early in 1849, Alexander Campbell resumed his efforts to persuade the brotherhood of the need for "a more efficient organization" of the churches.
- B. An editorial consensus among the brotherhood periodicals agreed that a general convention would be held at Cincinnati on October 23, 1849, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Bible society.
  1. 156 people, representing ten states, were present.
  2. Though Alexander Campbell was not there, his son-in-law, W.K. Pendleton, represented his views thus causing some to suggest that Campbell's "shadow fell over the sessions."
  3. It was generally understood that one action of the convention would be the organization of a missionary society for the brotherhood.

4. The convention decided that:
    - a. A missionary society would be organized.
    - b. The Bible society would be commended to the brotherhood for its support.
    - c. The two societies would be instructed to work together.
  5. D.S. Burnett also wrote the constitution for the new Missionary Society.
    - a. It stated that the object of the missionary society would be “to promote the preaching of the gospel in destitute places” throughout the world.
    - b. It said the society would consist of Annual Delegates, Life Members, and Life Directors; that any church could appoint a delegate to the society’s annual convention by contributing \$20; the society would have officers (president, 20 vice presidents, two secretaries, treasurer, managers); there would be an annual meeting of the entire society; and that the society would have an Executive Board to transact business between meetings.
  6. The final action of the convention was to authorize a letter to Campbell informing him that he had been elected president of the new missionary society.
    - a. He withdrew his objections to the Bible society since it had been endorsed by a brotherhood convention.
    - b. He accepted the presidency of the missionary society and served in that office for the rest of his life (1849-1866).
- C. The first work the society undertook was to send Dr. James T. Barclay and his family to Jerusalem as missionaries.
1. Arriving in Jerusalem in 1850, the work proved discouraging and was discontinued in 1853.
  2. Other early activities included sending Alexander Cross, a freed slave, to Liberia and J.O. Beardslee to Jamaica.
- D. The American Christian Missionary Society (ACMS) never had the support of the entire brotherhood. Opposition to it arose immediately after its establishment and never was silenced.
1. Jacob Creath, Jr. was the most outspoken critic of it.
    - a. Creath reminded everyone that when he had started the *Christian Baptist* in 1823, Campbell denounced missionary societies. Creath wrote of Campbell’s change of mind, “If you were right in the *Christian Baptist*, you are wrong now. If you are right now, you were wrong then.”
    - b. He charged that supporters of the society had “totally abandoned” the rule that “the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants.”
  2. Churches, even groups of churches, adopted resolutions opposing the missionary society stating, as did the resolution adopted by the church in Connelsville, Pennsylvania, that the church was “not a missionary society, but emphatically and pre-eminently *the* missionary society—the only one authorized by Jesus Christ.” And if the church was the divine missionary society, “all other societies for this purpose are not only unscriptural, but they are unnecessary and uncalled for.”
  3. The most important opponent of the ACMS in the pre-civil war years was Tolbert Fanning (1810-1874).
    - a. He spent most of his adult life around Nashville and was the most influential preacher in the South during the 1850’s and 1860’s.
    - b. He founded Franklin College, trained many preachers, and edited several religious journals.

- c. When the ACMS was founded, he was elected a vice president and supported it throughout the 1850's but gradually he came to question it.
  - d. In founding the *Gospel Advocate* in 1855, he stated his chief purpose was to examine the subjects of church organization and Christian cooperation.
  - e. In relation to the ACMS, he wrote in the *Advocate*, "The Church of God is the only divinely authorized Missionary, Bible, Sunday School and Temperance Society; the only institution in which the Heavenly Father will be honored...and through no other agency can man glorify his Maker." He continued by saying that it was wrong for Christians to "do the work of the church through merely human agencies."
4. During the years just before the Civil War, a majority of Southern Christians came to share Fanning's view but there was no sense of alienation from those who supported the society.

# Lesson Eleven:

## Pacifism, the Civil War and the Instrumental Music Controversy

### I. The Civil War and Pacifism

- A. The plea that “brother should not go to war with brother” was often heard among Christians when the Civil War began. It was a spiritual strength which made up for geographic weakness.
  1. Except for Walter Scott, all the early restoration leaders had been pacifists.
  2. The general view of preachers prior to the Civil War is illustrated by the plea made by J.W. McGarvey that called upon Christians not to participate in the fighting warning that anyone who engaged in “fratricidal strife” would incur God’s displeasure and that the church should remain a united body.
- B. Still, there were thousands of Christians on both sides who enlisted in the armies.
  1. Alexander Campbell’s son, Barton W. Stone, Jr., T.B. Larimore, B.F. Hall, Addison and Randolph Clark, and Austin McGary all served in the confederate army.
  2. James A. Garfield became a Colonel in the Union army even making recruiting speeches on the steps of church buildings.
- C. Benjamin Franklin in the North and Tolbert Fanning in the South, the most popular preachers in the brotherhood in their respective sections of the country, illustrate the tension felt by many when the war came.
  1. Each was a pacifist but each felt strong sectional loyalties.
  2. Each, though, believed that the Christian had a higher obligation which demanded that he stand aloof from the Civil War.
- D. The resolutions of the American Christian Missionary Society (ACMS).
  1. The first wartime meeting of the ACMS was held in Cincinnati in October 1861.
    - a. The South was not represented.
    - b. Dr. John P. Robison of Bedford, Ohio introduced a resolution calling on “brethren everywhere to do all in their power to sustain the proper and constitutional authorities of the Union.”
    - c. James A. Garfield, appearing in the uniform of a Union officer, made a short speech favoring the resolution and it was adopted with only one dissenting vote.
  2. When news of the resolution of the ACMS reached Southern Christians, Tolbert Fanning, who had pleaded with Southern brethren to remain aloof from the hostilities, was heartbroken and angry.
    - a. Just before the *Gospel Advocate* was forced to suspend publication for the duration of the war, he informed his readers that the ACMS had adopted resolutions approving “the wholesale murder” of the Southern people.
    - b. He did not see how he could “ever regard preachers who enforce political opinions by the sword, in any other light than monsters in intention, if not in very deed” and he pleaded, “How can Christian men of the South do otherwise?”



3. Two years later in 1863, because of increasing pressure on it from a small but vocal group of militant abolitionists within the brotherhood, the ACMS adopted an even stronger resolution supporting the North.
    - a. It had faced ugly rumors which had circulated through the North that it was disloyal to the Union.
    - b. Thus, in 1863, it denounced these rumors as “false and slanderous” and declared its unqualified support of the North.
    - c. This action alienated many former supporters of the society including J.W. McGarvey, Moses E. Lard, and Benjamin Franklin.
- E. Sectional bitterness, emphasized by the society’s pro-Union resolutions, was evident when the war ended.
1. Early in 1866, Tolbert Fanning proposed a “general consultation meeting” of Southern Christians.
    - a. He believed they needed to “counsel together” and assess the condition of the church.
    - b. It was held at Murfreesboro, Tennessee in June 1866 and six Southern states were represented.
    - c. Benjamin Franklin objected to the fact that Northern Christians were excluded saying, “There is no South or North in our gospel.”
    - d. Fanning responded to Franklin by saying that he doubted “the propriety of a hasty religious *reconstruction*” with Northern brethren since they had been “employing the fist of wickedness” against their brethren in the South.
  2. When the *Gospel Advocate* resumed publication in 1866, David Lipscomb quickly wrote about the wartime resolutions of the ACMS in plain and bitter language concluding, “We felt, we still feel, that the Society committed a great wrong against the Church and cause of God. We have felt, we still feel, that without evidence of a repentance of the wrong, it should not receive the confidence of the Christian brotherhood.”
  3. The Civil War shattered the sense of brotherhood between Northern and Southern Christians.
    - a. It alone was not responsible for the ultimate division.
    - b. The South’s narrower understanding and application of the restoration principle was the primary factor for the division.

## II. The Instrumental Music Controversy

- A. Instrumental music was not used, or its use even discussed, in the early days of the Restoration Movement.
1. The first discussion of the question came in 1851 when a reader asked J.B. Henshall, editor of the *Ecclesiastical Reformer*, whether instrumental music might not add solemnity to the worship.
    - a. Henshall’s reply was against instrumental music but he later carried articles by others favoring it.
    - b. Seeing these articles, John Rogers wrote Alexander Campbell and asked his opinion about instrumental music.
    - c. Campbell stated that if churches had “no real devotion or spirituality in them,” instrumental music might be “an essential prerequisite to devotion.” He added, “To all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert.”
  2. After Campbell’s statement, the question was not even discussed again for another ten years.

- B. The first congregation to introduce instrumental music into the worship was the Midway, Kentucky church.
1. Dr. L.L. Pinkerton, one of the earliest “liberals” in the brotherhood, was the preacher at Midway and they began using a small melodeon around 1860.
  2. Pinkerton wrote in 1860 that, as far as he knew, he was the only preacher in Kentucky who advocated using instrumental music in the churches and that Midway was the only church using it.
  3. The reason for its use in Midway was that the singing was so bad, according to Pinkerton, that it would “scare even the rats from worship.”
  4. There was opposition to the instrument at Midway. One of the elders, Adam Hibler, and a slave removed the melodeon through the window of the church building but later returned it.
- C. The first extended discussion of the music question was in 1864-1865.
1. W.K. Pendleton, editor of the *Millennial Harbinger* after Campbell, conceded that instrumental music was not used during the early centuries of the Christian era but to him, though, it was a question of “mere expediency.”
  2. The main participants in this discussion were A.S. Hayden and J.W. McGarvey.
    - a. Hayden agreed with Pendleton that it was a matter of expediency.
    - b. McGarvey believed otherwise. He wrote, “In the earlier years of the present Reformation, there was entire unanimity in the rejection of instrumental music from our public worship. It was declared unscriptural, inharmonious with the Christian institution, and a source of corruption.”
    - c. McGarvey always believed the instrument was wrong and refused to be a member of a congregation using it.
- D. Moses E. Lard also unyieldingly opposed the instrument.
1. In 1864 he called the organ “a defiant and impious innovation on the simplicity and purity of the ancient worship.”
  2. Lard advised the brotherhood on how to deal with the problem.
    - a. Every preacher should resolve never to enter a church containing an organ.
    - b. No Christian who moved from a congregation should ever unite with one using an organ.
    - c. Whenever a church introduced an organ, those who opposed it should abandon the church immediately.
  3. Lard said if Christians would follow his advice that, “These organ-grinding churches will in the lapse of time be broken down, or wholly apostatize, and the sooner they are in fragments the better for the cause of Christ.”
- E. Even though in 1868, according to Benjamin Franklin, there were only 50 churches out of 10,000 which used the instrument, in the 1870’s it began to be introduced into many more.
1. It was usually done in larger, urban churches indicating, perhaps, that social and economic influences played a part in its growing use.
  2. Benjamin Franklin saw the instrument as indicative of bigger changes within the church. He wrote that the organ was “the accompaniment of lifeless, formal and fashionable churches, in cities, where pride, aristocracy and selfishness prevail; where the poor have no sympathy, comfort, or place.”
- F. David Lipscomb had little to say about instrumental music in worship in the *Gospel Advocate* because though it was the focal point of bitter controversy in the North, churches in the South were already opposed to it so it was simply not an issue there, therefore, there was little need to discuss it.

### III. Why Did the Restoration Movement Suffer Division?

- A. Two antagonistic interpretations of the restoration principle.
  - 1. Alexander Campbell had formulated the strict view in the *Christian Baptist* when he insisted that the New Testament was a blueprint for the church and that any practice not specified in this pattern was forbidden.
  - 2. As the first traces of a denominational mentality began to appear in the movement, many interpreted the restoration principle less rigidly by allowing many practices as “expedients.”
  - 3. This was the basic issue whether the question was the society or the organ.
  - 4. Moses E. Lard had warned in 1869 that expediency might be the rock on which the Restoration Movement went to pieces.
- B. Sectionalism and Civil War bitterness was also a factor.
  - 1. The churches in the South had turned against the ACMS in the 1850’s but their opposition, at that time, did not produce any real feeling of alienation between them and Northern Christians.
  - 2. When sectional feelings were added to the doctrinal disagreements, the sense of oneness was shattered.
- C. The growing social and economic differences among Christians, particularly in the North.
  - 1. Frontier and rural conservatism was set against the urban demands of a more dignified and progressive religion.
  - 2. A sociologist of religion would describe this as the evolution of a denominational spirit.
  - 3. More liberal thinkers, like Isaac Errett, favored looser interpretation of the restoration principle and came to think of the movement as a denomination among denominations.
  - 4. More conservative thinkers, such as David Lipscomb and Benjamin Franklin, were committed to the past and to a narrower view of the restoration plea having as their firm conviction that their brotherhood was not another denomination but was the one true church restored.

# Lesson Twelve:

## Major Controversial Issues of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### I. Bible Classes

- A. Whether it was scriptural for a church to have Bible classes was discussed just after 1900.
- B. The fundamental cause of this issue is a failure on the part of those who oppose the Bible class arrangement to recognize general authority and the law of expediency, a belief that there must be specific authority for all things.
- C. This issue was more serious in Texas than anywhere else mostly because two early Texas colleges, Lockney and Gunter, were operated by those who opposed Bible classes.
- D. Ultimately, a great majority of the churches accepted Bible classes as a valuable expedient but a tiny minority have continued to regard such classes as unscriptural.

### II. Premillennialism

- A. The question of premillennialism was first raised in 1914-1915 when R.H. Boll began teaching it in his front page editorials in the *Gospel Advocate*.
  - 1. He was dropped from the *Advocate* staff but in 1916 became editor of *Word and Work* where he continued to present the premillennial view.
  - 2. His views precipitated a stormy controversy which plagued the church for 20 years.
- B. Two milestones in the premillennial controversy.
  - 1. A written debate between Boll and H. Leo Boles (1928).
  - 2. An oral debate between Foy E. Wallace and Charles M. Neal (1933).
- C. Foy E. Wallace led the struggle against premillennialism in the church and, more than any other preacher, was responsible for its ultimate rejection.
- D. Louisville, Kentucky was, and continues to be, the center of brotherhood premillennialism.

### III. The War Question

- A. The question whether a Christian can take life in the military service of his country, though a frequent topic of debate among churches of Christ, has not been made a test of fellowship leaving the final answer to the individual's conscience.
- B. David Lipscomb's pacifism continued to have strong influence even through the World War I era when most periodical articles stated that Christians could not bear arms.
- C. In 1926, of 450 preachers who responded to the survey question, "Do you believe that a Christian can scripturally take human life in war?", there were only 24 who responded "yes."
- D. During World War II, a sharper division appeared.
  - 1. The *Bible Banner* took the view that a Christian could accept military service.
  - 2. During both world wars, most Christian men disregarded pacifism in the pulpit and served in the armed forces. The "conscientious objector" was the exception and not the rule.

### IV. Church Cooperation, Institutionalism and the Social Gospel

- A. Beginning in the 1930's but coming to the forefront in the late 1940's, 1950's and even into the 1960's, the most serious issue that churches of Christ faced in this century is church cooperation, institutionalism and the social gospel.

1. Many debates have been held, churches have divided, and fellowship has been broken.
  2. This is the most serious division, in relation to numbers, that churches of Christ have suffered.
- B. A definition of terms.
1. Church cooperation, i.e., the sponsoring church arrangement. A church and its eldership assumes oversight of other churches in all or part of their work.
  2. Institutionalism. The support of human institutions such as orphan homes, colleges, hospitals, etc., from the church treasury.
  3. The social gospel. The use of recreation and unlimited general benevolence as evangelistic tools.
- C. This issue, as with that of the missionary society, is a question of whether or not the church, as ordained by God, is sufficient to do the work God has given it to do.
- D. Many think the division this issue has caused is just over the support of orphan homes from the church treasury, just as some think the only difference with the Christian Church is instrumental music, but much more is involved.
- E. The difference is a basic approach to Biblical authority. Those supporting these views use as their authority such principles as:
1. The authority of silence.
  2. “The end justifies the means.”
  3. “There is no difference between the individual Christian and the church.”
- F. The testimony of Floyd A. Decker illustrates the institutional church has embraced practices and doctrines that were unknown among those who adhered to the restoration principle of speaking “where the Bible speaks” and being “silent where it is silent.”
1. Decker was the “pastor” of the Murrell Boulevard Christian Church in Paducah, Kentucky.
  2. In 1930 he heard J. Petty Ezell preach on the differences between the Christian Church and the church one can read of in the Bible. Moved by a love for the truth, he left the Christian Church.
  3. In 1944, he wrote an article titled, “Why I Left the Christian Church” which appeared in *Unity Forum*. (See page 53)
    - a. In the article he mentioned 13 reasons for breaking ties with the Christian Church.
    - b. Today, all of these things are practiced by some churches of Christ.
      - 1) If these were being practiced by churches of Christ in 1930, do you think Floyd Decker would have left the Christian Church?
      - 2) Many of the churches of Christ which have embraced these practices are continuing on the path of digression and are close to accepting instrumental music in their worship (some are already justifying clapping while singing with the same reasoning the Christian Church uses to justify instrumental music in their services).
    - c. His article shows that these “progressive” churches are teaching a doctrine that is new, originates with men and is foreign to Scripture.

# Why I Left the Christian Church

Floyd A. Decker

1. The Christian Church has women Counselors, Directors and Lecturers; the church of Christ does not (1 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:34).
1. 2. The Christian Church has Educational Directors, Associate Ministers and Youth Directors; the church of Christ has elders, deacons, evangelists and teachers (Eph. 4:11; Phil. 1:1).
3. The Christian Church has Missionary, Benevolent and Educational Organizations to execute the work of the church; the church of Christ does not (Eph. 4:4; Eph. 3:10, 21).
4. The Christian Church celebrates days of heathen worship, such as Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas; the church of Christ does not (Gal. 4:10).
5. The Christian Church fellowships various denominations in their activities, leaving the impression that all are brethren; the church of Christ does not (2 John 9-11; Gal. 1:6-10).
6. The Christian Church seeks to get crowds with Youth Meetings, Campaigns for Christ, Rallies, Drives and Promotions; the church of Christ does not (Rom. 1:16; Rev. 22:18, 19).
7. The Christian Church emphasizes society and the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature, with church carnivals, bands, plays, choruses, dramatics, church kitchens, church camps, and elaborate fellowship halls; the church of Christ does not (1 Cor. 10:7; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22,34).
8. The Christian Church elevates its preachers above the rest of the members by using such titles as Pastor, Superintendent, President and Doctor, but the church of Christ does not (Matt. 23:5-12; Job 32:21 ,22). Also, the Christian Church has forced its ministers into the denominational "Pastor System" by hinting, suggesting, complaining, and even demanding that its preachers run after the members, taxi the people here and there, and hold hands of the sick. The church of Christ does not expect this and God does not expect this sort of treatment from those who have been called to preach the gospel. Acts 6 points out that it is not scriptural for ministers of the gospel to leave the word of God and serve tables. The church has women servants and has deacons who are supposed to take care of the physical needs of the congregation. And the church has elders who are entrusted with the "souls" of the members. And the preacher is left free to study, meditate, pray and carry on an unhampered work of preaching the gospel to the lost (Acts 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:15; 4:1-5). And if a church does not have elders, etc., it can no more scripturally introduce the "Pastor System" than it can introduce the piano because it has poor singing.
9. The Christian Church misuses the name "Christian," which is a noun, by speaking of "Christian nations," "Christian schools," and "Christian Church." The church of Christ does not (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16).
10. The Christian Church takes up collections at services other than on the first day of the week, and uses unscriptural means such as suppers, property rentals and special collections to raise money for the church; the church of Christ follows 1 Corinthians 16:1,2 by having each member lay by in store on the first day of the week. This is its only way of raising money.
11. The Christian Church owns and operates Publishing Houses, Radio Stations, Hospitals, and other Benevolent Societies; churches of Christ build nothing but churches (Eph. 3:21).
12. The Christian Church owns, supports and operates schools for secular education, through theological schools; the church of Christ does not (1 Tim. 3:15).
13. The Christian Church has a compromising spirit, will not defend its doctrine, is nothing but a man-made denomination, has no regard for the authority of the Bible, bases its practice on the silence of the scriptures, and appeals to the traditions of the elders rather than to the simple unadulterated gospel of Christ. The Christian Church is not part of the New Testament church and should not be regarded as a friend of Christ nor of the truth.

# Lesson Thirteen:

## The Need for Continued Restoration

### I. Reflections on the Restoration Movement

- A. We are eternally indebted to those brave men and women who cast off denominational shackles and began to speak where the Bible had spoken and be silent where it was silent.
  1. They had not been concerned with starting a new denomination but had only been interested in going back to pure, New Testament Christianity where all were known simply as “Christians.” (Acts 11:26)
  2. Through the labors of these individuals we have learned to demand a “thus saith the Lord” for everything we do in religion.
- B. A word of caution.
  1. While we may consider ourselves heirs of the restoration movement, we must never forget that we do not owe even the slightest allegiance to the movement itself.
    - Since the movement’s goal was not to start something new to which allegiance would be given, but rather to get people everywhere to sever ties with manmade religious movements and return to the Bible and Christ, to give allegiance to the movement itself would be a violation of the most fundamental principle and goal of the movement.
  2. We must not judge whether a thing is good or bad, authorized or unauthorized, based on the views of restoration movement.
    - a. The movement was composed of many men of many different denominational backgrounds who held many divergent views making it easy to find the seeds of every modern branch of the movement present during the movement.
    - b. We need to look only to our Bibles for what we should do or not do.
- C. Often, when we think of the efforts of those involved in the movement to restore New Testament Christianity, we envision, in reality, only a partial restoration.
  1. We primarily think of restoring the *outward form* of true Christianity. We think of restoring:
    - a. The non-denominational structure of the church.
    - b. The principle of congregational independence.
    - c. The New Testament pattern of local church organization—elders and deacons.
    - d. Non-instrumental music in worship services.
    - e. The weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper.
    - f. Baptism to its rightful place in the scheme of redemption.
  2. All of the above items are essential but, by themselves, they are not enough.

### II. The Need for Continued Restoration

- A. We cannot restore true New Testament Christianity just by restoring the outward forms established by Christ and His apostles. More is involved than mere outward practices.
- B. Restoration must continue in an effort to recapture the inner spirit of New Testament Christianity—those attitudes of heart and qualities of character which the New Testament sets forth as being as essential as any outward practices or forms.

### III. The Attitudes of New Testament Christianity Which Must Be Restored

- A. The zeal of New Testament Christianity (Titus 2:14).
  - 1. Even when scattered by persecution, the members of the early church went everywhere preaching the word. (Acts 8:4)
  - 2. Because they were filled with a burning desire to serve the Lord, the early church soon spread the gospel throughout the entire world. (Col. 1:23)
  - 3. We sometimes have difficulty spreading the word over our backyard fence or even to our own children.
- B. New Testament courage. (Phil. 4:13)
  - 1. We need men and women who will willingly stand up for Christ.
  - 2. New Testament examples of courage:
    - a. Stephen. (Acts 7)
    - b. Peter and John before the council of the Jews. (Acts 4-5)
    - c. Paul in the face of countless trials and perils. (2 Cor. 11:23-28; 2 Tim. 4:16)
  - 3. Sadly, many today who profess to be Christians do not have the courage to let their friends know they are Christians.
- C. New Testament generosity.
  - 1. New Testament examples of generosity:
    - a. The Jerusalem Christians sold their property to provide for their brethren. (Act 4:37)
    - b. Christians at Antioch sent to the needs of their brethren in Jerusalem. (Acts 11:29)
    - c. Christians at Macedonia, in spite of their own poverty, gave beyond what anyone thought they could to help the needy saints in Judea (2 Cor. 8:1-5).
  - 2. The saints at Macedonia provide the key to the generosity of all Christians: They had first given themselves to the Lord. (2 Cor. 8:5)
  - 3. One who is not generous with the blessings he has received from the Lord cannot claim to have restored New Testament Christianity for the love of God does not dwell in him. (1 John 3:17)
- D. Brotherly love. (Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:22)
  - 1. Time and again congregations have been split wide open by envy, strife, and malicious gossip by people who claim to be members of the body of the Lord.
  - 2. New Testament Christianity is characterized by brotherly love (John 13:34-35) which will even be gentle when a brother has been overtaken by sin. (Gal. 6:1)
  - 3. The qualities of this love are related in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.
- E. Belief in the power of prayer. (Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 18:1)
  - 1. Sometimes Christians are hesitant to pray for anything definite because they fear some will think they are asking for a miracle but God's promise to answer the prayers of His children is not restricted to the age of miraculous gifts.
  - 2. If Christians would spend less time fretting about their problems and more time praying about them, they would be much better off. (1 Thes. 5:17)
- F. The hope and confidence of early Christians.
  - 1. Just as the Bible says baptism saves us (1 Pet. 3:21), it also states we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24).
  - 2. People who do not have a confident hope of heaven are not going there.
  - 3. A lack of hope stems from one or both of the following:
    - a. A knowledge that we are not living in the proper manner which would enable us to go there.
    - b. A lack of faith in the grace and mercy of God.



G. Watchfulness. (Matt. 26:41)

1. Christians in the early church anticipated and desired the Lord's return. (Rev. 22:20)
2. Possibly the passing of 1900 years of silence from heaven has lulled some to sleep.
  - a. Few really imagine that Christ will return in their lifetimes.
  - b. Fewer consider the fact that He might actually return at any minute as a "thief in the night." (1 Thes. 5:2)
3. People who are not watching usually are not prepared.

H. New Testament joy. (1 John 1:4; Phil. 4:4)

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, an unbeliever, once remarked that if Christians wanted him to believe that they had a Redeemer, they were going to have to start looking a little more redeemed. His point: People who are truly redeemed from sin ought to be the happiest people in the world.
2. If we wish to persuade people that we have restored the New Testament order established by our Redeemer, we are going to have to start showing more joy in our redemption.

J. The total dedication to Jesus that many early Christians possessed. (Mark 10:28; Matt. 16:24)

1. Jesus was not kidding when He said that we would have to follow Him even if it meant giving up everything that is dear to us, even family (Matt. 10:37-39).
2. Sadly some have a difficult time giving up their favorite TV programs to follow Him.

## Conclusion

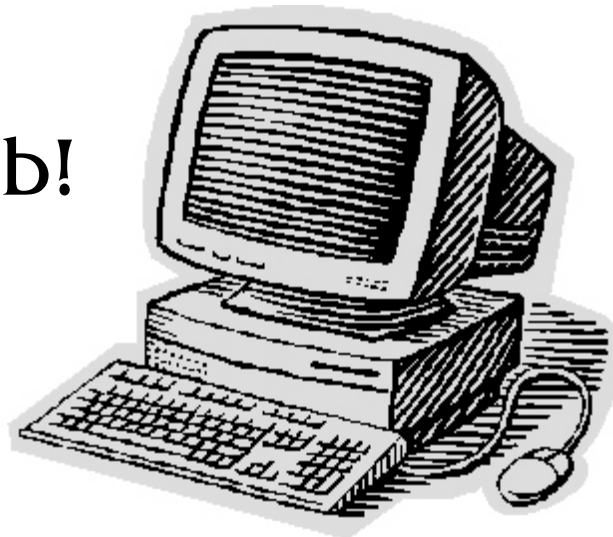
1. Generally speaking, we need a complete restoration of the life of Christ in every person who claims to be His disciple (Gal. 2:20; 1 Cor. 11:1). Anything less is not enough.
2. Without a restoration of the inner spirit of New Testament Christianity, any restoration of the outward form, important as it may be, will still be a hollow shell—an impotent religion akin to that of the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of Jesus.

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