

The Restoration, pt. 2

The Campbells

1. Thomas Campbell (1763- 1854)
 - a. Born in County Down, Ireland, he was a highly educated & cultured man. While a man of peace with a kind heart, he had a deep respect for God's word and stood strongly by conviction.
 - b. He was ordained to preach in the Presbyterian Church in 1791.
 - c. He came to America in May of 1807 after growing tired of religious disputes.
 - d. He was the first to utter the line, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."
 - e. In August of 1809, he and a number of others formed the "Christian Association of Washington. At the heart of this new group was the "Declaration and Address," a document stating who they were and what they believed.
 - i. They believed in the unity of the church. "That the church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one."
 - ii. They believed in Christian fellowship. While individual congregations must exist, within the church as a whole there was to be peace.
 - iii. They believed that nothing was to be expected except what was expressly taught in the word of God
 - iv. They believed in the New Testament as the supreme authority for Christians in all matters of faith and practice.
2. Alexander Campbell (1788-1866)
 - a. Son of Thomas Campbell. While in Ireland, he was greatly influenced by the preaching of the Haldane brothers.
 - b. After coming to America, Alexander and Thomas discovered they were both following similar tracks of religious thinking.
 - c. They were invited to join the Pittsburgh Synod of the Presbyterian Church. Alexander opposed the move privately, but gave way to his father's wishes. Thomas made application on the grounds that they not be a part of the Presbyterian Church or under its laws—they would only share in the work together. The application was rejected.
 - d. In May of 1811, they started an independent church called "Brush Run."
 - i. Both Campbell's and other members of the family were then immersed at this time due to a close examination of scripture.

- e. Since they then had more in common with the Baptist than the Presbyterians, they joined the Redstone Baptist Association in 1813.
 - i. They accepted the invitation on the grounds that they be allowed to teach and preach whatever they learned from the holy Scriptures regardless of any creed.
 - ii. Campbell's separation with the Baptist began in 1816 when he preached on Romans 8:4, teaching that Christians are today obliged to obey the law of Christ, not the Law of Moses.
 - iii. However, they withdrew from this association in 1816. In 1823, they joined the Mahoning Baptist Association. Later, it was decided to dissolve the Mahoning Baptist Association because it was unscriptural; though Campbell disagreed with this action, it took place nonetheless. Then all connections with the Baptist were severed.

Other Great Udenominational Preachers

1. Walter Scott (1796-1861)
 - a. Another Presbyterian native of Scotland he came to the US in 1818. While in Scotland, he too, was heavily influenced by the Haldane brothers.
 - b. He met with Alexander Campbell in 1821 and found their views remarkably similar. Both had come to the conclusion that baptism was for the remission of sins.
 - c. In 1827 he became an evangelist for the Mahoning Baptist Association.
 - d. In 1831, he moved to Cincinnati and began publishing a paper called "The Evangelist."
2. "Raccoon" John Smith (1784-1868)
 - a. After his family moved to Kentucky in 1795, he joined the Baptist church in 1804 and was ordained a Baptist minister in 1808.
 - b. With little worldly wealth, but a great deal of energy, Smith taught numerous people in Kentucky. In one six month period, he reported 700 conversions and the establishment of 5 new congregations.
 - c. In 1830, he was expelled from the Baptist Association and continued to preach independently.

The Fire Continues to Spread...

1. The simple appeal of the simple gospel caught the attention and hearts of many. Calvinism had been challenged by the gospel. People were ready to throw aside the teachings of men and denominations and only follow the Bible.
2. In 1823, Alexander Campbell began to publish the *Christian Baptist*. In the first issue he wrote concerning the NT church, "their churches were not fractured into missionary societies, Bible societies, education societies; nor did they dream of organizing such in the world.... In their church capacity alone they moved.... They dare not transfer to a missionary society or Bible society or education society a cent or a prayer, lest in so doing they should rob the church of its glory, and exalt the inventions of men above the wisdom of God..."

3. In 1830, he stopped publication of the Christian Baptist and began publishing the *Millennial Harbinger*.

Stone and Campbell

1. Both men had heard of one another, and in 1824 they met each other for the first time—and liked each other. They found their differences minor.
2. In 1831, men from several groups of churches met in Georgetown, KY and tried to work out several difference:
 - a. Disagreements on the Godhead. Stone was always unsure of the three persons/one God concept, but agreed to abandon all speculation on the topic and stand simply with what the Bible states.
 - b. Disagreement over the name. Stone preferred the term “Christian,” while Campbell preferred “Disciples of Christ.”
 - c. Church Organization. Stone felt that the Lord’s Supper could only be served by ordained ministers; Campbell disliked the idea of a clergy and argued to the priesthood of all believers
 - d. Emotions vs. Thinking. Stone believed and used religious excitement, while Campbell had an aversion to emotionalism.
 - e. The role of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Stone and his followers argued that the Holy Spirit acts apart from the word in conversion while Campbell and his followers felt he acted solely through the word.
 - f. Baptism. While all agreed that baptism was immersion for the remission of sins, Stone had no problem accepting into fellowship those who had not been immersed. Campbell did not agree with this practice.

Trouble on the Horizon

1. The first deep division among those of the restoration movement came over the issue of church organization and worship.
 - a. Generally, there was a great distrust of conferences and general assemblies, but there was also felt a need for some method of church cooperation for greater actions and needs.
2. The American Christian Missionary Society
 - a. Campbell, who seemed to be a great organizer, pushed through his preaching and writings for churches to organize to accomplish greater things.
 - i. He argued using a hypothetical situation. If a number of preachers started a number of churches on an island, eventually the islanders would find that they could not effectively do their work without pooling their resources. A meeting is called of the churches and they decided to act in all matters just as one church.
 - ii. To this, an individual replied, “Here then is a new organization, and new church and a new name—a district church, a district name. I call it new, because no such use of the word church is found in the scriptures.”

- iii. The overriding question of division became whether or not the universal church has a work to do. Biblically, all work is to be done by the local churches.
- b. Campbell, however, was influential, and cooperation meetings began to take place everywhere. They were in essence “mini” missionary societies. Campbell argued that the Lord gave the church a work to do, but no plan to achieve it; therefore, man could use his judgment as he saw fit in this area.
 - i. In 1849, the American Christian Missionary Society was formed with Alexander Campbell serving as the first president.
 - ii. Men such as Tolbert Fanning, Jacob Creath, Benjamin Franklin and David Lipscomb quickly rose up against such an organization, stating his belief that the church as God established it was well able to accomplish what he intended it to do. The present mission of the church was not different from the mission of the first century. If a missionary society was not needed then, it was not needed now.
 - 1. They argued there was no biblical authority for such a practice
 - 2. They argued the missionary society was a substitute for the church
 - 3. They argued that the missionary society dictated the church
 - 4. Finally, they argued it to be an inefficient way of doing missionary work
 - 5. These men and others were accused of not believing in mission work or cooperation.
 - 6. What was lost was any evidence to support the idea that the church universal had or has any work to do collectively.
- c. Finally, in 1849, there began a push for a large, national cooperation meeting. A convention met in Cincinnati of that year to form a missionary society.
- d. Battle lines were drawn early on:
 - i. W.K. Pendleton, “We met, not for the purpose of enacting ecclesiastic laws, nor to interfere with the true and scriptural independence of the churches, but to consult about the best ways for giving efficiency to our power, and to devise such methods of cooperation, in the great work of converting and sanctifying the world, as our combined counsels, under the guidance of providence, might suggest and approve. There are some duties of the church that a single congregation cannot, by her unaided strength, discharge... A primary object being to devise some scheme for a more effectual proclamation of the gospel in destitute places, both at home and abroad...”
 - ii. Tolbert Fanning wrote in the Gospel Advocate, “We believe and teach that the church of Christ is fully competent to most profitably employ all our powers, physical, intellectual and spiritual; that she

is the only divinely authorized missionary, Bible, Sunday School, Temperance and Cooperation Society on earth. It is, has been, and we suppose always will be our honest conviction, that the true and genuine service of God can be properly performed only in and through the church. Hence, we have questioned the propriety of the brethren's efforts to work most successfully by means of state, district, and county organizations... to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and any other human organizations for accomplishing the legitimate labor of the church."

- e. Nevertheless, The American Christian Missionary Society was formed, and Campbell was elected as the first president.
 - i. Opponents of the move were not silent, but very vocal in their objections.
 - 1. Based upon his earlier writings, David Lipscomb, Jacob Creath, Jr. and others said Campbell had changed his position. In the first issue of the Christian Baptist, 1823, Campbell wrote:
 - a. "Their churches were not fractured into missionary societies, education societies; nor did they dream of organizing such in the world. The head of a believing household was not in those days a president or manager of a board of foreign missions; ... in their church capacity alone they moved. They neither transferred themselves into any other kind of association nor did they fracture and sever themselves into divers societies. They viewed the church of Jesus Christ as the scheme of heaven to ameliorate the world; as members of it, they considered themselves bound to do all they could for the glory of God and good of man. They dared not transfer to a missionary society; or bible society; or education society; a cent or a prayer, lest in so doing they should rob the church of its glory, and exalt the interventions of men about the wisdom of God."
 - ii. Proponents to the society centered around several arguments:
 - 1. The universal church has a responsibility to evangelize the world and cannot do this through the independent activity of local churches.
 - 2. They denied that the silence of the scriptures prohibited.
 - a. Pendleton stated, "You say, 'Your missionary society is not scriptural' — and you mean by this, that there is no special express precept in the Scriptures commanding it. We concede this without a moment's hesitation. There is none; but what do

you make of it? Is everything which is not scriptural therefore wrong?"

b. He went on to say, "In the practice of human opinion we have liberty if we want to practice it..."

iii. Opposition countered:

1. Conventions and societies were without Biblical authority
2. The missionary society was a substitute for the church
3. The missionary society dictates the church.
4. It is an inefficient way of doing missionary work
5. The concept of a missionary society argued from a false premise: that the church universal had a work to do. Biblically, the universal church has no work.

3. Trouble over Instrumental Music

- a. Ten years later, problems over instrumental music began to divide those in the restoration movement.
- b. Campbell wrote early on about the use of instrumental music: "I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert."
- c. L.L. Pinkerton first introduced this issue in Midway, KY, in 1858 or 1859.
 - i. The diversion was gradual. They began by bringing in a melodeon on Saturday night, when many members met to improve their singing. At first, it was used simply to keep the right pitch. However, soon a sister began to sing and play. Eventually, it was moved to the Sunday morning worship.
 - ii. In 1881, the Fourth & Walnut church in Louisville brought in an instrument of music, causing many to leave.

The Inevitable Takes Place

1. With these two major issues dividing the convictions of Christians, it was only a matter of time before a split took place in those calling for a restoration of the New Testament church.
2. Earl West, in *Search for the Ancient Order*, wrote, "By 1885 division was upon the church."
3. In 1906, the U. S. Census began to count separately those who opposed ("Churches of Christ") the missionary societies and instrumental music and those who stood for it ("Disciples of Christ" or the "Christian Church").

Restoration Movement Observations

1. They were strongest when they appealed to the word of God
2. They were at their weakest when they moved away from the Biblical pattern.
3. While the importance of positive, Biblical authority had been learned from the past, it seems that the lesson of the silence of the scriptures is seen in the latter part of the Restoration movement.
 - a. Toward the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century till today, the real dividing point was and is the issue of authority.

Questions

1. In what denomination did Thomas Campbell originally preach?
2. What caused his rift with the denomination?
3. What event resolved Alexander Campbell to preach?
4. What event caused Alexander Campbell to question infant baptism?
5. What was the American Christian Missionary Society?
6. Who were some Christians objecting to the ACMS?
7. What arguments were given to support and object to the ACMS?
8. What was the next big cause of division?