



Testament. These brave souls began to look to the Bible and the Bible alone to determine God's will for His people. Any practice or teaching that could not be established by a "Thus saith the Lord" had to be rooted out and rejected, just as king Josiah had done. At the risk of their reputations, jobs, and friends in the religious world these brave Christians chose to **"obey God rather than men"** (Acts 5:29). Convinced that all who sincerely loved God would see the wisdom of their efforts, they began to appeal to all in the religious world to come out from the confusion and division of denominationalism and return to the **"simplicity that is in Christ"** (2 Cor. 11:3). While their aim was to restore the eternal church to its purity and simplicity, many in the religious world opposed their efforts and held on to the man-made traditions of their own religious sects.

Brothers in Christ But Not "Founders"

Two of these diligent souls that pursued this effort were a father and son named Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Both men left denominationalism and began to preach the ancient gospel and ancient order described in the New Testament. They were both articulate and well respected, and because of this the religious world has often tried to label them as the "founders" of this movement. That's like calling Josiah the *founder* of Mosaic Law—he was just calling people to do what God had commanded Moses. Christ alone is the head and founder of His church! (cf. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:21-22). There were many other brethren during the time of the Campbells that were working toward the same effort to restore the Lord's church. There were men such as Barton W. Stone, "Raccoon" John Smith, Walter Scott, and Moses Lard. These men were not "founders" but simply Christians calling others to serve God in truth.

What This Means For Us Today

The point of all this is simply to demonstrate that those who hold to the principle of restoration, are not members of some denomination—they are following the pattern by which they can be identified with that eternal church which the Lord established! How can we be certain of this? By the fact that any who do, teach, and practice what the New Testament church did, can be certain that that they are what Christians were in the New Testament. The appeal today is the same as it has always been to those who love God while living in a world of error and apostasy—**"come out from among them and be separate"** (2 Cor. 6:17). We must *root out* that which is not found in Scripture. We must commit ourselves to follow the Bible as our only guide. Wherever the Scripture leads us we must follow with all our heart. And finally, we must identify ourselves others who seek to worship God in **"spirit and in truth"** (John 4:24).

Please understand, our claim is not "my church is better than yours!"—remember, there is only one church! What we are saying is that any religious body that Christ has not built is not His church! We must make certain that the body with which we are identified belongs to Christ and no one else! If you love the Lord it's time you obeyed the gospel that He might add you to His church.



4700 Andrews Ave.
Amarillo TX 79106
806-352-2809
www.olsenpark.com

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BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

August 4,
2013

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM



Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

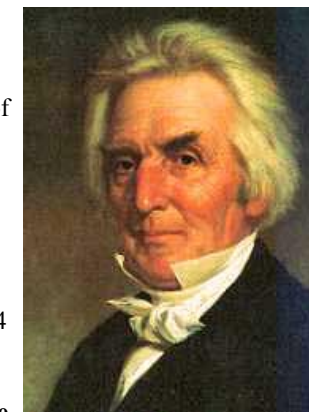
Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow

Campbellite Baptists?

By Kyle Pope

Years ago I was looking at a book printed in the 1870's listing the religious groups that existed at that time in the United States. I was anxious to see how (or if) it might list those of the *Restoration Movement*. After looking for awhile I finally found a heading entitled "Campbellite Baptists," followed by an explanation at the beginning of the entry that read, "this group would object to this title"—(i.e. being called *Campbellite Baptists*). How little things have changed in the world's perception of those of us committed to return to New Testament practice! We may not be called "Campbellites" very much anymore, but many people still see us as—"just another religious denomination founded by a man named Alexander Campbell." While this perception may never be completely eliminated, we must remain diligent to seek to clarify this false perception for the sake of those we teach, our own view of who we are, and for sake the generations that will follow us.



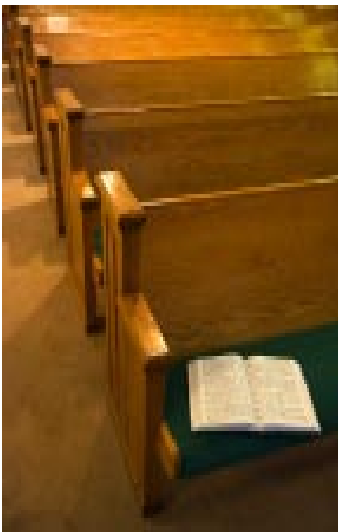
Alexander Campbell

The Promised Kingdom

As far back as the book of Daniel the Lord offered prophecies that pointed to what would result from the coming of Jesus. In Daniel 7:14 the Lord declared, **"Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion."**

ion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed” (NKJV). A few chapters before this, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar of the time when, “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44). In both of these prophecies this “kingdom” that was promised was foretold to be an enduring, eternal, everlasting kingdom what would last forever.

When we come to the New Testament we see the fulfillment of these prophecies. Paul, through the Holy Spirit, speaking of God, describes, “the ex-



Olsen Park church of Christ

ceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His power” (Eph. 1:19). The next verse describes the scope of this power, “which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come” (Eph. 1:20-21). This indicates that when Paul wrote Jesus was already at God’s “right hand” above all “power and might and dominion.” Jesus Himself declared prior to His ascension “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18). So the kingdom promised to Daniel was established in Jesus and existed in the first century.

If Christ now has all authority, what now comprises His kingdom? Scripture shows us that Christ’s *kingdom* is His *church*—those who submit their hearts and lives to His rule. In the text noted above, after describing the scope of Christ’s power and dominion Paul asserts “He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church” (Eph. 1:22). He told the Colossians that God in Christ has, “delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). He urged the Thessalonians to “have a walk worthy of God who calls you into his own kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:12), but this very epistle is addressed “to the church of the Thessalonians” (1 Thess. 1:1). Christ’s kingdom and His church are not separate entities—these are two ways of describing those in a saved relationship with Him. We should note three things about this *kingdom* which is Christ’s *church*:

1. There is only one. Paul told the Ephesians, “There is one body, and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:4-5). He says this after telling them at the beginning of the epistle that it is “the church which is His body” (1:22-23). Paul told the Corinthians he taught the same things “everywhere in every church” (1 Cor. 4:17). There were not many different bodies of doctrine—the same gospel was taught in all of the churches. Paul even plainly declared that division within the body of Christ, by which disciples call themselves by different names is wrong (1 Cor. 1:12-13), calling it behavior that is “carnal” (1 Cor. 4:1-4).

2. Apostasy was promised. The word “apostasy” means “turning away.” It generally refers to a turning away from true faith. The Scriptures foretold that from within the church itself there would come a *turning away*. Paul told the elders in Ephesus “from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves”

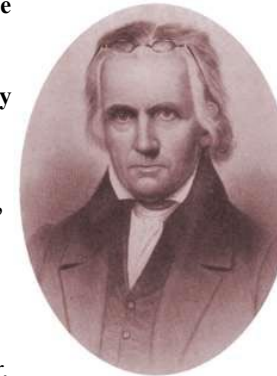
(Acts 20:30). He warned Timothy, “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2 Tim. 4:3-4). This warns us that we too must be on guard against this departure from sound faith and practice. If not, we too may come to have “a form of godliness” devoid of its power, of whom Paul commanded “from such people turn away!” (2 Tim. 3:5).

3. The true church will endure forever. Even though the Scriptures promised a turning away, the promise concerning the eternal nature of the kingdom which is Christ’s church remains the same. Even if only a remnant remains faithful and true, the kingdom still endures!

Restoration of True Worship

Throughout the centuries there have been faithful men and women who realized these truths. These faithful saints may never have made it into the history books, but we can trust that there have always been those who, in sincerity and truth, when they saw religious apostasy sought to correct it. This principle of religious restoration is well grounded in Scripture. In the Old Testament we can read about faithful king Josiah. In his day the Israelites had interwoven elements of pagan idolatry into their religious practice and abandoned true worship altogether. In spite of this, we can read the inspiring record of Josiah’s efforts to restore sound worship even though it had ceased to be visibly practiced. When he learned what God’s written law required of the people, he set out to root out of the land all apostasy and restore true worship (see 2 Kings 22:6-23).

This spirit of restoration was surely in the hearts of such brave men as John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli—men who are known to history for their involvement in the Protestant Reformation. Their aim was to root out of the religious practice of their own day, all that was contrary to God’s



Thomas Campbell

teaching in Scripture. They taught that men should look to God’s word for themselves to determine doctrine, practice, and organization within the church

While their aims were noble, in many cases (sadly) they failed to go far enough. They either accepted some manmade traditions without question, or developed their own ideas which those who followed them accepted rather than going back to the Scriptures. Within a short time what had been an attempt to reform the apostate church, actually resulted in the creation of new religious sects. From Martin Luther would spring the Lutheran church, from John Calvin, the Presbyterian church, and from John Wesley the Methodists. Even though Luther himself pleaded with his followers not to call themselves “Lutherans,” they rejected his plea and built a system of faith upon the man and not his motives.

In the early nineteenth century many who found themselves in this every increasing division and chaos that grew out of the Protestant *Reformation*, began to realize that it had not gone far enough. Within the world of their day division and party loyalty had not diminished but increased. They slowly began to realize that what was needed was not a *reformation* of apostate churches, but a *restoration* back to the ancient gospel and the ancient church order of the New