

The
RESTORATION READER & REVIEW

A Monthly Journal Of Select Readings And Commentary On Our Restoration Heritage

A MilePost / Project New Antioch Publication

Volume I, Number I

January, 2017

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**THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE
SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY**

For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall in the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth fruit. Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.--Scripture.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

The Presbytery of Springfield, sitting at Caneridge, in the county of Bourbon, being, through a gracious Providence, in more than ordinary health, growing in strength and size daily; and in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die, and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make and ordain this, our last Will and Testament, in manner and form following, viz.:

Imprimis. We will, that this body be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one body and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

Item. We will, that our name of distinction, with its Reverend title, be for-gotten, that there be one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one.

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- Item.** We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority, forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.
- Item.** We will, that candidates for the Gospel ministry henceforth study the Holy scriptures with fervent prayer, and obtain license from God to preach the simple Gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, without any mixture of philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, or the rudiments of the world. And let none henceforth take this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.
- Item.** We will, that the church of Christ assume her native right of internal government – try her candidates for the ministry, as to their soundness in the faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach and admit no other proof of their authority but Christ speaking in them. We will, that the Church of Christ look up to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest; and that she resume her primitive right of trying those who say they are Apostles, and are not.

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- Item.** We will, that each particular church, as a body, activated by the same spirit, choose her own preacher, and support him by a free-will offering, without written call or subscription - admit members - remove offenses - and never henceforth delegate her right of government to any man or set of men whatever.
- Item.** We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life, having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.
- Item.** We will, that preachers and people cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more and dispute less; and while they behold signs of the times look up, and confidently expect that redemption draweth nigh.
- Item.** We will, that our weak brethren, who may have been wishing to make the Presbytery of Springfield their king, and wot not what is now become of it, betake themselves to the Rock of Ages, and follow Jesus for the future.
- Item.** We will, that the Synod of Kentucky examine every member who may be

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suspected of having departed from the Confession of Faith and suspend every such suspected heretic, immediately in order that the oppressed may go free, and taste the sweets of gospel liberty.

Item. We will, that Ja-----, the author of two letters lately published in Lexington, be encouraged in his zeal to destroy partyism--we will, moreover, that our past conduct be examined into by all who may have correct information; but let foreigners beware of speaking evil things which they know not.

Item. Finally, we will, that our sister bodies read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late.

Springfield Presbytery.
June 28, 1804.

(L. S.) Robert Marshall,
John Dunlevy,
Richard McNemar,
B. W. Stone,
John Thompson,
David Purviance

Witnesses.

“Where the Scriptures speak, we speak;
and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.”
(Thomas Campbell, 1809)

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Wellsburg: A Hub of the Restoration Movement

By
Steve Wallace

Wellsburg, WV, is an historic city in its own right. A settlement existed on its site as early as 1778. The town was incorporated in 1791 as Charlestown, (then) Virginia. In 1816 its name was changed to Wellsburg for Charles Wells, the son-in-law of Charles Prather, the original purchaser of the land on which the town stood. In the early 1800's the town was one of the most important trading and shipping points on the Ohio river, then the main access to the southern part of the Ohio territory, which was then being settled, as well as to points to the northeast around to the southwest.. We leave the history of the town itself in order to center on its place in the Restoration Movement.

First Church Established by Alexander Campbell

Beginning in 1816 a small group had been meeting in Wellsburg from time to time under the influence of Alexander Campbell, but no church had yet been organized there.ⁱ In 1823, Campbell and thirty-one other members of the Brush Run church in nearby Pennsylvania withdrew their membership from that church to “constitute a church of Christ at Wellsburg.”ⁱⁱ Already in 1816 Campbell had embarked on a journey to the east to raise funds for a meeting house in Wellsburg.ⁱⁱⁱ It was built at Main and 12th streets.^{iv} This was the second church established based on Thomas Campbell's call for a restoration of the ancient order of things, Brush Run having been the first. By 1824 the church consisted of forty members.^v

Over the years many efforts to spread the gospel were made by the church in Wellsburg. The results were such as at which we marvel today. By 1827 its total membership stood at fifty-six.^{vi} In 1839 four

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visiting preachers preached in Wellsburg and three other surrounding churches. Their efforts resulted in fifty baptisms. They reported that there were then about 500 Christians meeting in the five meeting houses in the general area.^{vii}

Reports of meetings resulting in many baptisms at the church there continued throughout the run of the second paper Campbell edited, the *Millennial Harbinger*^{viii} (started in 1830).

As with countless churches the meeting house of the church in Wellsburg had many preachers enter its doors. Besides Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott was there with a host of other early preachers who worked in the area. C.L. Loos, one of the most influential preachers of the late 1800's, preached at Wellsburg for a year in 1849.^{ix} In 1871 Benjamin Franklin preached a series of lessons at Wellsburg. It was here that Daniel Sommer became interested in bro. Franklin, who became one of his mentors.^x Sommer would later take on the editing of Franklin's paper following his death. When speaking of preachers who trod its floors the meeting house at Wellsburg pails in comparison to another location in this old city.

Wellsburg's Wharf

The Wellsburg wharf has been in use since the 1790s. Standing at the waters edge by the present-day wharf one can still see some of the original stones of the old wharf, which once extended twenty feet out into the river. As the main connection to many parts of the nation before the coming of the railroad the wharf was a transit point for thousands, including many early preachers. In reporting his preaching trips to various parts of the country in the 1840's and '50's, Campbell mentioned in passing taking steamboats from or to Wellsburg.^{xi} Included is a trip he took in February, 1850, which began with his visiting the (Eight and) Walnut street church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and attending a called meeting of the Christian

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Missionary Board.^{xii} (Campbell had been sick the previous year and unable to attend the first meeting of the *American Christian Missionary Society*.) Walter Scott's memoirs likewise contain frequent mention of steamers to or from Wellsburg.^{xiii} In the spring of 1847, 18 year-old J.W. McGarvey caught a steamboat to Wellsburg to attend Bethany college, which was seven miles from town.^{xiv} A host of other preachers likewise used the wharf as published directions to the college in those early days were via steamer to Wellsburg.^{xv} Standing a scant two hundred yards from the wharf today is the building of the old Miller Tavern. Built before 1798, succeeding generations of Bethany students would have seen it as they debarked at Wellsburg.

The Wellsburg Church and Other Churches of Its Day

Many events of major importance took place during the time Campbell worked with the church there. We focus on just a few here. It was in 1823 that he began editing and publishing his first paper, the *Christian Baptist*^{xvi}, which continued until 1829. Campbell would later date from this year the planting of churches "not only from Nova Scotia to Texas, and from the Atlantic to Oregon and California, in all the American States" but to Great Britain, Ireland, and New Zealand as well.^{xvii} Further, in the first issue, he recorded his convictions about the first Christians. These words have come in for much discussion since their appearance.

Their churches were not fractured into missionary societies, bible societies, education societies; nor did they dream of organizing such in the world....They knew nothing of the hobbies of modern times. *In their church capacity alone they moved.*^{xviii}

The above quote is of note for at least two reasons. First, the churches at Wellsburg and Brush Run were, early on, each

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members of associations of churches. The other churches in these associations were mainly Calvinist in their beliefs. Nevertheless, the Campbell's independent thinking and resultant continued emphasis on returning to the ancient order contained in the New Testament eventually started a growing cry among Baptists that they exclude the increasing number of disciples from Baptist churches. In 1830 churches following the restoration principle formally separated themselves from the Baptists. Second, upon their separation they resolved to meet in annual meetings.^{xix} This led to the church at Wellsburg being directly involved in starting what would grow into arguably the major conflict of the nineteenth century among God's people.

The Wellsburg Cooperation Meetings

The April, 1835, issue of the *Millennial Harbinger* contained the following announcement, "General Meeting of Messengers, from thirteen congregations, held in Wellsburg, Va. on...the 12th of April, 1834."^{xx} One of the main focuses of the gathering was to discuss "a systematic co-operation of the churches for the conversion of the world." By the time the meeting had ended the machinery for such an effort was on the fast track to becoming a reality.

Soon afterwards, "Cooperation Meetings,' fully organized with presidents and corresponding secretaries, sprang up like magic all over the brotherhood."^{xxi} Campbell's writings reached beyond our shores. After having contact with him, churches in England held their first "cooperative meeting" in Edinburgh, Scotland, in August of 1843.^{xxii} The cooperative meetings were like miniature missionary societies. Indeed, the eventual formation of the *American Christian Missionary Society* was a logical outcome of this type of collective action of churches.

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The influence of these meetings did not stop when the division of churches over the support of the *ACMS* had run its course, churches of Christ and Christian Churches generally representing brethren on opposite sides of that issue. As the twentieth century progressed the Wellsburg cooperation meetings would be recalled again and again as the subject of collective action of churches once more became an issue among God's people.^{xxiii}

Wellsburg in Changing Times

In 1848, the church in Wellsburg moved into a new meeting house a couple blocks down Main Street from the original building. This building, with some improvements and additions, still stands today. Travel went from horses, to steamboats, to trains during Campbell's life time. A trolley was built from Wellsburg to Bethany in the early part of the 20th century.^{xxiv} In the last ten years of the *Harbinger's* existence (1860-1870), announcements of the deaths of various members of the church in Wellsburg make up the bulk of references to this historic city. A new generation was coming on.

ⁱ Wilbur H. Cramblet, *The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia: A history of its cooperative work*, p. 34, 1971

ⁱⁱ letter of dismissal, Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, vol. 1, p. 69

ⁱⁱⁱ W.W. Jennings, *Origin and Early History of the Disciples of Christ*, p. 144

^{iv} Richardson, v. 1, 467-468; "Walking Tour of Wellsburg," <http://www.brookecountywvgenealogy.org/walkingtour.html>

^v Richardson, vol. 1, p. 99

^v A. Wilcox, *History of the Disciples of Christ in Ohio*, p. 48

vii Report, author uncertain; seems to be A.C., *MH*, Nov., 1839, p. 552

^{viii} Report by A.C., *MH*, April, 1843, p. 190; W.K. Pendleton, "The Cause in Wellsburg, Va.," *MH*, Mar., 1846, p. 79; W.K. Pendleton, "Bro. Knowles Shaw – the Evangelist," *MH*, Feb., 1870, p. 114

^{ix} Charles Louis Loos, by Wayne Kilpatrick, <http://www.therestorationmovement.com/loos.cl.htm>

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- ^x James Stephen Wolfgang, *A Life of Humble Fear: The Biography of Daniel Sommer, 1850-1940*, pp. 47-46
- ^{xi} e.g., Richardson, v. 2, pp. 445-461; Campbell, "Notes on a tour to the North-East, No. 1," *MH*, July, 1836, pp. 330-333; Campbell, "Incidents on a Tour to the South," *MH*, July, 1839, pp. 308-314; Campbell, "Excursion to New York," *MH* November, 1852, pp. 649-651
- ^{xii} Campbell, "Letters to My Co-editors," *MH*, Mar., 1850, p. 164
- ^{xiii} William Baxter, *Life of Elder Walter Scott*, pp. 295, 319, etc. , 1874
- ^{xiv} J.W. McGarvey, *The Autobiography of J.W. McGarvey (1827-1911)*, p. 6
- ^{xiv} Campbell, "Bethany College," *MH*, Sept., 1841, p. 432
- ^{xvi} A.S. Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples of Christ on the Western Reserve*, p. 37
- ^{xvii} A. Campbell, "Good News from a Far Country," *MH*, June, 1846, p. 331
- ^{xviii} Vol. 1. No. 1, 8/3/23, p. 20
- ^{xix} *The Millennial Harbinger Abridged*, p. 409
- ^{xx} P. 162
- ^{xxi} Earl West, "Congregational Cooperation-A Historical Study," *Gospel Advocate*, 4/23/53, p. 244
- ^{xxii} "British Millennial Harbinger," David M. Thompson, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, by Douglas Allen Foster, Anthony L. Dunnivant, Paul M. Blowers, D. Newell Williams, editors, p. 99, 2004
- ^{xxiii} e.g., E.A. Elam, "The Octopus," *Gospel Advocate*, 3/15/28, pp. 244-45; W.W. Otey, "A Scrap of History," *Gospel Advocate*, 8/14/41, p. 607; Earl West, "Congregational Cooperation – A Historical Study," *Gospel Advocate*, 4/16/53, p. 230; 4/23/53, p. 244; this series was reprinted in the *Gospel Guardian* beginning with the 8/27/53 issue; also see Robert F. Turner and Bill Humble's speeches in *The Arlington Meeting*, pp. 253,254, 309-311
- ^{xxiv} George W. Hilton, John Due, *Electric Interurban Railways in America*, p. 303, 2000

"A man may live in the church, and share

*"Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise,"*

**and still fail of joyful fellowship with his brethren.
Why? Because he is not a partner with them in their
toils and anxieties. He sings, but he does not work; he
prays, but he does not pay; he communes in the
Supper, but he does not commune in the sacrifices**

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and toils and cares of the house of God. Consequently, "there is a great gulf" between him and them; while they are rejoicing over the fruits of their labors, and happy in projecting new toils, his barren heart pines in desolation. He lives in the midst of love without enjoying it"

(Isaac Errett, [date of quote unknown])

J W McGarvey On The Individual Cups

(source and date unknown)

The following quotation is from J W McGarvey, late president of the College of the Bible, Lexington, Kentucky, and acknowledged to be one of the great scholars of his day:

"About two years ago, I think, I published an article under the head of "Microbes", in which I ridiculed, in the manner I thought it deserved, the pretense by which the use of individual cups in the Lord's Supper is defended. The "sanitary feature", as Brother Keeler styles it, is proven to be a pretense by the fact that though the use of cups in common has been universally practiced for nearly two thousand years, not a single instance has been produced of persons contracting contagious diseases from it. And if there had been a few instances, or a few thousand among the multiplied millions, what is that compared with the strict observance of an ordinance appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ?

Shall we dare to change or modify such an ordinance for fear that one of us may prove to be the one out of millions who shall thus suffer? The "sanitary feature", as everybody knows, has been arrayed with great pertinacity against the ordinance of baptism as it was instituted by Christ, and it has been paraded as a justification of those who modify this

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ordinance. The shallowness of the reasoning in both instances forces the suspicion that want of faith, and not real fear of disease and death, lies at the bottom of it. If there is danger of swallowing microbes by drinking from the same cup with consumptives, what about being baptized in the same pool of water? Shall we have the baptistery emptied, washed and chemically disinfected after every baptism? If not, shall we always resort to a running stream, in which a dead dog may be floating some distance above us? Or shall we abandon baptism altogether, for the sake of keeping our immaculate persons from coming into contact with the invisible bugs which exude from our neighbors?

Some people are too nice for this world. They ought to carry a smelling-bottle all their days and pray the Lord to take them as soon as possible to a healthier country. It is my opinion that when the Lord instituted the Supper he knew as much about microbes as does any modern medical alarmist.”

This article is re-printed here to illustrate just one small part of the ongoing evolution of the restoration of New Testament Christianity. I ask that the reader consider this an educational effort and not an editorial one.

**Please note: All editorials in this publication will be clearly labeled as such.
(Kevin L Greer, ed.)**

**Advice To Young Preachers
from
Barton W. Stone**

Source:

Works of Elder B. W. Stone: James M. Mathes, ed.(1859) pages 340-345

TO YOUNG PREACHERS.

My sons: Hear the advice of an old father, just about to leave you--just about to be discharged from his services in the ministry for nearly half a

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century. I have been among the early pioneers of the West, in laboring through difficulties unknown to you, to preach the Gospel.

1st, It is a common saying among the preachers of this day, "Old men for counsel, young men for war." This is often advanced in justification of the public debates with opposers, or the clashing doctrines and opinions which now distract and divide the world. "Old men for counsel." Do they counsel you to engage in such debates? Do they laud you for victories won? I will fearlessly answer that no old man of piety and intelligence will give such advice, unless in an extraordinary case. For they know by long experience that such debates tend to strife, deaden piety, destroy the spirit of prayer, puff up the vain mind, annihilate the taste for the marrow and fatness of the living world, and destroy the comforts of true, heavenly religion.

Seldom do we see in the same person a warrior and a humble, devoted Christian. *Rara avis in terra*. Such acquire a controversial habit and temper. They may proselyte many to their opinions, and greatly increase their numbers; but the children are like the parents, lean and pigmy things. I have known, in the course of my days, great and good religious excitements in certain places, quashed by such debates from the pulpit. I have really thought that the most effectual and shortest way to put a stop to such excitements is for two debaters to propose a public debating match, [340] or an ecclesiastical duel, on a certain day, and at a certain place. Generally at the close of the debate, ends the good excitement.

I know it is said in justification of such debates that Paul disputed in the synagogue at Athens, and in the school of Tyrannus, with the Jews and others.

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Read the verse correctly, and the force of the objection is removed. He reasoned, or dialogued with them. This should be the constant practice of every faithful minister of Christ. Would to God it were the practice of all our young preachers to reason out of the Scriptures on the important things of the Gospel.

But "young men for war." What war? Not against flesh and blood, for nothing but carnal weapons can affect them; but against the powers of sin and hell, with spiritual weapons afforded us from above--not against men, but against their sins, as did our Lord and his holy apostles, in order to save them from ruin.

But are we not to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints? Certainly. But can not this be done without set debates, challenges, judges, rules, etc? Did our great head--did his apostles ever act thus? And who will say they did not earnestly contend for the faith? There must be something wrong in this matter, because these zealous duelists do not like to be called the challengers. Now if this be the proper way to contend for the faith, why not fearlessly challenge every opposer, and thus show your holy zeal?

In these public debates but few persons attend them who have not their minds prepossessed in favor of one side or the other. A few unsophisticated persons may be proselyted to your opinions, but one renewed soul is of more value than a score of such proselytes; and [341] such renewed souls are made by the truth uttered in the spirit, and heartily received and obeyed.

2nd,

I advise you, my sons, to preach the Word, the Gospel of the Son of God, with all boldness and humility. If any error or stumbling-block lie across the path of truth, and might neutralize its effect on your audience, labor with cogent arguments to roll it out of the way,

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without pity for its age, though sanctified by many centuries, and supported by the great and the learned for many ages. But be careful, and certain that it is an error before you touch it with your little finger. Truth, like a plow-share, will tear up the noxious weeds and plants sown and planted by erring man. Be careful not to name any person or people by whom these noxious weeds were sown. The moment you name a Presbyterian, a Methodist or a Baptist as having done it, that moment he buckles on his coat of mail, and shields himself against your arguments, however powerful. You can not profit him by all you say afterwards. "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

- 3d, I not only advise you to preach the Word, but also preach it in the spirit. In vain we attempt to preach in the spirit, unless we have the spirit, and experience the force of that truth we deliver to others. A man may preach the truth in the letter without the spirit. Such preaching is vain--useless to saint and sinner. Apathetic and moral lectures on religion have almost ruined the world, and swelled the number of sceptics. For they thus argue: Did these people believe what they preach or read, would they be so cold and unfeeling in their addresses? Would they not cry aloud and spare not? Did you ever know one such preacher convert a sinner from the error of his ways? [342] A person may also preach with a great vociferous zeal and manner. This may be and often is nothing more than mere animal nature, without the spirit. Live and walk in the spirit, and preach in the spirit; then will the attention of your hearers be arrested, and good effects will follow.

When we see our neighbor's house in flames, and the unconscious family within exposed to instant death, we do not take time to study and write an eloquent

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speech in order to read it to them, that they may fly from impending ruin--nor do we write a speech to read to persons whom we see ready to rush down a deathly precipice, unconscious of their danger. No; were we to do so, those people would be apt to disregard our admonitions, and perish.

4. Be as holy out of the pulpit as in it. Be always sober (not morose); indulge at no time in jesting, mirth, nor light conversation; these grow by indulgence. I advise you to beware of what is termed gallantry. It will ultimately sink your influence in the public mind. Be plain, but neat in your dress.

Wear not costly apparel, nor tinsel ornaments of any kind. It savors of vanity, and will detract from your usefulness. Be often on your knees, always endeavor to keep God before your mind, and labor to please him, rather than man; for if you seek to please men, you will certainly displease God. The friendship of the world is enmity to God. Some are tempted to please man by an ostentatious show of learning and talents. This is to preach self, not the Lord Jesus--it is to advance self, and not the cause of Christ--it is to gain the applause of the world, not to save souls from ruin--it is to be popular, not useful. Vain, presumptuous mortal! How despicable in the view of Heaven! [343]

5. In your public addresses, like the householder, bring forth out of your treasure things new and old. The Word of God is your treasure, not the wisdom of men--with this you must store your mind so as to be able to exhibit to your audience, things new as well as old. Do not forever harp on one string--on one doctrine, however true. The mind needs variety, and that variety is afforded to the Bible student in the Scriptures. "Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak." You

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should not preach that to another, of which you do not experience the truth yourself. It will be a dry morsel, unseasoned with grace, both to yourself and those that hear. Avoid every thing, every expression, every smart word that may excite levity or laughter in your hearers. Your object is to save souls; an object truly serious and important, and should be managed always in the spirit of seriousness and solemnity. What! to excite levity in those on the brink of everlasting woe! God forbid!

6. Beware of an avaricious or covetous spirit. Read Paul to Timothy, 1 Epistle, vi. 6-11. Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O, man of God! flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. Avoid every thing like boasting of yourself, or of your success in the Gospel. [344]

7. My dear sons; if this advice be good, receive it, and conform to it. I have known it to be good for half of a century. Be diligent and faithful, and soon you shall receive your reward. Oh that we may hear the plaudit of our Lord--Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of your Lord.

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The Restoration Plea

By
Andy Sochor

In the first century, after the Lord's church was established, there were no denominations like we have today. Of course, there were some who departed from the faith while still holding to a form of religion. A notable example is Diotrophes (3 John 9-11) who took control of a congregation and expelled those who wanted to follow the apostles' doctrine. But generally, the churches in the first century could be accurately called "*churches of Christ*" (Romans 16:16) because they submitted to Christ's authority and not to that of any man.

While the early church generally enjoyed unity by submitting to the authority of Christ alone, Paul warned of a movement that would change all of this. He wrote to the church at Thessalonica about "*the apostasy*" that was coming. He personified this great apostasy by calling it "*the man of lawlessness*" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). This "*man of lawlessness*" was described as one who "*opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God*" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). This apostasy would be characterized by certain men exalting themselves among God's people, claiming to speak for God and exercise authority over their brethren. It is called an apostasy because it would begin with some who were faithful Christians, but they would depart from the faith to follow their own doctrines and practices. This is exactly what denominationalism is. Denominationalism, beginning with the Catholic church, is the great apostasy.

As the Catholic church moved further away from the Lord's church, a movement began to try to *reform* the Catholic church. This has been called the Reformation Movement. However, this did not correct the problem. Instead of attacking "*the man of lawlessness*," the reformers attacked certain abuses. They did not attempt to return to the simplicity of the New Testament church. They wanted to fix the Catholic church. This did not work and ultimately resulted in thousands of denominations in the world today.

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In the 1800's, a movement began in this country which is commonly called the Restoration Movement. Unlike the Reformation, the Restoration Movement sought to *restore* the doctrines and practices of the New Testament church. It began with men like Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone *leaving* their denominations in order to be part of the church that Jesus built. The Restoration plea was two-fold. The first was unity instead of the divisions of denominationalism. The second was to use the New Testament as our *only* rule of faith and practice.

Both aspects of this plea are certainly taught in the Bible. We must follow them because they are divinely given, not because some men in generations past taught them. Regarding unity, Jesus prayed for his followers to be united (John 17:20-21). Paul wrote about the “*unity of the Spirit*” (Ephesians 4:3-7). God’s people should not be divided (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). The Restoration Movement was an attack on denominationalism.

The need to take the New Testament as our only rule of faith and practice is also taught in God’s word. The call to “speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent” is based upon Peter’s words – “*If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God*” (1 Peter 4:11, NKJV). When we preach, we are to “*preach the word*” (2 Timothy 4:2). We have no right to alter the message (Galatians 1:6-9), either by adding to it, taking away from it, or changing various parts of it. The Restoration plea should be ours today – give up the churches and teachings of men and follow the Bible exclusively and thereby have unity.

As the movement progressed, a division arose among those of this movement. Eventually, a split occurred between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the churches of Christ. The major issues that divided these groups were over the missionary society and instrumental music in worship. Faithful gospel preachers like Daniel Sommer zealously opposed the innovations that some tried to promote. Because men would not give up their innovations, division was inevitable.

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Some have looked back at this split that occurred 100 years ago and have suggested that these two groups divided because they followed/emphasized different aspects of the Restoration plea. It is asserted that the Christian Church focused on unity and the churches of Christ focused on the New Testament pattern. While this might sound like a simple summary of the division, it is really not accurate.

The two parts of the Restoration plea actually compliment one another. Jesus prayed for unity based on His word (John 17:20). Part of the “platform for unity” was the “*one faith*” (Ephesians 4:5). This is the body of doctrine – “*the faith*” (Jude 3) – that produces faith in us (Romans 10:17). Following the same rule/pattern naturally results in unity. The Restoration plea harmonized with this. It was a call for unity among all professed Christians. But there was a condition. They had to give up the creeds and traditions of men and follow the New Testament exclusively.

What if we neglect the pattern for the sake of unity? Some believe you cannot both strive to keep the New Testament pattern and maintain unity. Some say the Christian Church chose to strive for unity rather than keeping the pattern, which would have prohibited their missionary societies and instruments in worship. The result of forsaking the pattern for unity is “unity in diversity.” This is unity in spite of sin and error. But the New Testament explicitly forbids us to have fellowship with brethren who are living in sin (1 Corinthians 5:13), practicing error (Ephesians 5:11), and teaching false doctrine (2 John 10:11). It is a dangerous position to say we must ignore or loosely interpret the Bible in order to have unity. If striving to follow the pattern leads to division – and this is the accusation that many make – then they indict God as being the “*author of confusion*” (1 Corinthians 14:33). After all, He gave us the pattern.

What if we neglect unity for the sake of following the pattern? This is what many believe churches of Christ have done and view the brethren as legalists, Pharisees, and those who cause division. Today, if we strive to be careful to follow the pattern God has left for us, we are seen as divisive. The same thing happened with men like Daniel Sommer who opposed instrumental music and missionary societies. I suppose it will

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happen to faithful brethren until the Lord returns. But as we noticed, striving for unity and following the New Testament pattern go hand in hand. What kind of unity is sacrificed if we strive to follow the pattern? Unity with those in sin and error (the “unity in diversity” I mentioned in the last paragraph). This is not the unity we should desire. We must be “*diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (Ephesians 4:3). It is impossible to neglect the “*unity of the Spirit*” when we zealously follow the New Testament pattern.

God desires unity. But it must be on His terms. We must give up the teachings of men, whether they are written in formal creeds or not, and go back to the Bible and live by the pattern that God has given us.

Source: www.plainbibleteaching.com/2008/04/01/the-restoration-plea/

“Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

(Romans 10:21-11:5)

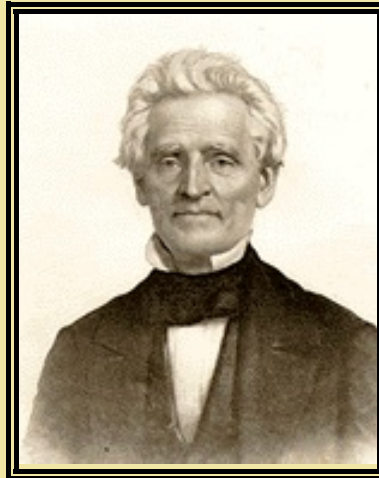
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***When Judged By Our Speech, Actions And Attitudes
Can We In Christ's Church Today Justly Claim
That We Are God's Reserved Remnant?***

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A Brief Biography of:
"Raccoon" John Smith
1784-1868



John Smith was born on October 15, 1784 in East Tennessee, in what is now known as Sullivan County. He has been called the Peter Cartwright and Lorenzo Dow of the Restoration Movement. He was truly a unique character, a product of the age in which he lived. Alexander Campbell is quoted as saying: "John Smith is the only man that I ever knew who would have been spoiled by a college education." He meant that the unique character would have been so greatly modified by an education that he could not have done the work that he did.

John Smith had very little schooling. He attended school four months in a log schoolhouse when he was but a lad. A little later he enrolled as a student in a private school. This school was so crude that it accomplished very little. The teacher was a drunkard and gave but little attention to his duties as a teacher. It is said that young Smith, to express his contempt for such a teacher, poured a shovel full of hot embers in the teacher's pocket while he sat before his pupils in a drunken stupor. This broke up the school, and Smith never enrolled any more as a student. These few months' schooling quickened his thirst for knowledge, though they furnished him but little opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge.

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His parents were Calvinistic Baptists in faith and were rigid in their enforcement of their peculiar theories upon their children. As young Smith verged into manhood he became interested in the subject of religion. He sought the Lord after the custom of the Calvinistic theory. He anxiously waited for the Lord to call him; he truly expected him to call him as one of the elect. He freely and unconsciously imbibed the teaching of his father's creed. All the stories of conversion at that time were full of marvelous incident and spiritual adventure. John Smith listened to the narration of these stories and prayed that they might be made his own experience. His father died about this time, leaving John Smith to take charge of the family affairs. The death of his father and the responsibilities that now fell upon him caused him to more earnestly seek salvation. He tried in vain, it seemed to him, to "get religion." He next turned to reading the Bible, thinking that he might get some comfort from his distressed condition. I've had strong convictions that he was a sinner, and his struggles were painful indeed. Finally he was told that he had been "converted." He rejoiced to hear this and believed it; however, he had not had the marvelous experiences that commonly attended conversions of that kind. There was an element of doubt in his own mind. He was assured that this doubt was one of the tokens of God's mercy to him. He submitted his case to the Baptist Church, and the church unanimously passed on his conversion and he was immediately taken into the fold of the Baptist Church.

Soon after he became a member of the Baptist Church he had a strong desire to be a preacher. He worried no little about "a call to preach." He could not understand why he should have such a strong desire to preach and yet the Lord would not call him. He began to talk at prayer meeting, and the more he participated in the prayer-meeting work, the stronger grew his desire to preach. He continued talking at prayer meeting and at the houses of his neighbors. He was reprimanded for preaching "without a call." Finally he persuaded himself that he had received the "call to preach." He lost no time in getting into the work of a Baptist preacher.

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He began reading the New Testament and pondering over the word of the Lord. He memorized much of the Scripture, which was a strange thing in that day. He read and studied the New Testament until, when he would arise to preach, he quoted freely from it. Some of his Baptist brethren who were preachers again reprimanded him for preaching so much of the Bible. It was a rare thing for preachers then to quote any of the Bible. The reprimand of his brethren distressed him, and he tried earnestly to satisfy his mind on the proposition. He presented the matter seriously to them in the following way: "Brethren, what shall I do? I must preach; I cannot preach if I do not study the New Testament." He was told that the Lord would give to him what he should say.

About this time he began reading the Christian Baptist, published by Alexander Campbell. From this he learned much and was led into a fuller appreciation of the New Testament teaching. Some time after this Alexander Campbell made a visit to Kentucky, where Smith was living. There was much discussion among the Kentucky Baptists as to whether Mr. Campbell knew anything about "experimental religion," or "heart felt religion." All agreed that Mr. Campbell was a learned man, but many doubted whether he was one of the "elect." So when Mr. Campbell came into Kentucky he was received with some hesitancy on the part of the Baptists. John Smith said that he could tell just what Mr. Campbell was if he could hear him once. He did hear Mr. Campbell. He sat and listened for two hours and thirty minutes, and the time seemed to him only thirty minutes. Some one asked Smith afterwards what he thought of Mr. Campbell if he was one of the elect or not. Smith replied: "I know nothing about the man; but, 'be he saint or devil, he has thrown more light on the Galatian letter and on the whole Scriptures than I have received in all the sermons that I have ever heard before." Through the help he received from Mr. Campbell and an earnest, prayerful rereading of the New Testament Scriptures, Smith saw that the Baptist Church was not the church of his Lord and that the theories which were preached by Baptists were not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He at once renounced the Baptist faith and embraced the faith of the gospel. It was a hard task to

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turn away from the religion of his mother and the fellowship and friendship of the Baptist brotherhood. it was quite a task to turn away from such a large and popular brotherhood as was the Baptist Church in Kentucky at that time and become identified with a despised and weak religious body, as were the true disciples at that time. However, he did not hesitate to make the sacrifice. He did it with joy in the newfound truth of the gospel.

He now devoted himself faithfully to the preaching of the gospel. He labored hard to get others to accept the truth, and his labors were not in vain. He was able to get entire congregations of the Baptist faith to turn away from their creed and theories and accept the Bible and work and worship as it directed. He was happy in this great work. He could preach the gospel with convincing power in a unique way. Few could withstand or resist the truth as presented by him. His unique way of handling a subject reached the hearts of the people of the rural sections of the country where he lived. He did a work among them that no other man could do. This he did without the promise or hope of any earthly reward or financial aid. He thus labored for the love of the truth and the salvation of souls. Perhaps John Smith is remembered more for his witticism and repartee than anything else. Many amusing incidents are related about his work. At one time he was preaching on the gospel and contrasting the different theories in religion with the gospel. He said that the gospel had this mark which was peculiar to it: "Whosoever does not believe it shall be damned." This could not be said of any of the theories of man. He put the different theories to the test, and showed that even those who believed in these theories did not claim that those who did not believe them would be "damned." At another time, after he had shown the absurdities of the mourner's bench theory of getting religion, he was asked: "What is the difference between your baptism and our mourner's bench?" He replied: "One is from heaven, the other is from the sawmill." He preached at Sparta, Tennessee, before a number of lawyers and judges. Afterwards he was asked if he was not very much embarrassed in the presence of such learned men. He replied: "Not in the least; for I have

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learned that judges and lawyers, so far as the Bible is concerned, are the most ignorant class of people in the world, except Doctors of Divinity." Again he said that he had spoken in the presence of all the great preachers of Kentucky, but, "I confess that the first time I ever preached before Alexander Campbell I did falter a little."

John Smith died on February 28, 1868, and was buried in Lexington, Kentucky, He died in the triumphs of the faith of the gospel. His sacrifice and service in the cause of Christ made him a hero in the service of God. Every young preacher can gain much information and inspiration from a study of the life of "Raccoon" John Smith.

From Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers, H. Leo Boles, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee, 1932, pages 37-41

“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.”

(“Raccoon” John Smith, January 1, 1832)

Walter Scott’s “Five Finger Exercise”

“ Walter Scott who met Alexander Campbell in 1821, became absolutely convinced that he was proclaiming the “ancient Gospel” with his rationally conceived “plan of salvation” which has long been central to Church of Christ thought and undoubtedly owes its origins to Scott himself. “The plan” went through several stages of development, however. The first change in “the plan” took place in 1827, while Scott was serving as evangelist

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to the Western Reserve on behalf of the Mahoning Baptist Association – the organization with which the fledgling Campbell movement was at that time affiliated. By then, Scott had enlarged “the plan” from the simple proposition that “Jesus is the Christ” to a covenantal conception involving human responsibilities and God’s gracious response. The human duties were three – believing the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, repenting of one’s sins, and submitting to immersion for the forgiveness of sins. In return, Scott taught, God’s gracious response involved the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. Scott was absolutely convinced that he was proclaiming “the ancient gospel” when he made this six-point “plan” the burden of preaching in the Western Reserve in 1827. In the interest in publicizing his meeting, however, he reduced these six points to five, so that he could use the mnemonic device of five fingers. He accomplished this reduction by collapsing the last two points into one – the gift of the Holy Spirit. He routinely spoke to children on their way home from school and taught them what he called the “five-finger exercise.” He placed one of his five points on each of the five fingers, and then told the children to make a fist and keep it closed until they arrived home. Then they should open their fists, show their parents what was “on their fingers” and explain that the man who taught them that exercise would be preaching that very evening.

Scott’s “five-finger exercise” brand of preaching produced a significant result from the legalistic tendencies inherent in the primitivism and rationalism of both Scott and Alexander Campbell and in due time came to dominate Churches of Christ. When this happened, Scott’s heirs transformed the five-point plan from one that emphasized both the work of humankind and the gracious response of God to one that featured only the work of humankind. By the twentieth century, this five-point plan of salvation had become commonplace and was routinely featured in Church of Christ preaching. It featured five human tasks: hear the gospel, believe the gospel, repent of one’s sins, confess the name of Jesus, and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Even more startling is the fact that this more legalistic form of Scott’s “plan” was heralded as orthodoxy as early as the 1840’s.

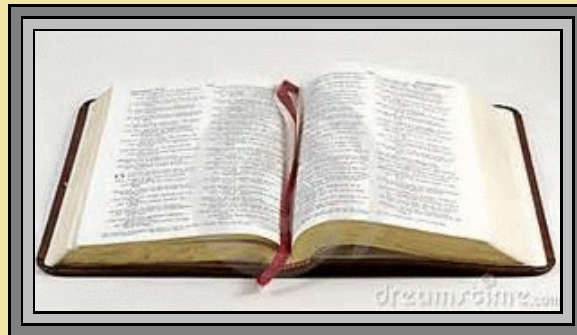
Source: Reviving the Ancient Faith – The Story of Churches of Christ in America, Richard T. Hughes, Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1996, pp. 51-52.

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“There was once a day when the disciples knew the Bible, and any member of the church would detect the slightest digression from the Scriptures in doctrine or methods; but that day has passed, and we need now to teach again the "first principles of the oracles of God.”

(G. C. Brewer, 1919)

“Study to show thyself approved unto God,



a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Indeed, (tragically) Bro. Brewer remains correct;
what **HAS** happened to

“The People Of The Book”?

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Unless an individual who is in a capable, accountable state comes in contact with God's Word in a form which they can understand; salvation cannot occur. **HEARING**, then, is the starting point from which the plan of salvation proceeds. Thus is the sending forth preachers of the word necessitated (Romans 10:14,15)

Without its acceptance, even the Word of God is without power to save. Just as surely as Satan flees from the single, simple word "no"; so too, will God not force an obedient faith upon anyone. Therefore, once again, in **BELIEVING** we find the necessity of the word being preached. (Romans 10:17)

REPENTANCE is the proof of the change of heart which is a vital element in the process of salvation. What you and I think or say about our commitment to Christ may have their places, but; only godly sorrow brings about the actual, active repentance necessary for salvation. (2 Corinthians 7:10) Our actions reveal our hearts.

Anyone not willing to admit and share with others his belief in what he has heard about God, His Word, and His church; has neither truly heard nor believed; and, is in fact; incapable of progressing any further towards becoming a child of God. Without **CONFESSION** we will never be partakers of any of the heavenly benefits in Christ. (Matthew 11:32,33)

For whatever motivation they may have to try to deny its place in the scheme of redemption; those who would argue against **BAPTISM** and its proper form and administration, can only find themselves with but a single choice to make: to follow scripture or not. Thus, all must accept that salvation is not outside of what is found in God's Word. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR:

If you would like to remain on the emailing list for The RESTORATION READER & REVIEW; please let us know at:

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Similarly, all requests to be removed from the list should be sent to the same address.

Also, we would very much appreciate it if you would let us know of any questions you have, or any comments, ideas or suggestions as to how this publication may better serve in the continuing restoration of New Testament Christianity and the edification of the church which is our Lord's.

Thank you.

In Him,

KEVIN L GREER

The
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is printed by
MilePost Publishing Company
2913 Dixiana Court Owensboro, KY 42303-6460
