

The
RESTORATION READER & REVIEW

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“THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY”
Publisher’s Preface

It is believed that such a work as "The New Testament Commentary" is designed to be is greatly needed. This age has been characterized by unusual activity in the department of Biblical Criticism. There never was a time when the Bible was more severely attacked. But it is equally true, there never was a time when the friends of the Bible felt more secure in their plea for its genuineness and divine authenticity. Opposition has only stimulated earnest inquiry, and this has brought to light a vast amount of heretofore unknown evidence, as well as developed an exegesis which promises the best results to all earnest students of the sacred volume.

We think it may be fairly claimed that the Bible, as a divine revelation, has been fully vindicated. It only remains to apprehend the truth which the Bible teaches, and then we may hope for the complete realization of the blessed influence which it is designed to exert in the salvation and civilization of our race. To secure this result, it is very desirable that the present means for enlightened criticism should be used in giving the world a commentary that will at once be popular, and employ all the best learning that is now so abundantly accessible in this department

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of study. It was the belief that such a work as would meet this demand of the age could now be produced, that suggested the publication of THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY.

Within the last few years several able commentaries have been published on the Old Testament, and it is believed little more can be done for this portion of the Bible. But as the New Testament contains what we are more particularly interested in, it is all the more important that the best results of biblical criticism should be applied in elucidating its teaching. And yet we are inclined to believe that this is just the part of the Bible that has failed to receive that enlightened treatment which is necessary to give it its true meaning. Taking this view of the matter, it was thought that a commentary on the New Testament, projected on a liberal basis and wrought out by skillful and able men, possessed of the clearest and ripest views of the Christian Dispensation, would commend itself to the public in a way that would at once secure a large patronage. Hence, after much correspondence and conference on the subject, the publishers of the present work called a meeting of such persons as had been agreed upon to take part in the proposed commentary, to consider the whole matter and make such arrangements as were deemed necessary to push the work to completion. At this meeting it was unanimously agreed that the work should proceed at once upon the general character and plan indicated as follows:

I. When completed, to consist of eleven volumes, divided and assigned as follows:

1. Matthew and Mark

J. W. McGarvey

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2. Luke	J. S. Lamar
3. John	C. L. Loos
4. Acts	W. T. Moore
5. Romans	W. K. Pendleton
6. First and Second Corinthians	Isaac Errett
7. Galatians Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians	R. Richardson
8. First and Second Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon	To be assigned
9. Hebrews	R. Milligan
10. James, Peter, John, and Jude	To be assigned
11. Revelations	To be assigned

II. The text used to be same as Bagster's Critical English New Testament. To be arranged into paragraphs. Chapters and verse-marks retained, but subordinated to this arrangement.

III. The text to be printed at the top of the page. The different readings and purely critical notes to be printed in small type immediately under the text.

IV. Following the text to be, first, a brief analysis of each section when necessary; second, Exegetical and Critical notes, as concisely made as can be done to present clearly the meaning, provided that such notes as are

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not suitable for the body of the work shall be arranged at the end of the volume; third, brief Practical Reflections; fourth, each book to contain an Introduction, giving history, canonicity, general purpose etc. The whole work to be made as popular as possible, at same time scholarly and critical enough for preachers and Bible students.

- V. Parallel references to be placed in the margin of the text; and such maps, illustrations, chronological index, tables, etc., to be provided, as are necessary for ample illustration.

- VI. The size of volume to be crown octavo. The text in long primer and notes in bourgeois. Each volume to contain about 400 pages.

Since the meeting referred to above, considerable progress has been made in the various divisions of the work—several of the volumes being already completed, or nearly so. It is the purpose of all concerned to push the work forward as rapidly as possible. We do not propose to discuss here the merits of the present volume, and yet we feel that it would not be out of place to call the attention of the public to the following important special features:

- a. It distributes the subject matter of the narratives into the Parts, Sections, and Paragraphs which are the natural divisions made by the inspired authors, instead of observing the unnatural division into chapters and verses which has been introduced into our printed Bibles. This arrangement makes the plan of the inspired writers more intelligible, and greatly facilitates

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both the comprehension and the remembrance of what they have written.

- b. It treats these narratives as historical proofs of the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus, and the logical bearing on this question of all the facts recorded, is carefully pointed out in the form of an "Argument" at the end of every section. This feature of the work, which is entirely new, is calculated to greatly exalt the reader's appreciation of the testimony for Jesus, and it should not fail to increase his faith.

- c. It discusses elaborately, and by a method in many respects new, the interesting subject of the genealogy of our Saviour, as given by Matthew.

- d. A note on the genuineness of the last twelve verses of the gospel of Mark, is appended at the close of the volume, which we think will be accepted as a complete refutation of the argument advanced by some eminent critics and commentators of the present age in favor of rejecting these verses from the inspired canon. We believe that this note alone will be regarded by appreciative readers as worth the entire price of the volume.

(Taken From)
("The New Testament Commentary: Vol. I - Matthew and Mark")

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Chapel Address -- No. 5
Selecting A Subject

(from J. W. McGarvey's Chapel Talks)

Many of you expect to preach tomorrow. What will be your subject? A good many years ago some one on Saturday put this question to brother _____. He had prepared a sermon on Satan and when he was asked, "Brother _____ what are you going to preach about tomorrow?" he said, "I am going to give them the devil." Now that seemed pretty rough. Yet that was one phase of Christ's own preaching, and we are to follow Him. He said more about the devil, the eternal judgment and the punishment of the wicked than any one of his apostles, and I rather think he said more than all of them put together, so far as we find their words in the New Testament. How should you determine what to preach, what subject to preach on, tomorrow and all the time hereafter? Perhaps some of you are prepared to answer, "I have but one sermon." Well, the thing is, if that is all and that one is worth preaching, go on and preach it. A man can scarcely preach a sermon that is anything like what a sermon ought to be without doing good. So, if you have only one, don't be afraid to preach that one. And if you have to preach twice before you get another, preach the same sermon twice, but make an improvement on it every time. Once I heard Moses E. Lard, preaching in the old Main Street church, announce a subject on which he had preached five times before to that congregation. He said, "It may surprise you that I have announced to you

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a subject upon which I have preached five times before, but, if it has taken me twenty years to study and work up this sermon I don't think there is any danger of your learning all that is in it by hearing it only five times." Then he went on and delivered it. I watched the audience, and I think they were as deeply interested in it as though that were the first time they had ever heard it.

But how is a man to determine what subject to preach on, if he has a number of sermons? Shall he say, "Well, a certain one that I have will enable me to show off what little learning I have and I will give them that." That would be to preach yourself instead of preaching Christ. Shall he say, "A certain one that I have will enable me to show off as a preacher better than any of the others. I will give them that tomorrow?" Well, that is doing the same thing. That is to preach yourself instead of preaching Christ. I think that the principle on which we are to determine the selection of the subject depends upon what preaching is for. "To save yourself and those who hear you." That sermon, then, of all that you are able to preach tomorrow, by which you can have the greatest hope of saving somebody in the audience, and thereby save yourself, is the one you ought to preach tomorrow and so every other time you are called upon to preach.

But, what have you got to do in order to save men? Well, you have got to make them believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of their sins. These are two very great undertakings. Which is the greater? There is a very common mistake among preachers in thinking that the great task is to inspire men with faith. But it is easy for men to believe in this country. It is very difficult

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for a young man or a young woman growing up in this country to become an unbeliever. A good many try it. A good many young men and young women try to shake off all the impression that the gospel has made on their minds and hearts. And they think sometimes that they have accomplished it. But let some disease seize you, death come near, and the grave seem to yawn, what will that infidelity do? In nine cases out of ten it passes away. It is not very difficult for them now to believe.

But how about repentance? To bring men to repentance as written in the gospel is the great task at which the Savior himself made a comparative failure. We are told that he upbraided the cities because they repented not and showed that it would be more tolerable in the day of judgement for Sodom and Gomorrah because Sodom and Gomorrah would have repented if they had had the chance of these cities. The skillful general, in invading a city, directs his heaviest artillery against the strongest fortifications of his foe. And so in the most difficult task of the preacher, bringing men to repentance, against that stronghold he should direct his heaviest artillery. To that he should devote his mind, his thoughts and his efforts in the pulpit and in the study and thus save the greater number. The apostle Paul says that the goodness of God leads you to repentance—evidently by the power of a sense of gratitude to God for his goodness. Well, then, any effort that you may make to impress upon men's minds and consciences the goodness of God to them individually is one of the means by which to bring them to repentance. We are also told in the Old Testament and in the New that the fear of God

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is the beginning of wisdom. That is not as popular a thought in the modern pulpit as it was in the pulpit of generations past. The idea of preaching the fear of God, the terror of the judgement and of hell is becoming unpopular. Not so with the apostles. We are told that God is love and that is true, but it is equally true that God is a consuming fire. He is one thing to the one class and another to the other. Every thing that you can do to make men fear God and to thus turn them to repentance is the best thing and the most important thing in this country in saving their souls. And to neglect that is to neglect the most important thing. The apostle Paul gives his estimation of that when he says to his brethren, "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, and I call you to witness that I am free from the blood of all men." Had he withheld anything that would have been profitable to their souls, he considered that he would have been guilty of the blood' of men. I advise you, then, young men, to keep this thought in view. When preaching was my chief business in life, before my whole soul became immersed in teaching, many a time have I wished and prayed above all other things that I asked for the power to bring men to repentance. I felt that that was my greatest weakness, my greatest failure. I could interest men generally. I never had much trouble in that way. I could see that men were paying attention to what I was saying. I often had my eye upon some individual in the audience whom I was trying and praying to bring to repentance, but all in vain. I very well remember a man who moved to the community where I was preaching. He was a very proud man in his feelings and in his family connections. He had married an humble, but most

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excellent Christian young woman who was a member of the Christian church. He had been so trained that he had a supreme contempt for what was known as the Campbellites. He had been brought up in a Presbyterian family, as I remember. His wife had brought her church letter with her when she moved, but before she got a chance to put it in he got hold of it and hid it. He would not go to church with her. Finally she managed to find where he had hid her letter. And one Sunday when he was gone she came and put in her membership. He was too much of a gentleman to make any fuss or outcry about it, but there they lived without very often darkening the door of the church. Finally she managed to invite me to go with her to supper on Sunday evenings. He was too much of a gentleman to let his wife go off to meeting with the preacher and have to come home by herself. So he would go to church with us. Well I never succeeded in bringing that man to repentance, but in the course of a year or two I heard of his debating on religious questions with men in his store, for he was a merchant, and always taking our side of the argument. This gave me some hope that he might be brought to repentance, but he was still impervious. Months and perhaps years went on and God took hold of him. He loved his wife as well as any man ever did I suppose. She was taken sick and grew worse and worse until she died. A few weeks after her death he was at church and when the invitation was given he came forward weeping vehemently to make the good confession. See how much it took to bring that man to repentance. You may witness in your congregations many a man like that. Do your best with any such man and leave the results to God. But keep this in mind all the

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time, that there are men in your congregations that will die in their sins and be condemned if you do not bring them to repentance. There are men in the audience outside of the church, men in a miserable condition. If you would bring home many sheaves with you as we have just sung, keep this in mind and labor to this end in preparing every sermon that you preach.

“I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

2 Timothy 4:1-5
(KJV)

The Birth Of The Church Which Is Christ's

Acts 2:1-47

as taken from

The People's New Testament

(Johnson's Notes)

1. **When the day of Pentecost was fully come.** The entire period between it and the passover, the waiting period of the disciples, was filled full. Pentecost, one of the three great annual festivals of the Jews, lasted only one day, was on the fiftieth day from the morrow after the passover Sabbath (Lev 23:15-22). The Savior, crucified on Friday, was in the tomb on the passover Sabbath, and rose on Sunday, the day from whence the count began. The Sunday following would be the eighth day, and the fiftieth day would fall on Sunday, the first day of the eighth week. Hence, the ancient church observed Pentecost on the first day of the week. For fuller discussion, see Meyer, Howson and Milligan on this passage. All agree that Pentecost came on Sunday. Pentecost was the feast of the grain harvest (Exod 23:16; 34:22, 23), and was also held by the Jews to be the anniversary of the giving of the law. **They were all... in one place.** Not only the apostles, but the hundred and twenty disciples. They probably had an intimation that the promised day had come.

2. **There came a sound.** As this day, the day of the founding of the church, was to be a day of signs and wonders, the shedding forth of the Spirit was made perceptible to all. The sound was heard, the tongues of fire were seen, the word was spoken in many languages. **It filled the house.** The mighty sound. At the same time the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, their spirits baptized in the Spirit.

3. **There appeared unto them cloven tongues.** Luminous tongues sat on each of them, "parting asunder" (Revision), or

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"distributing themselves" (margin). Meyer says that the idea is that they parted and distributed themselves on those present. These tongues symbolized the fact that the kingdom now inaugurated was to conquer by the spoken word, by the sword of the Spirit.

4. ***They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.*** All the disciples present. To be filled implies that the human spirit within was overwhelmed by, or immersed in, the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit was not a sprinkling, but an outpouring that overwhelmed the human spirit. ***Began to speak.*** This was the "Beginning." See Luke 24:47 and Acts 11:15. ***With other tongues.*** In the languages of all the different countries from which Jews had come up to Pentecost. Many would be unable to understand the Hebrew dialect of Judea in that period, and hence, they must be preached to in the tongue of their own country if they understood. That the gospel on this, the first day the Great Commission was ever preached, was preached in all tongues, symbolized the fact that it is for all nations. ***As the Spirit gave them utterance.*** They were not allowed to preach the Great Commission until now, in order that every word uttered on this day might be the word of the Spirit, not of man. The words were to be spoken to an audience, not of those in Jerusalem only, but to our whole race in all time, in order to show how sinners are to be saved under the gospel.

5. ***There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men.*** Devout Jews who had come up to the great feast of Pentecost. The Jews were already scattered in many nations, but foreign Jews were wont to flock to the great national feasts. Some, too, had come to end their days at Jerusalem. ***Under heaven.*** From all quarters of the world. Jews, in foreign lands, attended Pentecost in larger numbers than the other feasts, because the time of year favored travel.

6. ***The multitude came together.*** Led by the sound (Revised Version) and the marvellous events. ***Speak in his own***

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language. Of the foreign country in which he had been reared.

7, 8. **Are not all these who speak Galileans?** Most of the disciples to this time were. The Galileans were not generally learned men, yet now all hear, every man his own tongue.

9. **Parthians.** The long list of nations embraces the various races embraced in the we of verse 8. Parthia was east of the Tigris. **Elam** was an ancient name of Persia. **Media**, another part of the Medo-Persian empire, east of the Tigris. **Mesopotamia** was the seat of Babylon. These four countries just named were thickly populated with Jews descended from those carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. **Cappadocia.** A Roman province not far from the Black Sea. **Pontus.** A province south and east of the Black Sea. **Asia.** The Roman province of which Ephesus was the capital. All the "seven churches" were in the province called "Asia."

10. **Phrygia and Pamphylia.** Parts of what is called Asia Minor. **Egypt.** The great African province where many ten thousands of Jews had their home. **Parts of Libya.** Of Africa. About **Cyrene.** A great Grecian city on the coast west of Egypt. It is said that one-fourth of the population of Cyrene was Jewish. **Strangers of Rome.** Roman Jews sojourning at Jerusalem. **Proselytes.** Gentiles who had been converted to Judaism.

11. **Cretes.** From the island of Crete. **Arabians.** Many Jews dwelt in the desert lands south and east of Palestine, all called generally Arabia.

13. **Others mocking.** Some were amazed and bewildered; others, stubbornly skeptical, scoffed and suggested that the speakers were drunk. **New wine.** More exactly, sweet wine, a wine made by soaking raisins, pressing out and fermenting the juice, which was very intoxicating. Most wines of Palestine had very slight intoxicating qualities.

14. **Peter, standing up.** In the name of all the apostles. Jesus had said (Matt 16:19) that Peter should receive the keys of the

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kingdom, and they are now to be used to open its doors. **With the eleven.** Eleven other apostles besides himself. He now begins the first gospel sermon. He and the apostles now begin their witness to Christ.

15. **These are not drunken.** It was only the third hour, nine o'clock. The Jews at their festivals seldom ate before this hour, and as their drink was taken at a meal, could not be drunken.

16. **This is that which was spoken.** He turns to their prophets for an explanation. **By the prophet Joel.** Who lived about 800 b.c. See Joel 3:1-5.

17. **It shall come to pass in the last days.** The phrase "Last days" was used by the Jews to denote the last dispensation, that of Christ. See Isa 2:2. **I will pour out of my Spirit.** A figurative expression to indicate abundant gifts of the Spirit. **On all flesh.** On all races, not on the Jews alone. **Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.** "To prophesy" in the New Testament means to communicate religious truth by divine authority, as well as to foretell the future. The prophecy was fulfilled in the inspired speaking on Pentecost and afterwards, as well as by the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9). It will be seen that both sexes are included. **See visions... dream dreams.** Such visions as that of Peter at Joppa. Such dreams as that of Paul at Troas, where he saw the Macedonian asking him to "Come and help us."

19. **I will shew wonders in heaven.** Peter not only quotes that part of the prophecy of Joel which was applicable to the events now transpiring, but he quotes that part also which pertains to the calamities coming on the Jewish nation, and to the final judgment. I understand verse 19 to apply directly to the overthrow of Judea and Jerusalem.

20. **The sun shall be turned into darkness.** See notes on Matt 24:29.

21. **Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, etc.** To turn to the Lord for salvation in his appointed way. It means far more

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than simply prayer. He who would call on the name of the Lord for salvation must do more than say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." He must hear and obey (Matt 7:21).

22. **Hear these words.** Peter now begins to preach Christ directly to them. He boldly declares that they knew of his miracles, and wonders and signs. He demonstrates the Messiahship in verses 22-36: 1. By the miracles of which they were witnesses. 2. By his Resurrection, proved (1) by the prophecy of David; (2) by the testimony of all the apostles present who were witnesses; (3) by the phenomena then witnessed, which could be only due to his exaltation to the right hand of God.

23. **Being delivered by the determinate counsel.** It was the will of the Father that he should die, and was known to the Father before his coming. See Isaiah, chapter 53. **By wicked hands have crucified.** By the hands of wicked Romans, whom they caused to crucify the Lord.

24. **Because it was not possible that he should be holden.** It was not possible that Jesus be held by death, because he had life in himself, and, besides, it was the Father's will that he should arise. This verse epitomizes the four Gospels.

25-28. **David speaketh.** Psa 16:8-11.

27. **Not leave my soul in hell.** In hades, the unseen abode of the dead. The meaning is that he would not remain under the power of death. David did not speak this of himself, but of the Son of David. See verse 29. **Thy Holy One.** The Lord Jesus. The promised Messiah.

29. **He is both dead and buried.** David. His sepulchre was in their midst, within the walls of the city. All his hearers had seen it.

30. **Knowing that God had sworn.** God had promised to David that Christ should sit on his throne. See 2 Sam 7:11-16; Psa 89:3, 4, 35, 37; 132:11.

32. **This Jesus hath God raised up.** David foretold it; we are all

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witnesses of it. There were, including himself, at least twelve witnesses there who had seen the risen Lord again and again. The next point is the exaltation of Christ to a heavenly throne.

33. **He hath shed forth this**, which ye now see and hear. The supernatural marvels of this wonderful day were the proof of Christ's exaltation. He had shed them forth.

34. **For**. Peter now shows that David had foretold the exaltation of Christ. **David... saith**. Psa 110:1. Jesus (Matt 22:43, 44) quotes the same passage and applies it to himself. **The Lord**. God, the Father. **My Lord**. Christ. **Sit thou on my right hand**. See verse 33. "To sit at the right hand" implies participation in the Supreme Government.

35. **Until I make, etc**. When the work of the Mediator is ended and all conquered to Christ, then all power is given up to the Father. See 1 Cor 15:23-28.

36. **Therefore let all the house of Israel know, etc**. This is the grand climax, the conclusion to which the whole discourse had been directed.

37. **When they heard this**. The conclusion, supported by such convincing demonstration. Before Peter began to speak they did not understand the signs; but now it was clear to them that they had rejected and crucified the Lord. **Pricked in their heart**. Convicted of their sins, and pierced with sorrow. They believed Peter's affirmation; their faith revealed their sin in rejecting Christ. Overwhelmed with sorrow, they ask, **What shall we do?** Is there any way that such sinners can be pardoned?

38. **Repent, and be baptized**. For the first time the terms of pardon under the New Covenant and the Great Commission are given; given once for all time, and always the same. The convicted, broken-hearted, sorrowing sinner, believing that Jesus is the Christ, is to repent and be baptized. **Repent**. Not sorrow. They already sorrowed; but a change of purpose; the internal change which resolves to serve the Lord. The Greek term rendered

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repent, means a change of mind. The act of obedience in baptism is an outward expression of both faith and repentance. ***In the name of Jesus Christ.*** "Upon the name" (Revised Version). Upon the ground of the name. In submission to the authority of Jesus Christ. ***For the remission of sins.*** Thus, by complying with the conditions just named, they shall receive remission of sins. No man can receive pardon without faith and repentance, nor can he without submission to the will of Christ. "Eis (for) denotes the object of baptism, which is the remission of the guilt contracted in the state before metanoia (repentance)." -Meyer. "In order to the forgiveness of sins we connect naturally with both the preceding verbs. This clause states the motive or object which should induce them to repent and be baptized." -Prof. Hackett. ***The gift of the Holy Spirit.*** Promised as a comforter to all who obey Christ, but whom "the world cannot receive."

39. ***For the promise.*** Of pardon, and the gift of the Spirit. ***Unto you.*** Even unto those who rejected the Lord. ***To your children.*** Your children after you. ***To all that are afar off.*** To the Gentiles. That he refers to the Gentiles is shown in the next clause, ***even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*** Peter spake as the Spirit gave him utterance, and perhaps did not fully comprehend his own words.

40. ***Save yourselves.*** This was the object of the "many other words." They could "save themselves" by complying with the conditions named in verse 38, and thus accepting Christ as their Savior. ***From this untoward generation.*** The wicked Jewish race.

41. ***They that gladly received his word.*** Every believing penitent would gladly receive it. ***Were baptized.*** Not indefinitely in the future, but that day. ***The same day there were added about three thousand souls.*** "It is proper to add that pools numerous and large which encircled Jerusalem, as both those still in use, and as the remains of others testify of at the present day, afforded ample means for the celebration of the rite of

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baptism. The habits of the East, as every traveler knows, would present no obstacle to such a use of the public reservoirs."-Hackett, Commentary on Acts. It has been objected to the immersion of the three thousand that the apostles could not have done it in one day. We are not told that the apostles only were the baptists, or even baptized at all. There were at least 120 disciples there; perhaps even more on this great day. Perhaps the Seventy were all there. But the apostles alone could have discharged the office. There would be 250 to each one. Sixty persons have been immersed easily in an hour by one person. At this rate the whole work could have been accomplished by twelve men in about four hours. The celebrated Chrysostom, aided by his elders, baptized (immersed) 3,000 in a day in a.d. 404.

42. **They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine.** In the things taught by the apostles. **And fellowship.** Contribution to the common fund and its distribution. **The breaking of bread.** The Lord's supper. From this time it is observed as an ordinance of the church. **In prayers.** I think the prayers of the regular worship are meant. These four items are all features of the public church life.

43. **Fear came upon every soul.** Of the unbelievers.

44. **Had all things common.** Many, perhaps most, were sojourners at, not citizens of, Jerusalem. It was needful that they remain together for the time, and while sojourning here, they threw their common funds together. Alford says: "In order, however, rightly to understand this community, we may remark, It is only found in the Church at Jerusalem. No trace of its existence is discoverable anywhere else; on the contrary, St. Paul speaks constantly of the rich and poor. See 1 Tim 6:17; Gal 2:10; 2 Cor 8:13, 15; 9:6,7; 1 Cor 16:2; also James 2:1-5; 4:13."

45. **Sold their possessions.** Real estate. **Goods.** Personal property. Parted them to all men. On this special liberality we may note, (1) It partly arose from the non-resident or pilgrim character of a large part of the converts. (2) It was not an

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obligatory rule; the laws of ownership or property were not disturbed or questioned. Even Ananias might have kept all his land unblamed,

46. **Continuing daily... in the temple.** They gathered there for the purpose of teaching the multitudes. **Breaking bread from house to house.** Eating their food from house to house. It may refer to observing the Lord's Supper in private residences.

47. **The Lord added to the church.** This is the first time the church is named as existing. It had been founded on Pentecost. **Such as should be saved.** "Those being saved" (Revised Version). Those being saved on the conditions that the Gospel imposes the Lord added to his church.

The People's New Testament
The Common and Revised Versions, with References
by
Barton Warren Johnson
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“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

2 Peter 3:9
(KJV)

Did Alexander Campbell Start The church Of Christ?

by
Jarrod Jacobs

When discussing the church of Christ with others, we sometimes hear the comment made that the church of Christ was started by Alexander Campbell. Mr. Campbell was a well-known preacher in America in the 1800's; but did he start the church of Christ, or any other church for that matter? The short answer is no. Unfortunately, the teaching that Mr. Campbell established a church is made because people do not know the simple teaching of the New Testament concerning the church.

To begin, please understand that Alexander Campbell could not have started the church of Christ. This is because folks who lived in the first century, like Mary, Peter, James, John, Phoebe, and Paul were among the members of it (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:28; Rom. 16:1-16; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9). Saved people have been added to the Lord's church since it began on the Pentecost following the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:47). To this day, all those who submit to the Lord's plan of salvation continue to be added to it! Alexander Campbell did not live in the first century. Nor did he die to purchase a church (Acts 20:28). Mr. Campbell lived from 1788 to 1866. In other words, he was born almost 1800 years after the Lord's church

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was established in Acts 2. Therefore, he did not start the Lord's church. Nor did he start the church on this continent. He did not start any church.

Have you been to Paris, Kentucky and visited the Cane Ridge meeting house? If not, you need to go there and look at one of the grave markers in the cemetery. In the cemetery, you will find the grave marker of Mr. William Rogers. Mr. Rogers' headstone looks like many others of that era except for the inscription found upon it.



William Rogers' headstone reads as follows: "Born in Campbell Co., Va., July 7, 1784, removed with his father to Cane Ridge, Bourbon Co., April 1793. United with the Church of Christ at Cane Ridge in 1807."

A significant date mentioned on this headstone is 1807. This date is significant because 1807 was two years before Alexander Campbell came to America from Ireland. 1807 is three years before Campbell preached his first sermon in America. How could Alexander Campbell have started the church of Christ if William Rogers was already in it in 1807?

Further, in Celina, TN, there is a church of Christ who can trace the congregation's beginning back to 1805. If Mr. Campbell started the church of Christ, how could this church have already been in existence? Mr. Campbell wasn't even in America at the time! The answer of course is that it is possible

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because Mr. Campbell didn't start the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). The church of Christ began in this country when Christians came here simply preaching and teaching about the church found in the Bible! As was noted above, such things happened long before Alexander Campbell was in this land.

Mr. Campbell did much in his life to spread the gospel, but there is nothing the church of Christ does or practices that had its beginning with Mr. Campbell, or any other man (Gal. 1:6-9). The church of Christ follows what Christ has revealed in the New Testament (Jn. 12:48).

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“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

(1 Corinthians 3:10-11)
<KJV>

“Speak Where the Bible Speaks; Be Silent Where the Bible is Silent”

Wes McAdams

December 23, 2015

My entire life I have heard this saying, "Speak where the Bible speaks; be silent where the Bible is silent," or phrases very similar. I have heard this phrase lauded, I have heard it ridiculed, and I have heard it misused. Recently, a reader of this blog asked me to address this phrase and what it really means. I would love to do just that.

“speak where the bible speaks. be silent where the bible is silent”

Where Did the Saying Come From?

First of all, this isn't a quotation from Scripture, but a quotation from a preacher named Thomas Campbell. In 1809, Campbell spoke to a large crowd of people, who were described as being, "Sick of the animosities and controversies between rival sects, and disgusted with the petty differences which occasioned alienation and strife..." They sought some way to be united and to use Scripture alone as their guide in all matters of faith.

Thomas Campbell's speech that day was described in this way:

Having opened the meeting in the usual manner, and, in earnest prayer, specially invoked the Divine guidance, proceeded to rehearse the matter from the beginning, and to dwell with

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unusual force upon the manifold evils resulting from the divisions in religious society—divisions which, he urged, were as unnecessary as they were injurious, since God had provided, in his sacred Word, an infallible standard, which was all-sufficient and alone-sufficient, as a basis of union and Christian co-operation. He showed, however, that men had not been satisfied with its teachings, but had gone outside of the Bible, to frame for themselves religious theories, opinions and speculations, which were the real occasions of the unhappy controversies and strifes which had so long desolated the religious world. He, therefore, insisted with great earnestness upon a return to the simple teachings of the Scriptures, and upon the entire abandonment of everything in religion for which there could not be produced a Divine warrant.

Near the conclusion of his address, he spoke these now famous words, “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” A profound silence was said to have fallen over the crowd, as the weight of that thought sunk into their minds.

What Did It Mean?

Many debate and try to twist the meaning of these words today, but make no mistake, the meaning of those words were clear on that day. The first man to speak up said, “Mr. Campbell, if we adopt that as a basis, then there is an end of infant baptism.” To which Campbell replied, “If infant baptism be not found in Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it.”

There it is, the plain and simple meaning of the phrase: The

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church should do what Scripture authorizes us to do and not do what Scripture says nothing about. Fill in the blank with any religious practice, “If _____ be not found in Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it.”

Campbell’s statement was summed up this way:

There should be no contention, henceforth, in regard to the opinions of men, however wise or learned. Whatever private opinions might be entertained upon matters not clearly revealed must be retained in silence, and no effort must be made to impose them upon others. Thus the silence of the Bible was to be respected equally with its revelations, which were by Divine authority declared to be able to “make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”

There may in deed be many matters about which Scripture is silent and men may draw any number of conclusions and opinions about those matters. However, those opinions and conclusions should not be brought into the faith and worship of the church. They should be “retained in silence.” Incidentally, this seems to be the precise teaching of Romans 14 as well.

What It Does NOT Mean

1. It does not mean what God has not authorized is necessarily sinful.

We have often taken this to the next level and said we can know for certain that practices about which God is silent must indeed be sinful. That was not the intention of the phrase. Campbell believed “that all matters not distinctly

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revealed in the Bible should be held as matters of opinion and of mutual forbearance.”

But just because something is not sinful, or may not be sinful, does not mean you or I have the authority to introduce it into the faith or worship of the Lord’s church without express authority from God.

2. It does not mean when the Bible is silent about something, we can do whatever we want.

Many have begun to twist this phrase and insist it means the exact opposite of what Campbell meant. They now insist it means, “Where the Bible is silent, do whatever you want, just don’t make any laws about it.” Campbell knew there would continue to be chaos and disunity if men continued doing that.

It was obvious to the crowd the day this phrase was first spoken, If we make this the basis of our unity, then there are many things which we must STOP doing.

3. It does not mean we are not allowed to use church buildings.

When this phrase is quoted, many say something like, “Then why do you have a church building? The Bible is silent on that.” Actually, Scripture is NOT silent on a meeting place. In fact, the commands to assemble necessitate a meeting place. In a follow up writing, Campbell said about matters like this:

That if any circumstantial indispensable necessary to the observance of Divine ordinances be not found upon the page of express revelation, such, and such only, as are absolutely necessary for this purpose should be adopted under the title of

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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.

The church is authorized to adopt certain “human expedients” that are necessary for doing what God has expressly commanded us to do. Consider this example: If someone commissioned you to bake a cake, you’d be authorized to use an oven and purchase flour, as these things are necessary for doing what you’ve been told to do.

Bottom Line

I am not a follower of Thomas Campbell. I’m a follower of Jesus Christ. But I happen to believe Campbell was right. I believe we would be better off if we adopt – and stick to – this mentality, “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.”

I believe Scripture is not only inspired, I believe it is all sufficient. I believe it is, “Profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for EVERY good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

It is presumptuous, divisive, and spiritually dangerous to introduce things into the faith and worship of the church that are not expressly authorized in Scripture. Let us walk circumspectly, dear church.

I love you and God loves you,

Wes McAdams

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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

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