

Are The "Church of Christ" Churches A Cult?

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Introduction

The father and son team of Thomas and Alexander Campbell had no idea that their heretical teachings would eventually give birth to some of the most vicious cults that have ever plagued the Christian Church. They assumed that Christ was going to come back in their lifetime and they were the terminal generation. The the world would soon come to an end. But history has the nasty habit of crushing apocalyptic dreams.

The “churches” they set up have evolved into different organizations such as:

the Christian Church

the Disciples of Christ

the Church of Christ

Christadelphianism

the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

the Jehovah’s Witnesses

Oneness Pentecostalism

and several other smaller cults.

Many Christian Church, Disciples of Christ and Church of Christ churches have shed their cultic origins and no longer teach such heresies as baptismal regeneration. A few of them have adopted Evangelical theology and now preach the same gospel we do. We gladly embrace them as fellow Christians because they believe that salvation is by grace alone, through

faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Bible alone, apart from any acts of obedience on our part such as baptism.

The vast majority of the "Church of Christ" churches are still very conservative and hold to the strange teachings of the Campbells. The most aggressive "Church of Christ" churches are the "Boston Church of Christ" churches. The word "Boston" became connected with them because the media first took note of them because they met in Boston Commons near Harvard University.

As with most cults, the "Boston" Church of Christ churches go after college-age students because they are ignorant of the Bible and naive when it comes to religion. Thus they can be easily manipulated and deceived. For example, many young people come from homes where there was no discipline and thus fall prey to authoritative cults such as the Boston Church of Christ. Once they fall victim to cultic authority structures, they soon manifest a host of psychological illnesses that have been documented by secular and religious scholars alike.

The Boston cult has experienced defections from some of the leaders who were part of the movement from the very beginning. They in turn have gone public and "spilled the beans" concerning the true history and inner workings of the cult. There are numerous books that give the grisly details of the sexual exploitation, breakup of families, psychological harm, financial dealings, etc. that are part of the history of the Boston cult.

The bottom line is that the “Boston” Church of Christ churches are nothing more than a mutant strain of the old Campbellite killer virus. Since it is a new mutant strain of an old virus, it takes time for Christian apologists to develop theological anti-bodies to protect the Body of Christ from infection. Thankfully, thousands of people have recovered from the Boston virus and now give thanks to God that they are out of the cult.

Our refutation of the “Church of Christ” churches including the Boston cult has two parts. First, the leaders are quite desperate to avoid any discussion of the history of the Campbells and the religious groups they spawned. If you are in a “Boston” church and have been told not to “waste” your time on historical questions, ask yourself why are they so afraid of history? Are there things about their history that they do not want you to know?

Second, its theological foundation is still the old Campbellite heresy of baptismal regeneration. Once this is refuted by the Bible, the entire cultic structure crumbles. *Since it is preaching salvation by works such as baptism, then it is preaching a false gospel. Since it is preaching a false gospel, then it is a false church and falls under the condemnation of Gal. 1:8.*

The following material refutes the Campbellite view of baptism and any other “church” that teaches baptismal regeneration. While baptism pictures the atoning work of Jesus Christ, it was never intended to replace it.

Part One

THE HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

The "Restoration" Movement began in the 19th Century under the leadership of Thomas Campbell, Barton Stone, Walter Scott and Alexander Campbell (1788-1866). The importance of these "Restorers" was based on their claim that:

1. The Christian Church disappeared in the 1st Century. The "true" Gospel was lost at that time.

2. The Roman Catholic Church and all Protestant Churches are apostate organizations and are not to be viewed as "Christian" churches.

3. All the historic creeds and confessions are worthless and should be ignored.

4. God raised up Alexander Campbell to "restore" the "true" Gospel and to re-establish the Christian Church. He restored the pure "Apostolic" Church.

5. The Millennium was going to be ushered in during their lifetime by the "Restoration" Movement.

6. The "true" Gospel teaches that water baptism of believers by immersion for salvation is essential for salvation. The "Restorers" spoke of this as "baptismal regeneration."

7. The "baptism" given by all other churches is not saving. You have to be re-baptized in accordance with the Campbellite doctrine of baptism to be saved.

8. Only Bible names should be used in the name of a church. It is wrong to use such names as Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, etc.. Even though they first called themselves "Reformed Baptists," they later took up such names as "Disciples of Christ," "the Churches of Christ" and "The Christian Church."

9. Nothing should be allowed in the Church unless there is a "book, chapter and verse" for it. On this basis the "Reformers" were opposed to the use of musical instruments in worship, missionary societies, etc.

This point has led to thousands of church splits. The "Churches of Christ" split off from the "Disciples of Christ" over such issues in 1906 and have never stopped splitting since that time. Each group claims to be the "true" Church of Christ and all the other Churches of Christ are false churches.

10. Some Campbellite theologians have denied the omniscience of God by teaching that God does not know the future. (For example see: *The Gospel Plan of Salvation*, by T. W. Brents published by the "Gospel Advocate" Company in Nashville, Tenn.)

Significant Dates in Campbellite History

1809 Thomas Campbell censured by the Presbyterian Church for false teaching.

1809 Thomas Campbell writes "Declaration and Address" for the "The Christian Association of Washington." It functioned as a "creed" for the young movement.

1809 Alexander Campbell arrives in America and joins his father's Association.

1811 The Association becomes an independent church after being rejected by the Presbyterians once again.

1812 The Campbells are re-baptized by a Baptist preacher at Buffalo Creek. This was fifteen years BEFORE Scott originated the doctrine of "baptism unto remission of sins."

1813 The Campbells join the Redstone Baptist Association.

1820 Alexander Campbell represents the Baptist Church in a debate with John Walker, a Presbyterian.

1823 August: The Redstone Baptist Association prepares to censure the Campbells for false doctrine but they resign and set up an independent Baptist Church.

1823 October: Alexander Campbell debates McCalla still claiming to represent Baptists. The Campbells now call themselves, "Reformed Baptists."

1827 Nov.: Walter Scott preaches "baptism unto remission of sins." William Amen was the first one "baptized unto remission of sins" Scott's followers call themselves the "Christians."

1832 Campbell's "Disciples of Christ" openly unite with Scott's "Christians."

1849 Controversy over missionary societies splits the "Restoration" Movement.

1860 Controversy over musical instruments splits the movement.

1906 The "Churches of Christ" listed as a separate denomination apart from the "Disciples of Christ" and the "Christian Church." The Campbellites popularize Scott's doctrine of "baptism unto remission of sins."

1920- Over a hundred controversies split the movement on such issues as musical instruments, head-coverings, communion cups, schools, orphanages, Sunday School, divorce, re-marriage, etc.

Part Two

The Campbellite Origin Of The Major Cults

If the Campbells had known that their teachings would spawn such cults as Mormonism, maybe they would have repented of their heresies and found salvation at the foot of the cross. Jesus said that we would know false prophets by their fruit (Matt. 7:16). Let us now examine the "fruit" of Thomas and Alexander Campbell.

I. Campbellism And Mormonism

The evidence is clear that Mormonism arose out of the Campbellite "Restoration" Movement.

1. The leading figures in early Mormonism were originally preachers in Campbellite churches and many of them had personally worked with Alexander Campbell: Sidney Rigdon, Parley Pratt, Oliver Crowder, Orson Hyde, Lyman Wight, Edward Partridge, John Corril, Isaac Morely, John Murdock, etc.
2. So many thousands of "Disciples of Christ" joined the Mormons that Alexander Campbell called Mormonism "Satan's counterfeit" of the Disciples of Christ
3. Joseph Smith was taught the "Restoration" concept and its peculiar doctrines by Sidney Rigdon. When Joseph Smith adopted most of the points

of the “Restoration” Movement, he put himself as the “Restorer” of the Gospel and the true Church in the place of Alexander Campbell:

- a. The Church and the “true” Gospel was lost in the 1st Century.
- b. All subsequent churches are apostate.
- c. Joseph Smith “restored” the Church and the Gospel.
- d. A church should use Bible names. The Mormons first called themselves the “Church of Christ.” Most Mormon denominations still use such names.
- e. You must be baptized as a believer by immersion “unto remission of sins” to be saved.
- f. Smith challenged Alexander Campbell to a public debate on the issue of who was the true “Restorer.”

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Mormon Sources:

History of the Church, (by Joseph Smith) vol. I:120-125, 188. vol. II:268, 269n, 270.

Journal Of Discourses, vol. II:17, 18; vol. XI:3.

Joseph Smith: An American Prophet, (by John Evans)
211,214-216.

2. Non-Mormon Scholars:

Shadow Or Reality, (by the Tanners) pp.66-68.

Origin of Campbellism, (by J. Milburn)

3. Campbellite Sources:

Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, vol. II:344-347

II. Campbellism And Christadelphianism

Dr. John Thomas, a prominent "Disciple of Christ" and personal friend of Alexander Campbell, decided that if we should throw out the creeds and use only Bible names, then why do we believe in the "Trinity" seeing the word is not found in the Bible! He went on to deny the deity of Christ, the personhood of the Spirit, the bodily resurrection of Christ, Christ's physical return to this world, the immortality of the soul. He taught "soul sleep" and denied the doctrine of Hell. He did not believe in a paid clergy but each member was viewed as a minister. He was able to persuade many other "Disciples" to join him in establishing the "Christadelphians" or "Brethren in Christ." His movement was composed of Campbellite and Millerite churches.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological And Ecclesiastical Literature, (by McClintock and Strong), vol. XI: 937-938.

III. Campbellism and Jehovah's Witnesses

Benjamin Wilson was a "Disciple of Christ" who followed Thomas into Christadelphianism. Although he was only a newspaper reporter, he published a Greek-English interlinear called *The Emphatic Diaglott*.

It was Wilson who introduced Charles Taze Russell to those very doctrines which have become the central theology of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The Watchtower Society even published and used Wilson's interlinear for many years. Campbellism through Christadelphianism is the origin of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cyclopedia Of Biblical, Theological And Ecclesiastical Literature, (By McClintock and Strong), vol. XI:937-938; vol. XII:868-869.

Apostles Of Denial, (Ed Gruss) pp. 14-16, 193-196.

Part Three

The Doctrinal Errors Of Campbellism

While there are many doctrinal issues that divide Evangelical Christians from the Campbellites, the greatest point of controversy is the Campbellite view of baptism.

Evangelical Christians believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, apart from any acts of obedience. The person and work of Christ is the beginning and end of our salvation and nothing can be added to what He did for us.

Human works such as baptism, church membership, etc... are not necessary for salvation. While obedience to God's Law has a role to play in the assurance of salvation, it has no role to play in the way of salvation. Baptism like circumcision is a outward rite which symbolizes an inner state. While both ceremonies symbolize regeneration, they do not accomplish it.

In opposition to the Bible, Campbellite theology teaches "baptismal regeneration." They claim that water baptism by immersion of adults "unto remission of sins" does not merely symbolize regeneration but it actually accomplishes it.

In other words, the work of Jesus is not enough. Unless you are baptized in the exact way they dictate (immersion, adults only) and for the exact purpose they have in mind (unto remission of sins), not only is your baptism invalid but you are not yet saved no matter how sincerely you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior!

To add baptism to faith is nothing more than adding works to grace which is impossible according to Rom. 11:6. The attempt to evade this by claiming that baptism is part of faith is not linguistically or grammatically possible. If obedience to God's commands such as baptism is what "faith" is, then why stop with baptism? What about all the other commands of God such as "love your wife?" A works-salvation can never say when "enough" works have been done!

Twelve Reasons Why Baptism Is Not Essential For Salvation

1. If the Campbellite doctrine is true, then the Restorers were not saved men! Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott and Barton Stone were never baptized "unto the remission of sin." When they repudiated their infant baptism, they were baptized by the Baptists. But they never repudiated their Baptist baptism and got rebaptized according to Campbellite baptism. Thus if they were correct in their theology, then the "Church of Christ" churches were begun by unsaved children of the devil.
2. Jesus never baptized anyone. If baptism is essential for salvation, then Jesus never saved anyone. But He did forgive people of their sins without any mention of baptism or water. (ex. Mk. 2:5,10) To say He cannot do this today is absurd! (Heb. 13:8)
3. Paul did not view baptism as part of the Gospel (I Cor. 1:14-17).
4. John's baptism did not save anyone even though it was "unto remission of sins" (Mk. 1:4 cf. Acts 19:1-5). He contrasted water baptism to Spirit baptism in Mk. 1:8.
5. There is only one God and thus only one way of salvation (Rom 3:28-30). This means that the way of salvation today was also the way during O.T. times.
6. The Gospel of justification by faith alone apart from obedience to God's commands is taught in both O.T. and the N.T. (Rom 1:1-2).

Abraham : before the Law (Rom. 4:1-5)

David : after the Law (Rom. 4:6-8)

Habakkuk: in the Prophets (Rom. 1:17)

7. Baptism is the N.T. parallel of circumcision just as the Lord's Supper is the parallel of the Passover (Col. 2:11-12). Since circumcision was not essential for salvation, then neither is baptism.

8. Abraham was saved BEFORE he was circumcised in order to emphasize that salvation was by faith alone apart from obedience to God's commands and that the Gentiles would be saved by faith alone apart from obedience to any command such as baptism (Rom. 4:9-11, 16, 23-5:2).

9. Cornelius was saved and baptized by the Holy Spirit BEFORE he was baptized (Acts 10:44-48). This passage clearly refutes baptismal regeneration.

10. Baptismal regeneration:

a.) makes salvation dependent upon the availability of water.

b.) makes salvation dependent upon Campbellism.

c.) confuses the symbol with the reality it represents.

d.) makes faith and obedience and the same thing.

e.) is based on a superstitious and magical view of baptism.

11. The thief on the cross was saved without baptism. The Campbellite argument that he was saved under the O.T. way of salvation is not possible seeing that Christ had already died on the cross and finished the atonement before the thief died. The thief belongs on the N.T. side of the cross and not on the O.T. side.

12. Campbellites claim that the word “unto” in Acts 2:38 (eis in the Greek) always means “in order to obtain” and is always “forward looking.” In this way they make remission of sins follow the act of baptism in a cause and effect relationship. Baptism causes forgiveness of sins.

The problem with this idea is that Greek scholars do not see this as the meaning of “eis.” Liddell and Scott, Thayer, A.T. Robertson, Dana and Manty, Vine, etc... state that “eis” is often used in the sense of “in reference to something already previously existing or accomplished.”

In this sense, baptism is done AFTER and BECAUSE of remission of sins. Once our sins are forgiven, then you should be baptized. That the Greek scholars are correct is seen from the way “eis” is used in the N.T. See our booklet *Is Baptism Necessary For Salvation?* for a detailed discussion of the use of eis in the N.T.

CONCLUSION

As long as the Campbellites teach that baptism is essential for salvation, they will be viewed as a cult. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, apart from any acts of obedience done by us. Works are the evidence of salvation--not the basis of it.

WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA:

"Disciples of Christ, also called the Christian Church and Churches of Christ, is a religious body founded in western Pennsylvania in 1810 by Thomas and Alexander Campbell, father and son. Members are sometimes called Campbellites . . . In 1906 the organization split into two branches, the Progressives, known as the Disciples of Christ, and the Conservatives, called Churches of Christ." (Vol. 4, page 2006).

NEW STANDARD ENCYCLOPEDIA:

"Campbell, Alexander: (1788-1866), an American clergyman, born in County Antrim, Ireland. His father, Thomas, a clergyman and teacher in the Church of Covenanters and Seceders, went to America in 1807. Alexander followed with the rest of the family in 1809. In 1812, after following his father in a movement to reunite different religious denominations, he took the lead in organizing the Disciples of Christ." (1948, Vol. 2).

Vol. III, under "Disciples of Christ":

"A religious denomination that has had remarkable growth in the United States and Canada since nationally organized work was begun by the group in 1849. It is often called 'Churches of Christ,' or 'Campbellites.' The founder of the group was Alexander Campbell of Bethany, Virginia."

THE LINCOLN LIBRARY OF ESSENTIAL INFORMATION (1950):

"Campbell, Alexander . . . In 1810, he adopted the Bible as the sole recognized creed of his church and, in 1827, founded the Disciples of Christ, a sect that grew rapidly, especially in Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky . . . His followers are known also as Christians, Church of Christ, and Campbellites." (Biography Section, page 1753).

THE NATIONAL CYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (massive 40-volume set) :

"Campbell, Alexander . . . The 'rule of faith' which had ever disturbed the adherents of the Presbyterian creed, appears to have raised doubts in the minds of both father and son, and in 1810, at Brush Run, Pa., they formed an independent society . . . They named themselves 'the Disciples of Christ,' but became widely known as 'Campbellites' and as 'Disciples.'" (Vol. 4, page 161).

"Scott, Walter, one of the founders of the Disciples or Campbellites . . . emigrated to the United States in 1818. Three years later he met Alexander Campbell and his father Thomas Campbell . . . Together they studied the Scriptures . . . They labored as independent preachers . . . felt impelled to organize a body of their own." (Vol. 2, page 342).

NEW CENTURY CYCLOPEDIA OF NAMES:

"Campbell, Alexander . . . American clergyman, founder of the sect of the Disciples of Christ; son of Thomas Campbell (1763-1854) . . . Campbell originated (1809) together with his father, the Christian Association of Washington, in Pennsylvania. Out of this group, originally only a local congregation, grew the Disciples of Christ." (page 784).

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION (Ferm):

"Campbell, Alexander: (1788-1866) Leader in a reformatory movement which, designed to promote the unity of Christians by restoring primitive Christianity and especially the primitive conditions of Christian fellowship, issued in a separate religious body, the Disciple of Christ." (page 115).

"Churches of Christ . . . Local congregations of Disciples of Christ are often called Churches of Christ. The only group which has no other name, and the one to which it refers in government statistics, is the body of churches which separated from the Disciples of Christ. They are strict constructionists in 'restoring primitive Christianity,' to the extent that they repudiate missionary societies and the use of the organ in public worship, both of which are deemed unscriptural. Some also disallow Sunday schools and the use of individual communion cups . . . Their separate existence was first recognized in the religious census of 1906." (page 174).

"Disciples of Christ . . . Thomas Campbell gave the initial impulse and his son Alexander was the leader of the movement when it gained, or had forced upon it, a separate identity, and for many years after . . . Their local churches were generally called 'Christian Churches' or 'Churches of Christ.' . . . The Disciples went through the Civil War without division, but later a conservative group gradually withdrew because of a conviction that missionary societies and instrumental music in public worship were alike 'unscriptural.' These anti-society separatists (known as 'Churches of Christ' in the federal census since 1906) were not anti-missionary and had no theological affinity with the 'anti-means' Baptists." (page 230).

"Campbell, Thomas: (1763-1854) An Irish Seceder Presbyterian minister, of Scottish descent, who came to America in 1807, became dissatisfied with the doctrines and practices of his church and, for the promotion of Christian union, organized the Christian Association of Washington, Pa., and wrote 'A Declaration and Address' which embodied the principles upon which his son Alexander built the movement which became the Disciples of Christ." (page 116).

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS edited by James Hastings:

"Disciples of Christ—A religious body located chiefly in the central and western portions of the United States. The originator of the movement was Thomas Campbell, a minister of the Seceder Presbyterian Church."

"The Disciples have desired from the first to be known by New Testament names. They speak of their churches as 'Christian Church' or 'Churches of Christ.'" (Vol. 4, page 713).

THE RELIGIOUS BODIES OF AMERICA (Mayer):

"The Disciples constitute the largest church body indigenous to America. It came into being at the turn of the nineteenth century, when the religious atmosphere was such as to assure, from the very start, the rapid expansion of this movement . . . Almost simultaneously four distinct movements arose in widely scattered areas under the leadership of Abner Jones, Barton Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, and Walter Scott. These four movements finally merged to form the various Christian Churches . . . immediately after the Civil War, they were disturbed by controversies which divided them into two camps, the 'progressives' and the 'conservatives,' and ultimately — about 1900 — into two bodies, the Disciples and the Churches of Christ. The controversies revolved about the assumption of pastoral powers by preachers, open Communion, instrumental music in the public worship, and the establishment of mission societies." (pages 372, 373, 378, 379).

HANDBOOK OF DENOMINATIONS (Mead):

"The body in the United States, however, started independently; it came out of the restoration movement in the late years of the eighteenth century, when individuals and small groups of people preached and taught a return in faith to the Bible and a restoration of New Testament Christianity, and called upon Christians to be known only as Christians and to refuse affiliation with any sect. By 1860 these American groups listed 192,323 members as spiritual descendants of Thomas and Alexander Campbell" (page 68).

"Toward the end of the nineteenth century a division came into the fellowship, created by disagreements over the inspiration and authority of the Bible and its interpretation, the scriptural authority or lack of authority for missionary societies, and the use of instrumental music in the churches. The membership divided into Conservatives and Liberals, or Progressives, according to their views; and the gulf widened until the separation was complete, the majority group of progressives forming the body now known as Disciples of Christ. The Conservatives, feeling that they still stood on the ground upon which the Campbells stood when they 'restored the ancient order of things,' became known as the Churches of Christ." (page 68).

THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY:

"Campbellite . . . A comparatively new sect, called Disciples, though Campbellites was a name by which they were sometimes known, in honor of the founder of the sect, Alexander Campbell." (Vol. 2, page 547).

"Disciple. The name of a denomination of Christians, . . . which originated in the early part of the 19th century and is chiefly found in the United States; also called Campbellites." (Vol. 3, page 414).

THE NEW CENTURY DICTIONARY:

"Campbellite. (From Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) founder of the body.) A member of the body of Christians known as Disciples of Christ. See under *disciple*." (Vol. 1, page 201).

"Disciples of Christ, a denomination of Christians, founded in the United States in the early part of the 19th century by Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), which rejects all formulas or creeds, accepts the Bible alone as a sufficient and infallible rule of faith and practice, and administers baptism by immersion only." (Vol. 1, page 428).

NEW WORLD DICTIONARY OF THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE:

"Disciples of Christ . . . organized in 1809 by Alexander Campbell" (page 416).

"Campbellite . . . a member of the Disciples of Christ, a religious denomination founded by Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) of Virginia." (page 210).

A STANDARD DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:

"Campbell, Alexander (1788-1866), an Irish-American theologian; founder of the Disciples of Christ." (no page; alphabetically arranged).

FUNK & WAGNALL'S STANDARD DICTIONARY (Brittanica Edition):

"Campbell, Alexander, 1788-1866, Irish-born, American theologian; founder of the Disciples of Christ." (Vol. 1, page 196).

"Campbellite. A member of the Disciples of Christ, founded by Thomas and Alexander Campbell. The name *Campbellite* is rejected by the denomination." (Vol. 2, page 196).

WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY:

"**Campbellite** — A member of the denomination called Disciples of Christ — so called for Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) of Virginia, the founder of the sect, which, however, repudiates the name." (page 386).

"**Disciples of Christ**—A Christian denomination founded in Pennsylvania in 1810 by Thomas Campbell and Alexander Campbell; — called also Christians . . . Since 1906 there have been two branches, the conservative (see Churches of Christ) and the progressives (Disciples of Christ)." (page 742).

"**Churches of Christ**. Originally, a part of the Disciples of Christ fellowship, later becoming a separate denomination." (page 483).

WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY:

"**Church of Christ**. See Disciples of Christ" (page 148).

"**Campbellite**. See Disciples of Christ." (page 119).

"**Disciples of Christ**. A Christian denomination founded in Pennsylvania in 1810 by Thomas and Alexander Campbell (hence its members are also called Campbellites) . . . Following a separation in 1906, the conservative element became a separate denomination, **Churches of Christ**." (page 236).

WEBSTER'S NEW TWENTIETH CENTURY DICTIONARY:

"**Campbellite**. 1. A member of the denomination more properly called Disciples of Christ, founded by Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), of Virginia." (Vol. 1, page 261).

"**Disciples of Christ**; a Christian denomination . . . organized in 1809 by Alexander Campbell." (Vol. 1, page 520).

WEBSTER'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY:

"**Campbell, Alexander**. 1788-1866. Founder of the Disciples of Christ. . . . His followers, known as Disciples of Christ (nicknamed Campbellites), were dropped from Baptist affiliation and from about 1827 began to form a new and separate denomination." (page 238).

"**Campbell, Thomas**. 1763-1854. Associated with his son Alexander Campbell in founding and organizing the Church of the Disciples of Christ." (page 239).

DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY. (Published under the auspices of American Council of Learned Societies, consisting of 23 national and international organizations):

"**Campbell, Alexander** (September 12, 1788—March 4, 1866), one of the founders of the Disciples of Christ . . . After the organization of a full-fledged church of Disciples at Brush Run, Pa., Alexander was licensed to preach . . .

"Campbell's dislike for creeds and confessions of faith found response in a group similar to the Disciples of Christ—which was the name preferred by Campbell for his movement—the Christians, a company recruited from the three different sources . . . (here reference is made to the groups led by O'Kelley, A. Jones, and B. W. Stone) . . . These three groups combined as the Christian Connection, and were commonly known as Christians. The difference between the Disciples and Christians were chiefly in the matter of emphasis. The Disciples stressed the Bible, the Christians the idea of unity. The Christians were more evangelistic, appealed to all kinds of people, and gained rapidly in numbers, which Disciples had not done. The differences were not sufficient to keep them apart when they agreed on their special principles of fidelity to the simple Word. Local churches combined voluntarily, then the union became general in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio." (Vol. 3, pages 447, 448).

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY (Chambers):

"**Campbell, Alexander** (1788-1866), leader of the 'Disciples of Christ,' otherwise known as 'Campbellites.'" (page 172).

CONCISE UNIVERSAL BIOGRAPHY:

"**Campbell, Alexander** (1788-1866). Irish evangelist. Born in co. Antrim, Ireland, Sept. 12, 1788, he emigrated in 1809 to America, where he became an itinerant preacher. About 1827 his followers formed a society under the title Disciples of Christ." (Vol. 1, page 344).

F O U R

DICTIONARY OF DATES RELATING TO ALL NATIONS AND AGES (Haydn, 1882 edition):

"'Disciples of Christ' (also called Campbellites) . . . The term Campbellites originated through the first church at Brush Run, in America, having been set up by a Scotch Presbyterian preacher from Ireland, named Thomas Campbell, and his son Alexander. In 1812 they renounced infant baptism, and were rebaptized by immersion." (Page 288).

DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN HISTORY:

"Disciples of Christ are the largest religious body of American origin . . . Thomas Campbell, an Irish Seceder Presbyterian minister, came to America in 1807, preached in western Pennsylvania, and soon broke with his church . . . In 1809 he originated the Christian Association of Washington, Pa. . . . The adoption of the immersionist position led to a union of the 'reformers' with the Baptists in 1813, but this union, never without mutual reservations, lasted only until 1830.

"Meanwhile Thomas Campbell's son, Alexander, a much more vigorous personality, had assumed leadership of the movement . . . The Disciples and a great part of the followers of Barton W. Stone, known as 'Christians,' united in 1832.

"The Disciples escaped division on slavery and the Civil War, but a cleavage resulting from difference of policy regarding missionary societies led to the separation of a conservative element, known in statistics since 1906 as 'Churches of Christ.'"—Written by W. E. Garrison, Campbellite historian. (Vol. 2, pages 149, 150).

INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE WORK:

"Campbell, Alexander, eminent divine, born at Shane's Castle, Ireland, September 12, 1788; died in Bethany, W. Va., March 4, 1866 . . . Becoming dissatisfied with Calvinism, he and his father, also a noted minister, organized a church at Brush Run, Pa., taking the Bible as the creed. In 1827 he organized the denomination now called Disciples of Christ, or Christians, though formerly called 'Campbellites.'" (Vol. 2, page 449).

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS OF THE WORLD (Milner):

Under the heading "Campbellite Baptists, or Disciples": "This denomination of Christians, it is fair to say, object to the first cognomen at the head of this section. We use it because the name by which they are popularly known. The Rev. Alexander Campbell, who must be regarded as their founder, objects to denominating a church by any other name than one sanctioned by Scripture." (1866, page 134).

"A gradual and almost imperceptible separation took place among the Disciples. The conservatives alleged that the progressives among the Disciples had departed from the platform of the original Christians under Campbell, Stone, and Scott. The issues were deeply significant to the 'conservatives,' but their antidenominational principle prevented them from declaring a formal and actual division. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the twentieth century, a separation between the 'conservatives' and the 'progressives' among the Disciples had taken place. However, when in 1906 the census of religious bodies for the first time listed the Churches of Christ as distinct and separate from the Disciples, it indicated what was a denominational division on paper only, rather than in fact." (page 384).

THE SMALL SECTS IN AMERICA (Clark):

"The Disciples of Christ originated in the early nineteenth century in a 'restoration' or back-to-the-Bible movement, the leading spirits of which were Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone. With the passing of frontier conditions cultural forces began to affect the group and a controversy over instrumental music and the organization of a missionary society with money dues, which began near the middle of the century, led to a movement to 'restore the restorationists,' which finally resulted in the emergence of the Churches of Christ as a separate sect. Indeed this and similar controversies have split the total body of Disciples into not less than six 'mutually hostile and exclusive groups,' later to be mentioned." (page 19).

WHAT CAMPBELLITE WRITERS SAY ABOUT THEIR HISTORY

CHURCH HISTORY (John D. Cox):

The latter part of the Eighteenth Century saw the beginning of a great movement to restore the New Testament pattern of the church upon the earth. This movement had its beginning when preachers of various denominations and in different parts of the country recognized the sinful division existing among those who claimed to follow Christ and sought to unite all professed believers by renouncing denominational creeds and pleading for the New Testament as the only guide of faith and practice." (Page 84).

The book names James O'Kelley, Abner Jones, Barton Stone, Thomas Campbell, and Alexander Campbell as leaders in the "Restoration Movement." It tells of the formation of the "Christian Association of Washington" which in 1811 became Brush Run Church. "It started with a membership of thirty. Most of these had become sprinkled in infancy. Some of them changed their convictions about baptism and requested immersion. However, the Campbells were not convinced that infant baptism was unscriptural until the birth of Alexander's first child brought them face to face with the question." (Page 85).

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH THROUGH THE AGES (Brumback):

"Years elapsed before James O'Kelley, Abner Jones, Elias Smith and Barton Stone learned of each other's work in their respective fields, but when they learned of the work of restoration that was being carried on by others, they saw that they were all striving for the same thing. They were not working for the reformation of any religious group, but for the restoration of the ONE CHURCH of the New Testament." (Page 297).

"Those who stood with Thomas Campbell in his opposition to the treatment he had received from the Chartiers Presbytery organized the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania . . ." (Page 310).

"1811 A. D. The Church of Christ Established at Brush Run.

"Thomas Campbell was selected to serve as elder, four were appointed deacons, and Alexander Campbell was licensed to preach." (Page 314).

RESTORATION HANDBOOK (Thomas):

"The close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth were characterized by a number of simultaneous movements, which has as their aim the restoration of the New Testament church and the practice of apostolic Christianity. These movements were in widely separated localities and amidst different and antagonistic sects." (Page 73).

"There arose in America . . . leaders who advocated a return to the New Testament order of things . . . Prominent among them were: James O'Kelley . . . Dr. Abner Jones . . . Dr. Chester Bullard . . . Barton W. Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell . . . He [Thomas Campbell] organized 'The Christian Association of Washington County, Pennsylvania,' and published his epoch-making 'Declaration and Address,' usually regarded as the Magna Charta of the Restoration movement. This was the first document issued to the world in which the Restoration plea was definitely and comprehensively proclaimed." (Pages 73-75).

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES OF TODAY (Baxter and Young):

"One hundred and fifty years ago the winds of atheism blowing across from France and the continent combined with widespread religious division to make the religious state of America a very sad state indeed. It was in that climate that a group of men began to say, 'What we need is the kind of religion that men had back when the apostles were still on earth guiding men.' . . . This restoration movement—the reason for its being called that is obvious—had no formal organization. It was just a spirit in the minds of the people. They found that they were saying about the same thing, up and down the Atlantic coast and out through the frontier states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. . . .

"One of the beginnings was in a person by the name of James O'Kelley, who lived and worked in North Carolina and Virginia. . . .

"There was a man by the name of Abner Jones and another by the name of Elias Smith, both Baptists, who spoke out for the undenominational New Testament church in New England. . . .

"Next, we move to the frontier state of Kentucky in 1804 . . . a man by the name of Barton W. Stone, without knowing of these other movements, stood on the same ground. . . .

"In 1809 two other names came into the story: Thomas Campbell, and his son, Alexander Campbell. They were not first, but they became more illustrious in the long run. . . ." (pages 13-15).

RESTORING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH (Paul McClung):

"In the latter part of the 18th century a movement was launched in this country by Abner Jones, James O'Kelley, Barton W. Stone, and later ably championed by such men as Walter Scott, John Smith and Thomas and Alexander Campbell to restore the apostolic church in all its purity and simplicity." (page 6).

"Alexander Campbell did not found a church of his own, he, along with a group of great and good men already mentioned, restored the church which was founded by Jesus Christ and his apostles in Jerusalem in A. D. 33." (page 7).

WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST? (H. E. Phillips):

"After about 300 years of religious confusion and dissatisfaction, beginning with the turn of the 19th century, there began to be a definite movement toward discarding party names and creeds, and a return to the New Testament as the sole authority in religion. This resulted in the restoration of the church of Christ as it was in the days of the apostles. This movement was not instant, but once started it grew rapidly until denominationalism was forced to relinquish many of its members.

"This movement was not the result of one man's work, but rather the simultaneous activity of several men in several parts of the country, working unknown to each other. Those men in America who began to make the plea were from several religious bodies.

"James O'Kelley, a minister of the Methodist Church, withdrew himself from that religious body on December 25, 1793 at Manakintown, Virginia, and with several others soon began meeting as a simple congregation of the church of Christ.

"Dr. Abner Jones, a physician of Harland, Vermont, and a member of the (Free Will) Baptist Church, became dissatisfied with party names and creeds. Together with about 25 others of similar disposition he began to teach and practice New Testament Christianity in Lyndon, Vermont in September, 1800. They were not aware that others in other parts of the country were doing the same.

"Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell had become acquainted with one another. In their conversations together, they discovered that they were both teaching the same thing. The meeting at Lisbon, Ohio, in October, 1828, prepared the way for the uniting the forces of these two great men of the restoration movement." (Page 323).

CHURCH HISTORY FOR BUSY PEOPLE (Klingmen):

"In the beginning of the nineteenth century 'the Bible alone, without any human addition in the forms of creeds and confessions of faith, began to be plead and preached by many distinguished ministers of different denominations, both in Europe and America.' In spite of the simplicity of the plea thus made, and contrary to its very meaning and spirit, there developed two more denominations, namely, the 'Christian Connexion,' and the 'Christian Denomination,' or 'Disciple Church'; but a large number of the thousands who accepted this plea, consistently reject all names and designations that would 'distinguish them from other Christians,' and contend for the use of Bible names and words with Bible meanings and applications. In so doing they do not deny to others this privilege and honor." (page 25).

"Alexander Campbell was born in Ireland in 1788. He was educated in the University of Glasgow [one year]. In 1807 the family moved to America. His father, Thomas Campbell, was a Presbyterian preacher; and the son followed 'in his father's steps.' In 1809, Thomas Campbell issued 'A Declaration and Address' in which he pleads for the union of all Christians on the Bible. 'Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where it is silent, we are silent' was his motto. **He left the Presbyterians and organized a congregation at Brush Run.** Alexander, acting upon the principle contained in the above motto, was led, by a careful study of the Bible, to reject Infant Baptism and Sprinkling. Accordingly, he and his father and almost the entire congregation at Brush Run, were immersed by a Baptist preacher. When they joined the Redstone Baptist Association they had a written agreement that they would not subscribe to a human creed. On account of a strong Creed Sentiment in that Association, the Campbells left it and united with the Mahoning Association, which was more favorable to their 'views of reform.' A few years later, the Baptists declared non-fellowship with those who accepted the 'views of the reformers,' and separate congregations were formed. These views were being preached in various parts of America and Europe, by prominent men in different denominations, and independent of each other, and the 'Great Reformatory Movement of the Nineteenth Century' had begun." (page 105).