

Our Roots

Ecc 1:9 What has been will be again,
what has been done will be done again;
there is nothing new under the sun.

Ecc 1:10 Is there anything of which one can say,
"Look! This is something new"?
It was here already, long ago;
it was here before our time.

Ecc 1:11 **There is no remembrance of men of old,**
and even those who are yet to come
will not be remembered
by those who follow.

Those who don't learn from history are destined to repeat it.

Reformation Europe: Church & State

New World:

Church & State

Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians

- Congregationalist preachers supported by government taxes (New England)
- Episcopalians established by gov't: NY, Va, Md, NC, SC, GA

Higher pay.

Those who came over from Europe were not the cream of the crop

sect vs church

degree of tension between believers and the culture around them

secularization: prosperity brought down Congregationalists

- Highly educated, well paid clergy
- Harvard, Yale
- deists, unitarian, denied miracles, purely rational and humanistic
- taught a god who doesn't "do" anything
- neither willing nor equipped to preach the gospel in rural areas

Into the void: "sects" emerged

- not of this world
- highly motivated

George Whitefield

From Oxford, with John and Charles Wesley

Preached in Georgia for awhile

Barred from many pulpits in England because of emotional style

Preached in public squares, fields

Benjamin Franklin, on Whitefield:

- Heard him in Philadelphia at town square
- Paced off distance until he could not hear him
- Calculated that 25,000 people could have heard him at one time.

Preached to 30,000 in Boston (population of city at the time was only 20,000)

People fell facedown on the ground in conviction at his preaching

Publicly blamed the established preachers

Methodists, Baptists

- small, rural, essentially independent congregations
- led by uneducated, unpaid or scarcely paid ministers from the local areas.
- highly motivated
- message of sin, repentance, judgment

Methodists

- Methodist circuit riders
 - One circuit rider rode 4000 miles on horseback in a year, preached 400 sermons
 - paid \$12.15 for his efforts.
 - Francis Asbury: 270,000 miles on horseback
- camp meetings
- small groups, Methodist "classes" with class leaders.

Presbyterians and Congregationalists

- Opposed camp meetings
- Not equipped to evangelize the common people

1776-1850

- Population grew
- Percent attending church grew dramatically
- Congregationalists went from 20% of all church members to 4%
- Methodists went from 2% to 34%
 - from 65 congregations to 13,000--- with 2.6 million members
- Baptists from 17% to 20%

1850 --

- Methodists became more secular, declined
- Catholics emerged (missions)
- Baptists continued
- Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians languished

Key to success or failure:

- not of this world
- plain teaching on sin, repentance, judgment

RESTORATION MOVEMENT

Barton Stone,

- Georgia, NC, KY
- Cane Ridge KY camp meeting
- Carefully planned, organized, advertised
- at least 10,000 maybe as many as 20,000
- largest city: Lexington, 2000 inhabitants
- Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptists preachers.
- emotional, charismatic “irregularities”
- 3000 converts
- Threatened with disbarment from Presbyterian church
- Withdrew to form independent Springfield Presbytery
- Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery (1808)
 - We will, that this body die, 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.*

Thomas Campbell

- Born in Ireland; Presbyterian
- Came to Washington, Pennsylvania
- Distressed at intolerance in Penn. Presbyterians
- Declaration and Address (1809)
- Thirteen propositions:
 - One church
 - No divisions
 - Bible only
 - New Testament
 - Where Bible is Silent
 - Inferences and deductions
 - Human reasoning
 - Required knowledge
 - Unity of believers
 - Evils of division
 - Causes of division
 - What it will take for unity
 - Human expedients

Alexander Campbell—Restoration Movement

- University of Glasgow; Scottish Enlightenment; John Locke
- editor of *The Christian Baptist*, *Millennial Harbinger*
- first child born in 1812;
 - studied out infant baptism, rejected.
 - Thomas agreed
 - both were baptized, did not baptize infant child.
- Became baptist
 - controversy over ten commandments;
- discovered purpose of baptism later, through various debates on mode baptism
- By 1830, both Campbell and Stone were teaching baptism for forgiveness of sins
- Joined with Barton Stone, 1832
 - Very different personalities
 - Same doctrine
 - Both were not “of this world”
- Founded Bethany college

church of Christ strengths:

- Great respect for Bible
- Great Bible knowledge
- Willingness to be set apart from the world
- At times, great zeal for the lost

1850-1889: rising controversies

- Command, example, necessary inference
 - Silence of the scriptures
 - missionary societies
 - instrumental music
 - other issues
 - Thought interpreting the Bible could be treated as an exact science
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- led to split between churches of Christ and Christian churches / disciples of Christ
 - Christian churches later split into independent Christian churches and Disciples of Christ

1950's: churches of Christ the fastest growing religious group in America

1960's: leveled off – affluent, nice church in suburbs

Late 1960's, 1970's campus ministry movement (Crossroads)

1980's: graduates of campus ministries started congregations

1990's: ICOC, international church plantings

Restoration Movement today:

1. churches of Christ vary. Some more like us than others.

2. conservative independent Christian churches very much like us

- doctrine
- instrumental music
- rapid growth
 - 1995-2005: growth rate second only to Mormons
 - 11 of the fastest growing 100 congregations in America
- Working together without a denominational structure

Ecc 1: Nothing new under the sun!

Will we remember what happened before?

Rise and fall of Methodists:

- rise due to devotion; not of this world
- fall due to conforming to the pattern of the world

What does all this history teach us?

Seek first the kingdom of God Matt 6:33

Do not love the world. 1 John 2:15

Do not live as the Gentiles do. Eph 4:17

Mark Twain: *It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.*

Simple message of the gospel. Live it and preach it.

1Co 2:1-2 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.