

A lesson in Church history: the church of Christ is not a denomination started by Alexander Campbell

Part II

In 1806, Abner Jones, Barton W. Stone and James O'Kelly, each leading an arm of the Restoration Movement, become aware of each other. Previously they and others in western civilization were unaware of each other while each attempted to restore primitive Christianity. In 1807, a church of Christ is established in Antioch, GA. The Restoration Movement started to spread more rapidly in America commensurate with the mobility of the American population. Independent churches striving to imitate the church of the New Testament were being established with greater frequency in many areas.

Not until 1808 does **Thomas Campbell**, a former Presbyterian preacher, form an independent group in western Pennsylvania. In 1809, **John Mulkey** forms a Restoration church in Tompkinsville, KY. The church of Christ at Philadelphia, Warren County, TN began meeting in 1810; it was initially unacquainted with Campbell, Stone, O'Kelly or other Restoration Movement leaders. **Alexander Campbell** organized an independent church in 1811.

From this time forward, the Restoration Movement continued to grow. Due to the great distance religion had evolved away from the original pattern of Christianity through Catholicism and Protestantism, the return to New Testament Christianity was a slow, gradual progression. Several religious leaders, independent of each other and often unaware of each other, in Europe, the British Isles, and America and over a period of several decades sought to restore New Testament Christianity. Therefore, it is inaccurate historically as well as theologically to suppose that Alexander Campbell is the founder of the churches of Christ or that the churches of Christ are a denomination. The purpose of the Restoration Movement was to restore undenominational Christianity.

Members of the church of Christ are neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jewish. We are Christians only! We endeavor to practice the original worship about which one can read in the New Testament. We imitate the congregational church government written on the pages of inspiration. We practice the biblical plan of salvation depicted in the Gospel of Christ. Our affiliation as Christians and congregations is wholly dependent upon our common regard for the Bible without earthly headquarters or human creeds.