

A Chronology of Events Affecting the Church of Christ from the First Century to the Restoration

10. 1790 to 1832 Restoring the Church of Christ and New Testament Christianity

These notes draw dates and events from timelines of www.wikipedia.com. The interpretation of events and the application of scripture to these events, as they affect the church of Christ, which was built by the Lord (Matt 16:18), remain the responsibility of this writer.

1790- The Second Great Awakening
1840

The Second Great awakening was a religious revival movement in the United States. It enrolled millions of new members, and led to the formation of new denominations. Many converts believed that the Awakening heralded a new millennial age. The Second Great Awakening stimulated the establishment of many reform movements designed to remedy the evils of society before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The Methodists circuit riders and local Baptist preachers made enormous gains. The Presbyterians gained members.

Among the new groups that were formed, and which still claim their roots in the Second Great Awakening, are the churches of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Evangelical Christian Church in Canada.

Some of the groups were post millennial, believing the Christ would return after 1,000 years of Utopia in America; some were pre-millennial, believing that Christ would come and establish an earthly kingdom and reign 1,000 years on earth.

In this context, most churches of Christ held and now hold that the Bible teaches that Christ now reigns over his kingdom from the right hand of God and that Christians are neither pre-, post-, nor trans-millennial in their beliefs:

John 18:36

36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Eph 1:19-23

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, 20 which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Heb 12:28-29

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let

us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire."

Rev 1:5-6

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father – to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

1792 James O’Kelly (1735(?)-1826



From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia

On Dec. 25th, 1792 O’Kelly walked out of the Methodist conference with about 1/2 of those in attendance and became “The Republican Methodists,” meaning that they were free to pursue Bible truths.

O’Kelly believed in partaking the Lord’s Supper on the 1st day of the week and that the collection was a free-will offering. He retained sprinkling as sufficient form of baptism and was never himself immersed.

In 1789, he wrote *Essays On Negro Slavery*, which was one of the earliest anti-slavery tracts written by a clergyman.

1794 Rice Haggard (1769-1819)

On August 4, 1794 Rice Haggard attended a conference at “Old Lebanon,” in Surry County, Va. There he suggested they be called simply, “Christians.” With it, the establishment of the first “Christian” church in America near Flavana, Virginia. Haggard, who would move to Kentucky, suggested the name Christian to Barton Stone.

1801 Cane Ridge, Kentucky began the second great awakening.

Methodist, Baptists, and Presbyterians all participated in this large camp meeting, which drew 20,000 people. Out of this meeting, the Restoration Movement became a formal effort and resulted in the restoration of the New Testament church of Christ and the formation of the Christian Church.

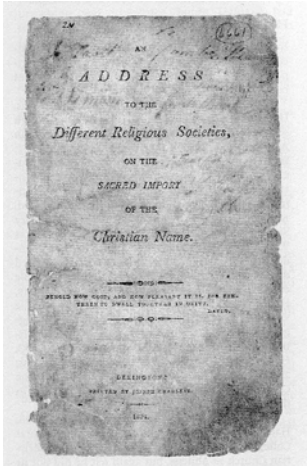
1801 Barton W. Stone

During the Cane Ridge Camp Meeting, Stone advanced his belief that salvation depends on faith alone, alienating him from the Presbyterians for whom he had served as the Cane Ridge minister. He also rejected the Doctrine of the Trinity, of which he said: “Revelation nowhere declares that there are three persons of the same substance in the one only God; and it is universally acknowledged to be above reason.”

1801 Rice Haggard (1769-1819)

Haggard, who had moved to Kentucky, suggested the name Christian to Barton Stone. According to Barton W. Stone, in the *Christian Messenger*, 1826-1827, O’Kelly was with Haggard and officially joined the Christians at Cane Ridge at that time. Later Stone wrote:

“We published a pamphlet on this name [Christian], written by



From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia

1804 The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery and the beginning of the Restoration Movement in America

Elder Rice Haggard, who had lately united with us. [Barton W. Stone, *The Biography of Eld. Barton Warren Stone* (Cincinnati: J. A. and U. P. James, 1847), p. 50.]

This 1804 pamphlet was entitled, *An Address to the Different Religious Societies on the Sacred Import of the Christian Name*, maybe accessed online: www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/rhaggard/haggard.html .

The *Christian* name became the main designation of those to become the *churches of Christ*. Those following the preferred name *Disciples* became the *Disciples of Christ* and *Christian Church*.

This event marks the birth of the church of Christ in the West. The Last Will is widely regarded as the founding document of the American Restoration Movement. It addressed the following issues:

- The Bible is the only standard for Christian faith and practice.
- They took no name other than Christian and stated: ". . . the name first given by divine authority to the disciples of Christ."
- Local congregations were autonomous.
- Preachers gave up the title *Reverend*.
- The power to make laws for the church were given up; rather the people had free course to the Bible.
- The congregation was to choose their own preacher, admit members, and remove offenses.

See the complete text:

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Last_Will_and_Testament_of_The_Springfield_Presbytery

1809 The Declaration and Address

Written by Thomas Campbell in 1809, it was the founding document for the Christian Association of Washington, a short-lived religious movement of the 19th century. The Christian Association ultimately led to one group of what is now known as the Restoration Movement. (For complete text, see: <http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/tcampbell/da/DA-1ST.HTM#Page1>) .

1811 Elias Smith (17 June 1769 - 29 June 1846) was a preacher, physician, journalist and clergyman.

Smith, along with the preacher Abner Jones, founded a group of Christian Churches in New England that eventually merged with other like-minded, regional groups to become the denomination known as the Christian Connexion. Smith founded *The Herald of Gospel Liberty* in 1808, claimed by many to be the first religious



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journal in the United States. Smith proved to be a controversial figure in the Christian Connexion, leaving the denomination for a time to become a Universalist, which he finally repudiated in 1840.

1811 Abner Jones (April 28, 1772 – May 29, 1841), also known as



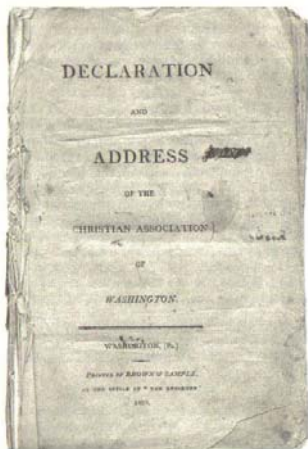
Elder
Abner
Jones

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Elder Jones had entered the ministry in 1801. He organized several Christian churches in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

In 1811, he attended worship at the Christian Church in Assonet, Massachusetts. This church had formerly been of the Baptist denomination, but had come into the Christian Connexion.

1811 The Campbells begin a Restoration Movement

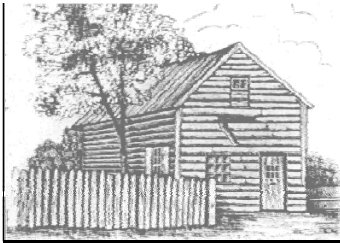


This movement – separate from the Stone Movement but similar in purpose – began with the publishing of *The Declaration and Address*. The Presbyterian Synod had suspended his ministerial credentials. On May 4, 1811, The Christian Association of Washington (Washington County, Pennsylvania) constituted itself as a congregationally run church, which became known as Bush Run church. The church practiced baptism by immersion. Alexander, the son of Thomas took a leading role that led to a separation from the Baptist with whom they had fellowshiped. In his journal, the *Christian Baptist*, Alexander advanced key issues that he thought necessary to reconstruct apostolic Christianity:

- Congregational autonomy.
- A plurality of elders.
- Weekly communion.
- Immersion for the remission of sins.

Alexander rejected many practices of the day:

- The holy kiss.
- Foot washing.
- Deaconesses.



Bush Run Church Building

Images are from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia.

- Communal living.
- Charismatic exercises.

The Age of Enlightenment affected the Campbells:

- They believed Christian unity could be achieved by agreeing on an essential set of principles from the scriptures.
- They believed in the elimination of creeds.
- Alexander believed that Christian unity could be achieved.
- Alexander's millennialism (advanced in the *Millennial Harbinger*) held that Christians would unite and transform the world, and thus, initiate a millennial age, making him post-millennial in his thinking.

1816 Bishop Richard Allen (1760-1831)

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Allen, a former slave, founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first African-American denomination. Richard Allen was born on February 14, 1760, in Germantown, Pennsylvania (now a part of Philadelphia.)

As Allen grew older, he attended meetings of the local Methodist Society. Richard had taught himself to read and write. He joined the Methodists at age 17. He began evangelizing and attending services so regularly that he attracted criticism from local slave owners.

1824 Stone met with Alexander Campbell

The two movements differed in some ways: the Campbell movement was systematic and rational; the Stone movement was freer and lacked dogma. They agreed in others ways: both sought to restore New Testament Christianity; the New Testament restored was the route to Christian freedom and unity and a basis for unity upon which reasonable men could agree.

1827 Walter Scott (1796-April 23, 1861)



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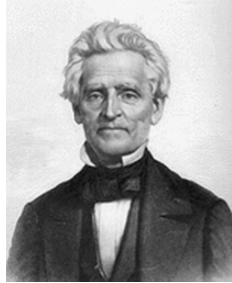
Walter Scott was one of the four key early leaders in the Restoration Movement, along with Barton W. Stone, Thomas Campbell and Thomas' son Alexander Campbell. He was a successful evangelist and helped to stabilize the Campbell movement as it was separating from the Baptists.

Scott developed a simple mnemonic illustration for the gospel plan of salvation that has been used in the Restoration Movement ever since. Based on Acts 2:38, Scott believed that salvation requires faith, repentance and baptism. As an evangelist, he would first come into a community and find a group of children. He would ask them to hold up a hand, and then point to each finger and say "faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, gift of the Holy Spirit." Once the children had learned the mnemonic, he would ask them to tell their parents that he would be preaching that same gospel that evening.

1830 Joseph Smith, Jr.

Smith founded the church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormonism) following reported visitations and visits by God, Jesus Christ and the so-called Angel Moroni. *Book of Mormon* was published by Smith.

1832 The Stone and Campbell movements merge.
"Raccoon" John Smith



From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia

The merger was effected in Lexington, Kentucky on January 1, 1832, with a handshake between Stone and "Raccoon" John Smith. The effort began to find a non-sectarian name: Stone favored "Christians" and Campbell insisted on "Disciples of Christ."

The Campbell movement was a "systematic and rational reconstruction" of the early church. In contrast, the Stone movement which was characterized by radical freedom and lack of dogma. Despite their differences, the two movements agreed on several critical issues.

- Both saw restoring the early church as a route to Christian freedom.
- Both believed that unity among Christians could be achieved by using apostolic Christianity as a model.

Both movements agreed that restoring the early church and uniting Christians was sufficient reasons to stay together.