

History of the Reformation

Restoration of the Primitive Church

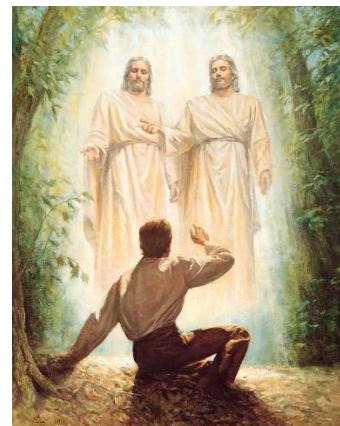
- Background
 - 2nd Great Awakening (1790 – 1850)
 - “free will” – emphasis on human ability to change their situation for the better
 - Salvation is open to all human beings (not just the elect)
 - Embraced a more optimistic view of the human condition
 - Millenarianism – Fleeing the wrath to come
 - Post-Millennial – bring in the return of Christ by reforming your lives
 - Make the Earth below to be like Heaven above
 - His coming is eminent and you must be ready
 - Burned over district
 - Phrase coined by Charles Finney
 - So evangelized that there was “no fuel left to burn”
 - Centered in Western NY – Rochester, Oneida
 - “Over-Revivalized”
 - Theologically – revival = Hellfire and damnation
 - Ecclesially – people became resistant to the Gospel
 - Fertile bed for “new and unusual” versions of Christianity
 - Shakers
 - Mormons - Palmyra, NY
- Restoralism
 - Christian Primitivism –
 - An effort to restore the church to the way it was before (denominationalism/ Catholicism/ modernism/. . .) changed things for the worse
 - Organizational changes
 - Ethical changes
 - Two types
 - Biblical – the church needs to be restored to its biblical foundations
 - Sola Scriptura
 - Primitive church
 - Correct the faults in the church by appealing to the way the apostolic church was in the 1st Century
 - Some were great movements who were somewhat restoralism
 - Hussites
 - Anabaptists
 - Puritans
 - Waldensians
 - Others were not so great
 - To some degree, the Protestant Reformation was restoralism at its heart, as they sought to reform the abuses in practice and theology in the Roman Church
 - While Luther opposed efforts to restore “biblical forms and structures”
 - Zwingli/Bullinger thought it was necessary
 - Calvin stressed biblical precedents of church governance, but to further the preaching of the Gospel, not as ends themselves

- It often takes a post-millennial character
 - Desiring to improve the world condition in order that Christ could come and establish His Kingdom
- During the early 1800's, many groups arose because of the desire to restore the early church
 - They saw denominations as evil and working against true Christianity
 - Usually had a dominant leader who had a vision of "the way" to restore the Church
- Restoration out of the 1st Great Awakening
 - Most of the emphasis of the 1st Great Awakening was on the personal relationship that one must have with Christ
 - "You must be born again"
 - Many traditional churches rejected the emotionalism, yet were happy that many of their members had found new excitement in their faith
 - Within the Baptists, a movement called Separate Baptists
 - Scripture was the "perfect rule" for the Church
 - Rejection of creeds
 - Freedom in the Spirit
 - Separate Baptists began in New England, but became especially strong in the South
 - In late 18th Century, it spread to western frontier of Kentucky and Tennessee
 - Eventually developed into the Landmark Baptists (1850's)
 - Looked for the precise blueprint for the primitive church
 - "Trail of Blood" – unbroken chain of churches since John the Baptist to current Baptists
 - Deviation from that meant that one was no longer a part of the true church
 - Shakers
 - Combination of "New Light Baptists" and dissenting Quakers
 - Pacifists during the American Revolution
- Out of the 2nd Great Awakening
 - The American Restoration Movement
 - Christianity should not be divided – Christ intended one church
 - Creeds divide – the bible alone unites
 - Ecclesiastical traditions divide – the pattern of the early church should be enough
 - Names of humans divide – we should just be "Christians" in Christian Churches
 - Adventism
 - Millerites
 - Sabbatarian Adventists
 - Latter Day Saint movement
 - Mormons
- Stone-Campbell Restoration
 - Restorationism becomes THE Restoration Movement
 - Barton Stone
 - 1801 – Camp meeting at Cane Ridge, KY
 - 1803 – withdraws from the Kentucky Presbytery and forms Springfield Presbytery
 - 1804 – withdraws from Presbyterianism altogether

- Thomas Campbell and son Alexander
 - 1809 – publishes Address of Christian Association of Washington (county, PA)
 - 1815 – 1824 – works within Baptist Association
 - 1831 – disassociates from Baptists (non-subscription to Philadelphia Confession)
- 1832 – Stone and Campbell merge efforts
 - Stone – need to be called “Christians”
 - Campbell – “Disciples of Christ”
- Characteristics of American Restoration
 - Stone
 - Christian freedom – rejection of historical creeds, traditions, theological systems
 - Need for primitive Christianity based on the Bible
 - Avoided developing own ecclesiastical traditions
 - Millenarianism
 - Only a unified Christianity based on the Apostolic church could lead in the millennium
 - Apocalyptic – countercultural commitment to live as if kingdom were already established
 - Campbell
 - Deeply influenced by Scottish Enlightenment
 - Bible is a book of facts, not abstract generalities
 - Those facts (approached rationally) would provide a blueprint for the primitive church
 - Effects of emotionalism, spiritualism are precluded by rational appeals to the biblical text
 - Christian unity was Enlightenment + Reformed Puritanism
 - Provided essentials that reasonable people could agree on
 - A rational faith formulated and defended based on facts from the bible
 - Primitive Christianity – rejecting creeds and traditions
 - Millennialism – more postmillennial – progress of the church would lead to an age of peace and righteousness prior to the return of Christ
 - Merger of Stone and Campbell
 - Despite differences
 - systematic and rational reconstruction” vs “radical freedom and lack of dogma”
 - Agreement
 - Restoring apostolic Christianity would hasten the millennium
 - Restoring the early church was a route to Christian freedom
 - God only “saves” through water baptism (an integral part of salvation, not a symbol of conversion)
 - Christian unity was a higher cause than separate existence
 - 1832 – merger of Stone and Campbell groups
 - Stone – wanted name simply “Christian”
 - Campbell – Disciples of Christ
 - 1906 – Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ split
 - Centralized missions
 - Musical instruments
 - Women active in social movements (temperance)
 - “Nothing but what is commanded” vs “if not forbidden, considered”



- Latter Day Saints
 - 1820 – God appears to Joseph Smith in Palmyra, NY
 - The creeds of the churches of the day are all corrupted
 - I am going to restore “My church” through you
 - Close friends who is in Campbell movement
 - Though Mormonism and Restoration movement are different expressions of restorationism
 - 1829 – Joseph Smith translates the golden plates into the Book of Mormon
 - Restorationism of the Mormons
 - Campbell – Enlightenment rationalism
 - Smith – 19th Century Romanticism
 - Not so much recovering forms and structures of ancient church
 - But restoring the golden age of OT/NT where God breaks into history and communicates directly with man
 - Priority to current, continuing revelation
 - Priesthood authority was lost in 1st – 4th Centuries, but restored in Joseph Smith



- Adventism
 - William Miller
 - 1833 – in intensive study of the scientific details of bible
 - Led him to know precisely that Christ would return on March 21, 1843
 - “To cleanse, purify and take possession of the earth with all the saints”
 - When it didn’t happen, recalculation was advanced to October 22, 1844
 - Popularized at camp meetings as the true midnight cry of repentance because the Kingdom of God is near
 - The Great Disappointment
 - Miller’s followers were many (50K – 500K)
 - But his legacy is more in the groups who came after
 - From the Millerites came
 - Advent Christian Church
 - Sabbatarian Adventists
 - Advent Christian Church
 - Formed by Millerite leaders, resetting predictions of Christ’s coming
 - Rejected Greek philosophical concept of the immortality of the soul
 - Seventh Day Adventists
 - Combine Sabbatarianism with Miller’s Adventism
 - 1650’s – 7th Day Baptists (where does the bible say that the Sabbath Day changed from 7th day to 1st day)
 - SDA not a splinter group, but influenced by teachings
 - Ellen G White becomes central because of her “gift of prophecy”



- Currently 5th largest Christian communion worldwide
- Are these groups cults?
 - Characteristics of cults
 - All-knowing, authoritarian leadership
 - Claim of “true” insight into the bible + additional special revelation
 - Traditional Christian doctrine is flawed and our doctrine is correct
 - Our good works prove that we are right
 - Salvation is dependent on how closely you follow the “true faith”
 - Leaving our group is a sure sign of your being lost for eternity
 - What are we to do?
 - Know the original so well that a counterfeit is obvious
 - Be careful, kind, patient, and loving to those caught in these errors
 - Beware those who are
 - Exclusive
 - Secretive
 - Authoritarian