

THE OLD PATHS

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“Did Alexander Campbell Start The church Of Christ?”

Jarrod Jacobs

When discussing the church of Christ with others, we sometimes hear the comment made that the church of Christ was started by Alexander Campbell. Mr. Campbell was a well-known preacher in America in the 1800’s; but did he start the church of Christ, or any other church for that matter? The short answer is no. Unfortunately, the teaching that Mr. Campbell established a church is made because people do not know the simple teaching of the New Testament concerning the church.

To begin, please understand that Alexander Campbell could not have started the church of Christ. This is because folks who lived in the first century, like Mary, Peter, James, John, Phoebe, and Paul were among the members of it (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:28; Rom. 16:1-16; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9). Saved people have been added to the Lord’s church since it began on the Pentecost following the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:47). To this day, all those who submit to the Lord’s plan of salvation continue to be added to it! Alexander Campbell did not live in the first century. Nor did he die to purchase a church (Acts 20:28). Mr. Campbell lived from 1788 to 1866. In other words, he was born almost 1800 years after the Lord’s church was established in Acts 2. Therefore, he did not start the Lord’s church. Nor did he start the church on this continent. He did not start any church.



Have you been to Paris, Kentucky and visited the Cane Ridge meeting house? If not, you need to go there and look at one of the grave markers in the cemetery. In the cemetery, you will find the grave marker of Mr. William Rogers. Mr. Rogers’ headstone looks like many others of that era except for the inscription

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found upon it. William Rogers' headstone reads as follows: "Born in Campbell Co., Va., July 7, 1784, removed with his father to Cane Ridge, Bourbon Co., April 1793. United with the Church of Christ at Cane Ridge in 1807."

A significant date mentioned on this headstone is 1807. This date is significant because 1807 was two years before Alexander Campbell came to America from Ireland. 1807 is three years before Campbell preached his first sermon in America. How could Alexander Campbell have started the church of Christ if William Rogers was already in it in 1807?



Further, in Celina, TN, there is a church of Christ who can trace the congregation's beginning back to 1805. If Mr. Campbell started the church of Christ, how could this church have already been in existence? Mr. Campbell wasn't even in America at the time! The answer of course is that it is possible because Mr. Campbell didn't start the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). The church of Christ began in this country when Christians came here simply preaching and teaching about the church found in the Bible! As was noted above, such things happened long before Alexander Campbell was in this land.

Mr. Campbell did much in his life to spread the gospel, but there is nothing the church of Christ does or practices that had its beginning with Mr. Campbell, or any other man (Gal. 1:6-9). The church of Christ follows what Christ has revealed in the New Testament (Jn. 12:48).

The Three Crosses

Joel Raulerson

The scene at Calvary is one that can produce a lot of emotion. As Christians, we tend to focus on the cross of Christ. However, there are lessons that we can learn from each cross at Golgotha that day.

A Cross of Rebellion

Hanging on the first cross is a rebellious sinner being justly punished for his sins (Lk. 23:40-41). This man represents the majority of humanity. Mankind chooses to live their lives in sin and will be justly persecuted for their rebellion (Rom. 3:23; 6:26). Proudly and arrogantly, this man on the

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cross next to Jesus railed and blasphemed the Lord. Luke 23:39 says, *“One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, ‘Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!’”* This crucified man symbolizes humanity in general. His attitude is one of rebellion until the very end. The only words this criminal is willing to speak is blasphemy toward the Lord. He is not interested in salvation, obedience, or humbling himself before the Lord. This criminal does not view Christ as his savior. He is only thinking of a way to save his neck.

A Cross of Repentance

Hanging on another cross, we see yet another rebellious sinner being justly punished for his sins. What makes this thief on the cross different from the other criminal is his attitude. As the thief is faced with his own mortality, he confesses that he has sinned, and seeks repentance. Luke 23:40-42 says, *“But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong. And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’”* The difference between this thief and the other criminal is their attitude toward Christ. While the first criminal was rebellious and blasphemous toward God, this thief rebukes him for his attitude. Not only does the thief rebuke the other criminal, but he recognizes that he is no better than the other thief. They are both facing just punishment for the crimes that they have committed. The thief on the cross is not looking for some “quick fix” solution. He is not trying to justify or make excuses for any of the crimes that he has committed. The thief accepts the responsibility of his sin. Then, he humbly asks Jesus for mercy, and to remember him when He comes into His kingdom.

A Cross of Redemption

Finally, on the middle cross (Matt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 19:18), we see Jesus. This is the sinless Son of God sent here to suffer and die for our sins (Isa. 53:5). At this cross, we see the mercy that is offered to us (Rom. 3:26). This is the cross that offers each of us redemption if we choose to obey Christ. We are all doomed to face death because that is the consequence of our sins (Rom. 5:12; Prov. 11:19). Jesus offers us redemption. We could be like the first criminal who, rather than humbling himself before God, chooses to mock Him. There will be no pleasant end to that attitude of rebellion. Wouldn't you rather have the attitude of the second thief, and humble yourself before the Lord and do as He says in

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order to gain redemption through Christ (Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; 1 Pet. 3:21)? Have you turned in repentance to the cross of Christ or are you standing in open rebellion?



Spotlight On A Bible Verse: Matthew 16:18-19

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” In the shadow of Mount Hermon, a place that had seen idolatry for millennia, Christ promises that based upon Peter’s confession (Matt. 16:16), His church will be built, and that death itself (hades) will not stop its coming! Jesus promises not only the founding of the church, but also that Peter would be the one to “open the doors” to this church. Looking forward just a few years, we see this promise fulfilled on the Pentecost following Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. After hearing the gospel preached, Peter answered the Jews’ question in Acts 2:37 by telling those convicted souls to “*repent and be baptized ... for the remission of sins*” (Acts 2:38). About ten years later, Peter would be sent to Cornelius and his household that they might hear the truth, believe, and obey it (Acts 10-11, 15:7). The statements made on this day echo to this present day! – Jarrod Jacobs



“I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!”

Please visit with the Caneyville church of Christ....

Location: 103 N. Main St. Caneyville, KY

Website: <http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com>

Times Of Services...

Sunday: 10:00 am (Bible classes), 10:45 am & 5:00 pm (Worship)

Wednesday: 7:00 pm (Bible classes)

Other opportunities for Bible study:

“The Ancient Landmark” Radio Program airs Mon-Fri on 99.9 FM, WXMZ (10:30-11:00 AM) & 101.5 FM, WLBQ (5:30-6:00 AM)

“The Ancient Landmark” television program airs on:

www.youtube.com/theoldpaths1994

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