

BEING A RESTORATION CHURCH 2

Grimsby, August 14, 2011

INTRO: It was and still is common to hear of disciples of someone. Moses had his Jn. 9:28, Pharisees had theirs Mk. 2:18, John the Baptist has his (Matt. 9:14) and Jesus had his own. In Acts 11:26 we find that *"the disciples (of Jesus) were called Christians first in Antioch."* Two men who lived for Jesus said, *"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God"*. (Acts 14:22). This was never more true than in the early days of the restoration efforts.

I. LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT A FEW GOOD MEN

A. They Were From Different Countries and Continents and wrestled with different issues.

B. But All Were Dissatisfied With The Religious Status Quo

1. In 1793 James O'Kelly withdrew from the Baltimore conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His platform: *"The Bible as the only creed."* This was Virginia and North Carolina, U.S.A.
2. Abner Jones and Elias Smith, 1802, left the Baptist Church Their platform: *"Away with Denomination Creeds" and "The Only Name Is Christian."* New England.
3. In 1804 in Kentucky, Barton W. Stone and several other Presbyterian preachers took similar action declaring that they would take the Bible as the *"only sure guide to heaven."* USA
4. In 1809 Thomas and Alexander Campbell voiced their disapproval of their branch of the Presbyterian Church. This was in Scotland. They soon moved to USA
5. Similar works were going on in Canada and elsewhere.

II. THEY WERE SADDENED BY THE POWER ATTACHED TO CHURCH NAMES

A. Names Were Changed To Identify Certain Strong Points

1. But names really showed that somebody got his own way.
2. Unity was impossible against this background

B. "To Denominate"= "To give a name to."

1. Money is crafted into denominations; a dollar is never a five!
2. Lesson: Denominations divided Christianity up into *"parties."*
3. This in the face of the plea if Jesus- John 17
4. *"Let us, then my brethren, be no longer Campbellites or Stoneites, New Lights or Old Lights, or any other kind of lights, but let us come to the Bible, and to the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need."*

Racoon John Smith 1832

C. All This And Jesus Had Not Even Given His Church A Name!

III. THEY WERE BURDENED BY THE LACK OF PURE BIBLE

A. They Heard Lessons But Not God's Message

1. The sermons represented their *"party"* of Christianity
2. Lessons were dictated by the denomination's creed

B. Creeds Are Designed to Give Voice to that denomination's peculiar beliefs, thereby driving a wedge between it and all other.

1. At first creeds ("I believe") was a short, concise statement that gave direction. O.K.
2. Then they became longer, more authoritative, equal to Scripture.
3. **ILLUST:** Procrustes' Bed*

IV. **THEY WERE CONFUSED BY THE PREVALENCE OF CALVINISM**

A. **The Most Troublesome Doctrine They Had To Face**

1. It is a complex system formulated by John Calvin(1509-1564)
 - a. Articulated under the acrostic **TULIP****
 - b. It says, all are born in sin and inclined to sin; God chose some for heaven; Christ died only for the chosen; God's grace is irresistible to the chosen ones; it is impossible to fall away once saved.
2. Those who hold this teaching are: Presbyterians, All Reformed churches, Baptists, those who practice sprinkling babies.

B. **The Barton W. Stone Account.**

1. Ordained a Presbyterian Minister; Questioned Calvinism
 - a. Attended a gospel meeting by Mr. McCreary. Went into the wood to pray and read. At this point he began to believe that he was free to believe in God by himself.
 - b. He tells his own story: *"I sunk at His feet a willing subject, I loved Him- I adored him- I praised him aloud in the silent night, in the echoing grove around, I confessed to the Lord my sin in disbelieving His word so long in following the devices of men. I now saw that a poor sinner was as much authorized to believe in Jesus as first as at last, that now was the accepted time and the day of salvation."*
2. The Next Day, Sunday He Preached On Mark 16:15,16
 - a. This simple teaching of Jesus was now proclaimed....and believed
 - b. Nearly his whole congregation left Calvinism.

CONCLUSION: The restoration plea implies that man left God's pattern. By becoming too well-known a product can lose its distinctiveness. The Trademark Association calls this problem "*genericide*." Some examples: All facial tissue is called "**Kleenex**," Any gelatin dessert is "**Jello**," Any clear, sticky tape is "**Scotch Tape**," any carbonated drink is a "**Coke**" (at least in the South), Any adhesive bandage is a "**Band-Aid**."

This has happened to the words Christian and Christianity. Once brand names for a definite product, they are now used for any kind of vague religiosity connected loosely with the historical Christ. The rigid New Testament ethical code is now fluid and accommodating. Doctrines that in Bible times were black and white, are now gray and faded. Practices that were then commanded are now optional. For instance, the creed book of the largest Protestant denomination states:

It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, baptism was the door into the church. Now, it is different.

Calling us back:

Begin a renewed interest in **our brotherhood**.

- 1) Take in **brotherhood functions**
- 2) **Subscribe to brotherhood papers**, like Gospel Herald
- 3) Attend and **support our camps** like Omagh
- 4) Mark your calendar for **GLBC Lectureship**
- 5) Become a **member of CCCHS**
- 6) Plan to attend next year's **Annual Meeting of CCCHS**- Aug 20th-Oshawa

*Procrustes in Greek Mythology had a bed he sat down on a desert and demanded that all lie down on it. If the person was too long for the bed he cut their legs off, if too short, he stretched them. His bed was the standard for all.

** **T- TOTAL HERITARY DEPRAVITY**
U- UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION
L- LIMITED ATONEMENT
I -IRRESTIBLE GRACE
P-PERSEVERENCE OF THE SAINTS