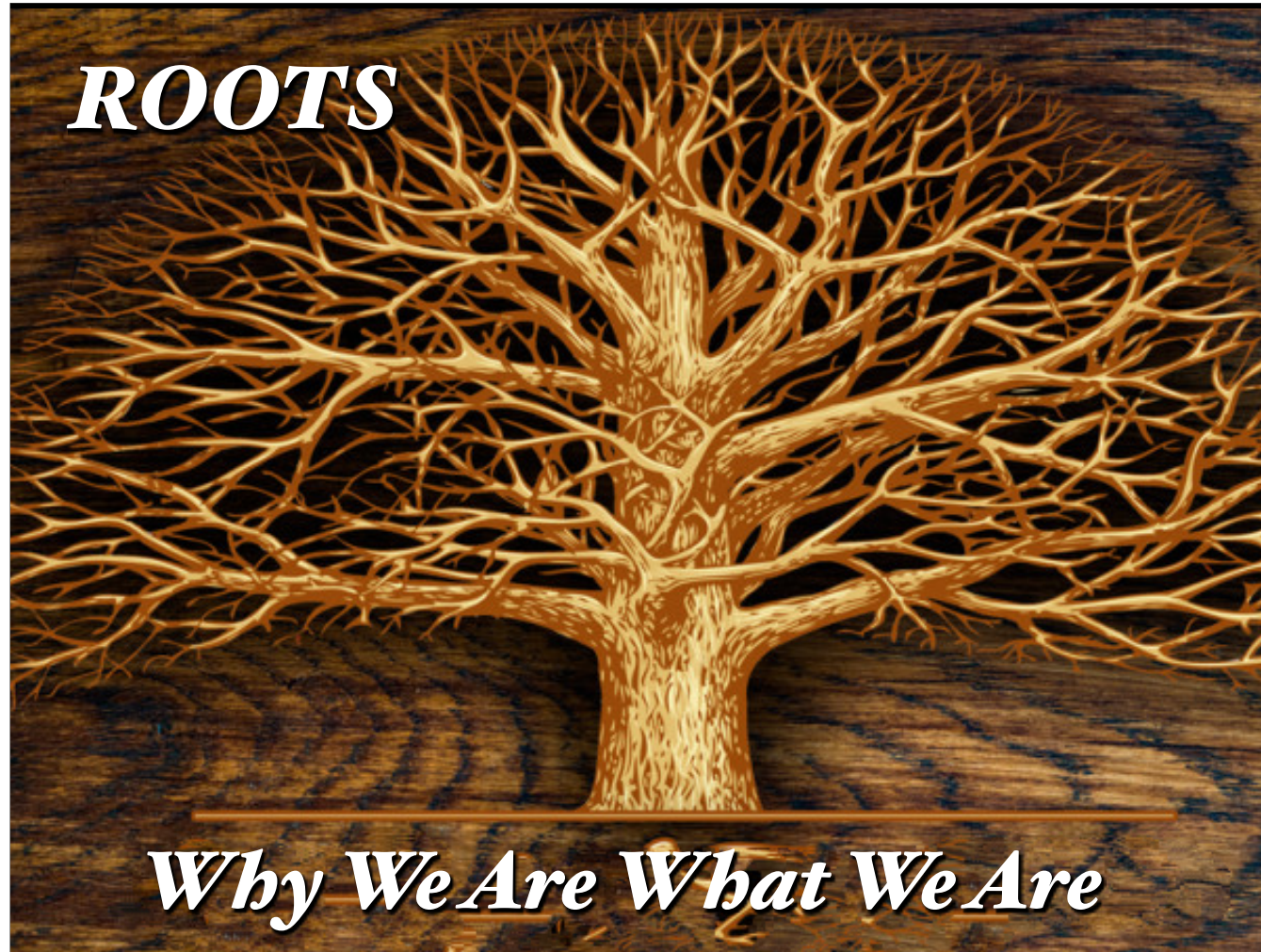


ROOTS



Why We Are What We Are



1989, I was watching the World Series that was beginning with game 1 in San Francisco. The first pitch had not been thrown out and suddenly the camera started shaking and the announcers stopped talking. No one knew exactly what was happening.

They found out. A magnitude 4.9 earthquake had shaken the city during rush hour. It damaged houses and crumbled the Bay Bridge like a waded up piece of paper.



Most people think earthquakes are sudden happenings. Yet, seismologists tell us it takes a long time for an earthquake to form. A fault line like the San Andreas fault is two plates of the earth's crust that move in different directions. Those directions create tremendous pressure. Finally, when the pressure gets too great, one last slip happens and the earth quivers with that move.

Such is what happened to the restoration movement.

The Cornerstones of Restoration



Is the Bible enough?

How do you put the church together?



*Restoration over unity or
unity over restoration?*

The three key cornerstones of restoration never change, but...



Unity Through Restoration

The Tension of Togetherness



Once, many had similar dream of achieving unity by going back to the practices of the New Testament. They merged and came together. But when things come together, there is always tension. It is true in marriages. It is true in college roommates. It is true in people who say they have the same values.



As time moved on, pressures began to build. The issues of cooperation or organization put the first strain. It was followed by the devastating blow of the Civil War which pitted brother against brother, both physically and spiritually. The church became regionally divided between the North which was more progressive and the South which was more conservative. The instrumental use of music in worship created an atmosphere where worship together became strained. The study of German Liberalism moved the church to the brink as it challenged the basic integrity of the authority of the Bible, the foundation upon which restoration rests.



Finally, the movement could not stay together and different groups went different directions. What happened to cause it and where are the pieces today?

The Christian Evangelist



B. W. Johnson



J. H. Garrison

There was a growing movement toward progressive interpretation and practice, led the journal The Christian Evangelist. The journal was founded by J. H. Garrison and B. W. Johnson.

Most of us do not recognize the name J. H. Garrison but for many of us, the name B. W. Johnson is quite familiar. He published a commentary on the New Testament called Johnson's Notes.

I remember everyone quoted scripture first and Johnson said. If Johnson said it, we tended to believe it. If we knew more about what Johnson espoused we might have been a little more careful.

The Christian Evangelist

Strong Support for the Missionary Society

Promoted the Use of the Instrument

The Christian Evangelist held two basic tenets. One was the strong support for the missionary society as it moved to a more independent entity from the local church. Secondly, it promoted instrumental music in churches. When it started publishing, few were using an instrument. By the time 1900 arrived, due to much of its influence, hundreds of churches had been splintered over the use of the instrument.

Christian union, when it comes,
will not be *uniformity*. *There will
be room in it for differences of
opinion, different methods of
work and worship, different
forms of organization and
different degrees of emphasis.*



J. H. Garrison

There was an underlying shift in emphasis. While Campbell and Stone were alive, the emphasis was on going back to the “blueprint” or “pattern” of the New Testament. By following what is read there, you can achieve unity.

But Garrison was changing the thinking. We no longer talked of unity, but of union. He wrote a piece called *Christian Union: A Historical Study* in which he asserted there must be difference in worship, organization and emphasis. You don’t hear of one church worshipping together the one God. You hear “there is no pattern” and we are left to human freedom and human thinking to find a way to peacefully co-exist with those who see it differently.



Benjamin Franklin's death unleashed the flood in the north.

Before Benjamin Franklin, the editor of the American Christian Review and the conservative voice of the northern churches died, there was a counterbalance, a dam to hold back the flood waters. But his death in 1878 unleashed a flood away from the restoration principle in the north.

The Conservative South



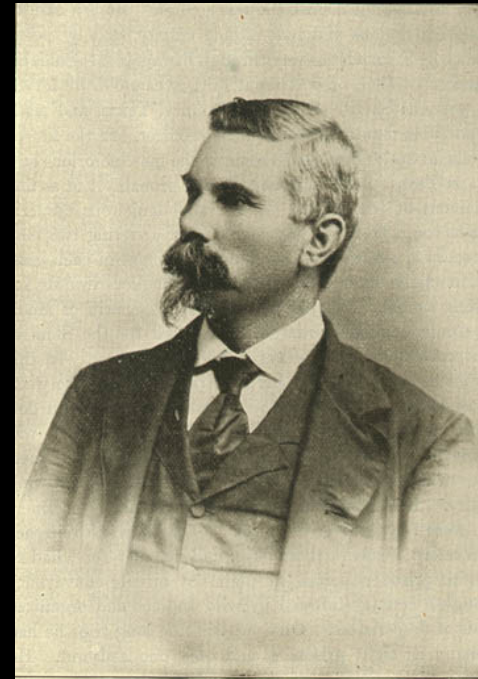
**The Gospel Advocate and
David Lipscomb**

In the south, Restoration stayed the anchor, due mostly to the influence of the Gospel Advocate and David Lipscomb. They rejected the missionary society, taught the use of an instrument in worship was a deviation from God's plan, and held the inspiration of the scripture.

**The Texas Reporter for
the Gospel Advocate
Austin McGary**

The Issue of Rebaptism

The Firm Foundation



The Advocate had various reporters from various parts of the south. One was a man named Austin McGary, a Texan who was the Texas reporter to the Advocate. McGary was a staunch Restorationist who opposed both the organization of the missionary society (publicly writing against it when it was proposed in Texas) and defending the role of accapella music in worship.

He did have one controversy with Lipscomb and it was over the issue of rebaptism. Lipscomb held that if a person had been immersed for what he believed the right reason, there was no reason to rebaptize him. McGary was quite vocal about the issue, insisting that a person must be rebaptized just to make sure. This continues to be debated by some today.

Out of that he started publishing a Texas-based journal called The Firm Foundation which closed its doors about 20 years ago following the death of the influential editor Reuel Lemmons.

Why the Division?



Different & antagonistic interpretations of the Restoration Principle

Sectionalism and the Civil War provided a bitter environment which made civil relations difficult, if not impossible.

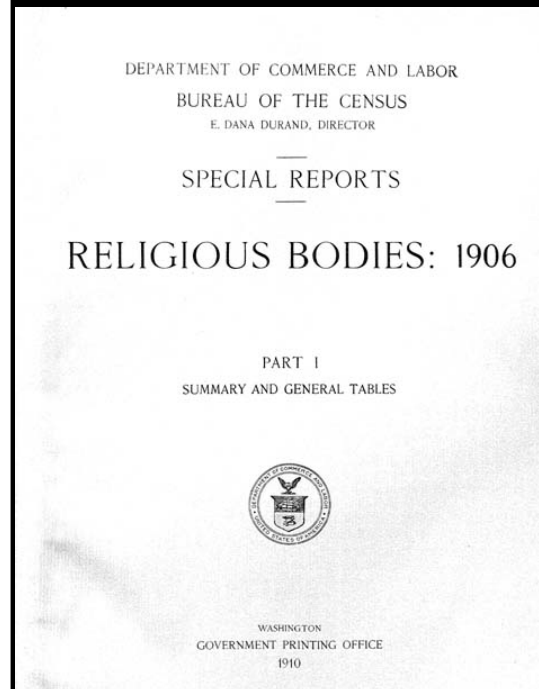
Growing social and economic differences. The difference between urban and rural and upwardly mobile and middle class.

Why did division come? It is not a simple or one-time thing. It was pressure over time in three areas.

Different and antagonistic interpretations of the Restoration Principle. Some believed in the basic tenets espoused in the Declaration and Address that the NT is a pattern for the work, organization, and life of the church. Others saw that thinking as a detriment to unity. The issue was "which is most important when push comes to shove?"

Sectionalism and the Civil War provided a bitter environment which made civil relations difficult, if not impossible. The emotions were raw and it was easy to paint each other as evil. The north called the southern Christians traitors. The Southern Christians saw the north as heretical. While the emotions grew apart, with liberalism taking the Bible out of the northern equation, there was no ground to discuss differences.

Growing social and economic differences. The difference between urban and rural and upwardly mobile and middle class. In the north, the industrial revolution gave wealth and power to a growing middle class. They could build big buildings, send their children to universities, and hire men with PhD's from Yale, Harvard, and Chicago. The south remained rural, poor, and suspicious of the "carpetbaggers" from the north.



**Letter from S. N. D. North, the
Director of the United States
Census to David Lipscomb**

***“Is there religious body called
“church of Christ,” not
identified with the Disciples of
Christ, or any other Baptist
body?”***

(letter dated June 17, 1907)

In 1906, the United States government did its ten year religious census trying to get numbers on the religious bodies in the United States. It was 1906 that would be a defining mark for the movement.

The polity of the churches being purely congregational, the influences work slowly and the division comes gradually. The parties are distinguished as they call themselves "conservatives" and "progressives" as they call each other "antis".

In many places the differences have not as yet resulted in separation. There are some in the conservative churches in sympathy with the progressives, who worship and work with the conservatives because they have no other church facilities.

The reverse of this is also true. *Many of the conservatives are trying to appropriate the name "churches of Christ" to distinguish themselves from "Christian or Disciples Churches."*

Here is Lipscomb's reply.



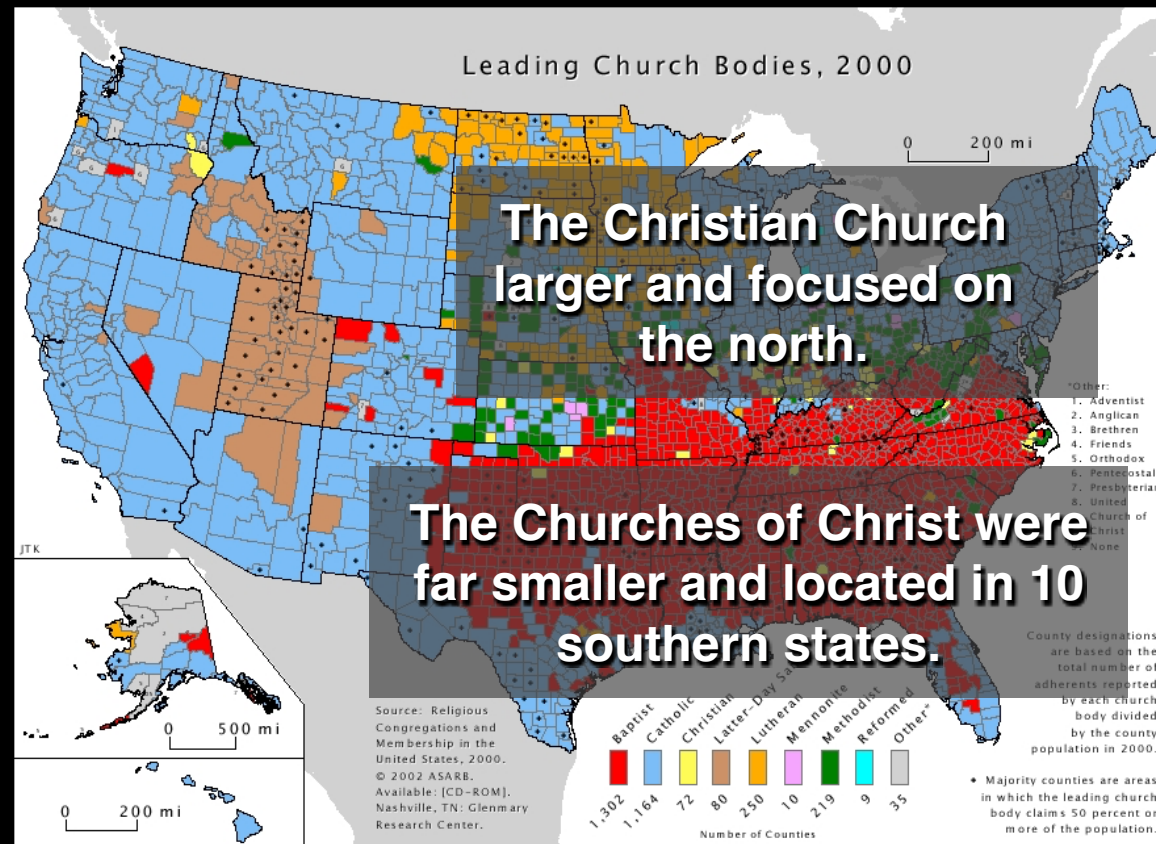
**What Lipscomb did
was to acknowledge
what had happened
over time, not to call
for a split or division.**

There are some today who go around, without one shred of evidence and ignoring the basic facts, that say David Lipscomb split the church. He called for division in 1906 and that is what happened.

However, his response simply acknowledged what was happening at that time.

Furman Kearley took over editorship of the Advocate in the 1990's. During that time, the instrument (as we will see next week) began to take centerstage again. Many of our brethren were calling for a "break". Kearney said he had read everything Lipscomb wrote. Readers were calling for a break 20 years before 1906. Lipscomb refused to do that then or even in 1906.

No man split the movement into pieces. Events had done a better job of that.



For this reason, churches of Christ existed primarily in 10 southern states. That's why today we have missionary efforts in places like Vermont and Philadelphia. We just were not there.



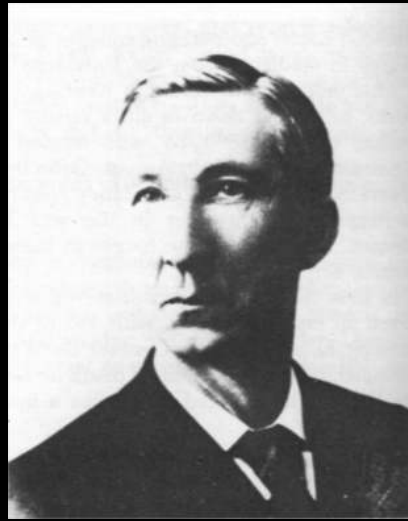
What happened to the other part of the Movement?

So what happened to the other part of the Restoration Movement after 1906?

**Growing Liberal
Movement**



They took a hard left turn and moved even further away from the Restoration ideal.



Denied miracles and the virgin birth and inspiration

It was seen first in R. C. Cave's preaching in St. Louis denying miracles and the virgin birth. It was followed up by the Divinity School at the University of Chicago being established by the Disciples of Christ to continue a very liberal agenda of denial of inspiration.

The Federal Council of Churches



1908 in Philadelphia

**32 Denominations
including the Disciples of
Christ**

**Promote an
Ecumenical View**

It was not long after the 1906 census that the Disciples of Christ (which is the other part of the movement) joined with 32 denominations in Philadelphia to establish in the Federal Council of Churches which would one day become the National Council of Churches.

The express purpose of the council was to promote ecumenism in the religious world. It was basically a stand that say, "believe what you want regardless of what the Bible says."

1926
International Convention of Churches of Christ

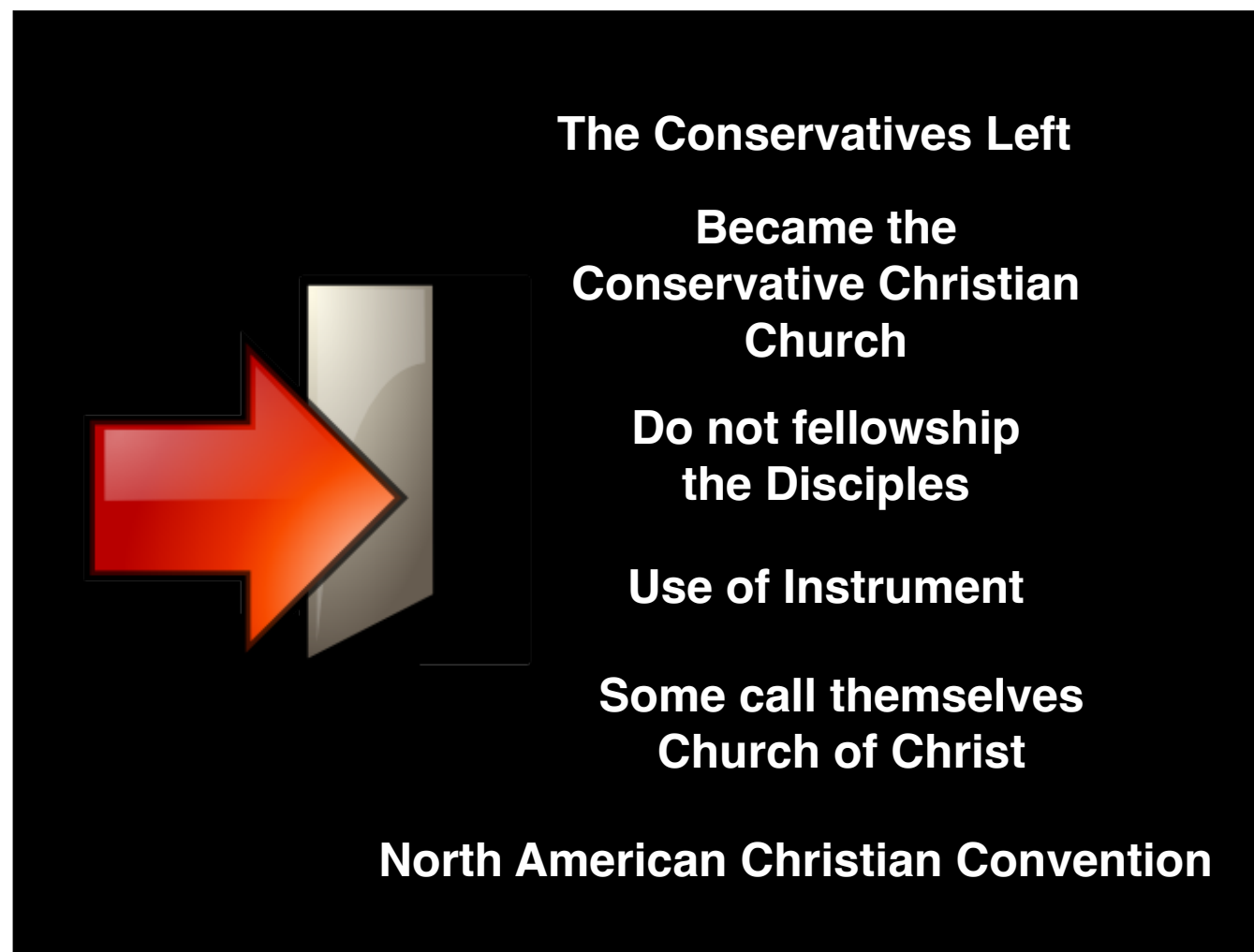


**Missionaries
teaching baptism
was not essential**

But even for that part of the movement, they could not stay unified. In 1926 at the International Convention of Churches of Christ (a meeting which takes place every four years to discuss direction), there was a problem.

In the mission field missionaries, under the banner of ecumenical thought were teaching baptism was not essential and was a relic or throwback to primitive times.

It was the spark in the tinderbox which drove the conservatives out of the Disciples of Christ.



When the conservatives left, they became the Conservative Christian Church. They do not fellowship with the Disciples believing them too liberal.

They are much like we are, with local elders, they do not call their preacher by titles. However, they use the instrument. (What is interesting is that there are some that believe the only right instrument is a piano or organ.)

Some of them, especially in the Midwest call themselves Church of Christ.

Today, they meet in an annual event called the North American Christian Convention. This year it was held in Indianapolis. The NACC Mission statement is "the connecting place providing ideas, inspiration, and identity to New Testament Christian Churches and their leaders." It is a lectureship type even at which they have classes for adults, teens, church leaders. They have a Bible Bowl for their teens.

The Disciples of Christ

Emphasis on Unity

Consultation on Church Union



But the Disciples continued to move to the left. They had an emphasis on unity which drove them to deny scriptural positions to advance the notion of all who call themselves Christians are united. It was a group organized to merge the 10 largest denominations into an ecumenical church. (What prompted most of this was also declining membership and financial support.) They even had one of their early meetings on the grounds at Cane Ridge under the notion that the only thing Stone saw important was unity. He would have turned over in his grave.

The Disciples of Christ

Emphasis on Unity

Consultation on Church Union

- **African Methodist Episcopal Church**
- **African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**
- **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**
- **Christian Methodist Episcopal Church**
- **Episcopal Church**
- **Evangelical United Brethren Church**
- **Methodist Church**
- **Presbyterian Church in the U.S.**
- **United Church of Christ**
- **United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.**

The ten denominations are listed.

The Disciples of Christ

Decidely Liberal

Redefine “church”

**Reject inspiration, miracles and, for many, the divinity
of Jesus**

**Restoration is no longer tenable (some call it
embarrassing)**

Consider Churches of Christ “a sect”

They have preserved the heritage.

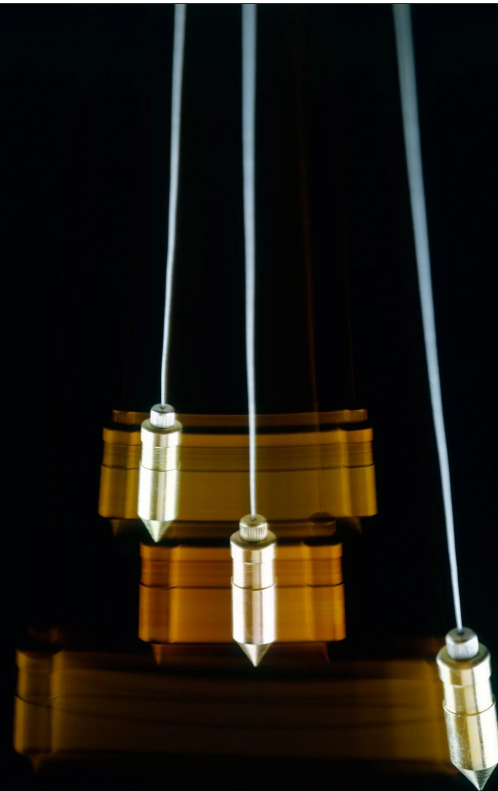
Today, the Disciples are decidedly liberal. They have redefined the term church to mean inclusive of all beliefs with diversity abounding in all manner of practice, morals and ethics. They have led as a pioneer in the philosophical stand of post-modernism, which props up the ecumenical movement.

They have rejected inspiration of scripture, and for many scholars and preachers even the divinity of Jesus.

They see the concept of restoring the church of today to the New Testament pattern as untenable and call restoration “embarrassing.”

In their redefinition of church they see a sect as something that sees the strict standards of the NT as normative and anyone holding to the NT as sectarian. By their definition both churches of Christ and the NT church was sectarian.

One good thing. They have done an excellent job preserving the heritage of the restoration. In Nashville, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society has preserved the records and writings of Stone, Campbell, Franklin, and Fanning. They restored both Campbell’s home and study at Bethany, WV and the Cane Ridge meeting house. Much of this series is dependent on material saved from the fire by the historical society. If only their theology matched their passion for restoration.



**When you change, you never change a little...you
change a lot.**



Once you go too far, there is no coming back.



There is a line in the sands of time which is drawn. On one side as we have seen, restoration was given up to join the religious world at large. Many today call for that in our fellowship. They want us to be open and diverse. They don't like the exclusive nature of baptism, the Lord's supper, accappella singing in worship.

But all of those are found in the life of the New Testament church. We do those things because that's what we see them doing. We know they had unity based on their faith in the guiding voice of the apostles and we are doing the same. But others have turned away from that thinking and now are far away from the world of NT thought.

It always comes down to where you stand in relation to the NT.

A man in a dark suit is seen from behind, looking at a chalkboard. On the chalkboard, there is a large, thick brown question mark in the center. Surrounding the question mark are numerous thin, light-colored swirling lines and arrows, some pointing towards the center and others in various directions. The background is a dark, textured surface.

Our Last Lesson?

A Long Look in the Mirror...at Ourselves.