**Harmonious Individuality:**

**BARTON W. STONE AND ALEXANDER CAMPBELL**

No two persons are alike in all facets of their life and character. This is apparent in any comparative study of men. Even when they have the same basic concepts and belong to the same spiritual brotherhood, there are shades of difference in their beliefs and actions. Elijah and Elisha were greatly different, even though they both faithfully served God. No two of the apostles were alike. Although guided by the infallible Spirit and thus perfectly harmon-ious in their teaching, they were individually different. It is not practical for two people, not inspired of God, to see every item of truth precisely alike because each is influenced by inheritance and environment. The Bible commands us to all speak the same thing and to have no divisions among us. But as J.W. McGarvey said of the qualifications of elders, this is applied to fallible men, not to angels. Unity is the ideal for which we must strive, but if its application requires perfection, then none will be saved.

In comparing Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell, we are engaging in a study of harmonious individuality. These men, in time, accepted the same ideals regarding the restoration of New Testament Christianity. They were harmonious in pursuing the apostolic order. However, there were differences between them that, in some points, caused disagreements. In other matters, over which they did not clash, their independent study led them to diverse conclusions in some facets of truth. And even where they agreed, they were different in style and emphasis. One’s beliefs and practices, no matter how well honed, are affected by his temperament, circumstances, associates, teachers, family, and dozens of other nuances too numerous to name.

In studying the harmonious individuality of Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell, we will give attention to a few salient points that are of particular importance. So much more is known about Campbell that it is easy to defer to him in any comparative study, but we will try to be as objective as possible as we consider the lives of these two men.

**Their Early Life and Education**

Barton Warren Stone was born at Port Tobacco, Maryland December 24, 1772, a fifth generation American. The youngest of nine children, he was named for Barton Warren, his mother’s father. He was a descendant of William Stone, the first Protestant governor of Maryland, and Thomas Stone, a cousin, was a signer of the *Declaration of Independence*. So, Stone’s roots ran deep in American soil and he was a true son of the American frontier. Stone’s father died when he was three, leaving his mother to care for the family. The Stones were members of the Church of England and his mother had him sprinkled into that communion. But his interest in religion in early life was not keen. The war caused many of the clergy of the Anglican Church to return to England, leaving many of their people without spiritual guidance. The war itself brought the whole county to spiritual and moral bankruptcy.

The Lord’s Day was a time of pleasure and many church buildings were abandoned. In 1779, when Stone was seven, the family moved to Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in the Dan River region near North Carolina. Here Stone grew to manhood in the turbulent days of the American Revolution. The hardships of pioneer life, aggravated by the tribulations of war, helped mold his character. Stone saw his older brothers go off to the war, and from his forest home, he saw the tented fields of the bivouacked soldiers and the attending theft, promiscuity, swearing, drunkenness, fight-ing, and gambling that demoralized the land. He heard the cannons roar in the 1881 Battle of Guilford Courthouse thirty miles south of his home. This was one of the most important battles of the war. It set the stage for the region’s liberation from British occupation and impelled Lord Charles Cornwallis to take the ill-fated British army to final defeat at Yorktown, Virginia, seven months later.

The war made such an impression on young Stone that he became a confirmed pacifist, hating the cause and effects of war. This may have contributed to his later desire for peace among warring churches. But he also drank deeply the spirit of liberty that brought on the war, holding with the Revolutionary cause. He said: “I could not hear the name British or Tories, without feeling a rush of blood through the whole system.”1

Alexander Campbell was born in Northern Ireland, September 12, 1788. His father, Thomas Campbell, was a Presby-terian preacher who reared his family in that faith. Thomas, though formally bound to the Presbyterian Creed, was an independent thinker and his son imbibed this trait that eventually led both to leave the Presbyterian Church. His mother, Jane Corneigle, descended from French Huguenots who settled in Ireland. In addition to preaching, Thomas Campbell taught school and gave his family an educational environment. He was scholarly, pious, and strict. He drilled his oldest son in Latin, Greek, and English literature and philosophy. The family worshiped God with singing, Bible reading, and prayer morning and evening. Each member was required to memorize a portion of the Scriptures each day. When Thomas Campbell left for the New World in 1807, he turned his school at Rich Hill over to nineteen year old Alexander.

Their early life and education prior to college marked Stone and Campbell as two very different individuals. One was reared in a land of gross immorality, without a father, and with scant religious training in his formative years. The other was reared in a well-structured religious environment where the Bible, worship, education, and morality were stressed daily. One grew to manhood with little knowledge of the Bible, while the other was steeped in its teaching from childhood. Both men were intellectual, but Campbell was apparently more gifted.

**Their Religion Before Becoming Reformers**

Stone occasionally heard Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodist preachers in his community, but he was largely indifferent to religion prior to his college years. His father’s estate was finally divided among the heirs in 1790 when Stone was nineteen. He wisely used his modest inheritance to obtain an education, intending to study law. He enrolled in David Caldwell’s famous school near Greensboro, North Carolina, thirty miles from his home. Caldwell was considered “one of the greatest natural teachers that American every produced.” Five of his graduates became governors. Stone was a good student and completed the classical course in three years. Caldwell was a minister of the Presbyterian Church and religion quite naturally dominated the atmosphere of his school.

Reformation never comes easy or travels a painless route. None arrives at all the truth in a moment’s time, nor do two traveling the same path to reformation walk in lock step. Stone’s first move toward reformation came at the time of his conversion. This was after he heard the legendary James McGready, a strict Calvinist who preached several times at the school. Following one of McGready’s visits, Stone felt the conviction of sin and desired to be saved, but he failed to find an assurance of salvation in McGready’s hell-fire and brimstone preaching.

Stone was almost moved to distraction as he tried to recon-cile his desire for salvation with “the Westminster Confession of Faith.” Speaking of it later, Stone said: “I shudder while I write—blasphemy rose in my heart against such a God, and my tongue was tempted to utter it. Sweat profusely burst from the pores of my body, and the fires of hell got hold of me.” It was only when he turned to the Scriptures that he found relief. “From this state of perplexity,” he said, “I was relieved by the precious word of God. From reading and meditating upon it, I became convinced that God did love the whole world, and that the reason why he did not save all was because of their unbelief; and that the reason why they believed not, was not because God did not exert his physical, almighty power on them, but because they neglected and received not the testimony, given in his Word concerning his Son…. I now saw that it was not against the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that I had been tempted to blaspheme, but against the character of a God not revealed in the Scriptures.”2

It was a sermon by William Hodge, preaching on the text, “God is love,” that moved Stone toward the Bible. He reasoned: “Had I a child whom I greatly loved, and saw him drowning, and utterly unable to save himself, and if I were able to save him would not I do it? Would I not contradict my love to him—my very nature—if I did not save him? And will not God save all whom he loves?” With this assurance of God’s love, Stone said: “My heart warmed with love for that lovely character [Hodge] described, and momentary hope and joy would rise in my troubled breast.” When the service ended, Stone found solitudein the woods with his Bible. The preacher’s words about the love of God filled his troubled heart with joy and hope. At that moment, he surrendered his life to Christ. Describing the incident, he said he sank at the feet of Christ a willing subject. “I loved him—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 and in following so long the devices of men. I now saw that a poor sinner was as much authorized to believe in Jesus at first, as at last—that *now* was the accepted time, the day of salvation.”3

This was not an orthodox Calvinist conversion, but it was real and Stone never departed from that commitment. Nor did he ever forget his bout with Calvinism. He later said: “Let me here speak when I shall be lying under the clods of the grave**.** Calvinism is among the heaviest clogs on Christianity in the world. It is a dark mountain between heaven and earth, and is amongst the most discouraging hindrances to sinners from seeking the Kingdom of God.”4 Calvinism may very well have been the catalystthat brought the Restoration movement associated with Stone into being. Without the struggles he had with this ungodly system, both in his conversion and in his ordination, there might not have been the Stone movement.

Alexander Campbell, reared in the Seceder Presbyterian Church, never experienced the difficulty Stone had in conversion. As a young man he “received Christ as his Savior” and naturally joined the Seceders. He took an early interest in theological studies with a view to perhaps becoming a minister.But advanced study was prevented at the time by his father’s need to support of a large family and by his father’s illness, which precipitated his coming to America. He was unable to attend college until the shipwreck that delayed the family’s joining their father in America for a year. When the family first set sail for the New World, they were shipwrecked off the coast of Scotland and barely escaped with their lives. The year’s delay in the journey gave Alexander the opportunity to attend Glasgow University. His brush with death moved him, even while awaiting rescue, to definitely commit his life to the ministry.

While young Campbell did not experience any turmoil in conversion, he nevertheless realized his own spiritual weakness and despaired of the perfection which God requires. He prayed for God “to work in him both to will and to do his own good pleasure” and for that strength that is made perfect in human weakness. He had no confidence in self-righteousness, but put his trust in the merits of Christ. This, along with other influences in Glasgow, moved him in the direction of reform. There he came in contact with the Restoration movement of Robert and James Alexander Haldane. This was channeled through the influence of Greville Ewing, minister of a Haldane church in Glasgow. Ewing also conducted a seminary for the Haldanes in that city. He became a close friend of Campbell and often invited him to his home for religious discussions and social gatherings. The association greatly weakened his ties with Presbyterianism.

Near the end of his year in Glasgow, time for the semi-annual communion service of the Seceders came. Campbell obtained the metallic token required to receive communion. He attended the service in doubt as to whether he should remain with the Presby-terians. He waited until the last communicants were served hoping to overcome his scruples. “Failing in this, however, and unable any longer conscientiously to recognize the Seceder Church as the Church of Christ, he threw his token upon the plate handed round, and when the elements were passed along the table, declined to partake with the rest. It was at this moment that the struggle in his mind was completed, and the ring of the token, falling upon the plate, announced the instant at which he renounced Presbyter-ianism for ever—the leaden voucher becoming thus a token not of communion but of separation.”5 Later, he recalled that year, saying: “My faith in creeds and confessions of human device was considerable shaken while in Scotland, and I commenced my career in this country under the conviction that nothing that was not as old as the New Testament should be made and article of faith … or a term of communion amongst Christians.”6

The first important steps toward reformation, both with Stone and Campbell, began while they were barely mature men, and while they were students in college.

**The Ordination to the Ministry**

After his conversion, Barton W. Stone joined the Presby-terian Church. Almost as soon as he was converted, he became deeply interested in preaching. He had no miraculous call, but Caldwell assured him that his great desire to preach was sufficient. He assigned him the Trinity as a topic for a sermon before the Orange Presbytery. Stone had difficulty with the subject, which troubled him the rest of his life. But after wrestling with the theme in utter confusion, he read a work of Isaac Watts that was more enlightening and from this prepared his speech. Henry Patillo, who accepted Watt’s views, presided over the presbytery that examined Stone. He worded his questions in such a way that Stone passed the examination.

While awaiting his license to preach, Stone visited an older brother in Georgia, where he was invited to teach in Succoth Academy at Washington, and remained there a year. The principle of the academy was Hope Hull, a Methodist preacher who had sided with James O’Kelly in the O’Kelly Rebellion, but remained with the Methodist’s. Stone attended a Methodist conference with Hull and they became good friends. He doubtless learned some-thing about the O’Kelly movement from Hull. Another man who influenced Stone at this time was John Springer, a New Light Presbyterian preacher to whom denominational lines meant little. Stone frequently heard Springer preach while he lived in Georgia.

On returning to Virginia, Stone received his license and began a preaching tour of Virginia and North Carolina. But he soon grew discouraged and thought of giving up preaching. He then set out for Florida with that in mind. When he stopped at place to worship, he met a wise woman who knew him and correctly guessed that he was playing Jonah and advised him to go west over the mountains. He took here advice and his journey took him to Kentucky where he became the regular supply pastor of Cane Ridge and Concord Presbyterian churches. A year later (1798), he became the stated minister of the churches, which required him to be examined by the Transylvania Presbytery for ordination. Stone held views that were not considered orthodox by most Presbyterians, one of which concerned the Westminster Confession of Faith. When asked if he accepted the creed as containing the doctrine of the Bible, he replied: “I do, as far as I see it consistent with the Word of God.” No objection was made and he was duly ordained. For the next three years, he served as the pastor of the Cane Ridge and Concord churches.

Alexander Campbell’s decision to preach was not realized until after his break with the Presbyterian Church. Upon arriving in America, he found that his father had been rejected by the Chartiers Presbytery in western Pennsylvania for his independent views. However, he continued preaching to his neighbors, friends, and sympathizers as he had opportunity, largely in homes to small gatherings. He emphasized the sinfulness of sectarian division, the need for a wider circle of fellowship than human creeds allowed, and the importance of following the Scriptures as the only authority in religion. In 1809, he and others of a like mind formed the Christian Association of Washington (Pennsylvania). The group was made up of “voluntary advocates of church reformation … formed for the sole purpose of promoting simple evangelical Christianity.” It was not a church and met only twice a year. In a special meeting of the Association, Thomas Campbell spoke on the principles upon which they were acting. He concluded by stating the great rule, or principle, upon which he understood that they were acting, saying: “The rule, my highly respect hearers, is that, that WHERE THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK, WE SPEAK; AND WHERE THE SCRIPTURES ARE SILENT, WE ARE SILENT.”7

When the Campbell family reached America, they began their journey from Philadelphia to western Pennsylvania and Thomas Campbell set out to meet them on the way. Neither he nor his son knew that the other had left the Presbyterians. The joy of their reunion was tempered with apprehensions regarding their religious experiences during their two and half year separation. According to legend, Thomas Campbell had the galley proofs of the *Declaration and Address* in his saddlebags when the family met. Through many days and nights they talked about their respective experiences and they soon saw that they had come to similar positions. Alexander read his father’s now famous document and they discussed its teaching at length. He agreed with its propositions and told his father he would devote his life to preaching and defending the principles set forth in that work. To prepare himself for the ministry, Alexander began a rigid Biblical and theological study under his father’s guidance. In the spring of 1810, he preached his first sermon to a gathering in a private home. After this, he never lacked appointments to preach and was able to hold audiences with remarkable effectiveness from the start.

An attempt was made by Thomas Campbell to reunite with the Presbyterians, albeit holding his independent views, but he was harshly rejected by the Synod of Pittsburg. This resulted in his complete and final separation from that denomination. Alexander defended his father before the Association and answered the charges made against him by the Synod. Thomas Campbell was too humble in spirit and had no natural inclination to make such a defense. It is generally agreed, that from this time, the son, in spite of his youth, became the leader of the movement. It was soon agreed that the Association should cease and resolve itself into an independent church. Thus, on May 10, 1811, the Brush Run church was organized with Thomas Campbell as elder. Four deacons were chosen and Alexander was licensed by the church to preach. The next Lord’s Day the church held its first communion service and Alexander preached, followed by a discourse by his father.

Even though Stone and Campbell both came from a Presbyterian background, they entered the ministry by different routes. Campbell did not have the experience of a prolonged ordeal of trials before human tribunals, as Stone did, nor was he ever ordained by the Presbyterians. He was simply authorized to preach by the Brush Run church the day it was organized and without any examination of any sort. Perhaps as a consequence of their different experiences along these lines, the ordination of preachers by ordained ministers was practiced in the Stone movement for many years, while those in the Campbell movement were closer to the New Testament pattern of preachers simply being recognized by local churches. However, Stone believed that one should obtain his license to preach from God, although he held that the local church had the right and duty to examine a preacher as to his soundness in the faith.

**Their First Independent Churches**

The Brush Run church was the first church to attempt to follow the New Testament order in Campbell movement. In his first sermon to the Christian Association, before the Brush Run church was organized, Alexander Campbell defended the princip-les set forth in the *Declaration and Address.* These may be summarized in six points. 1. While the denominations possessed the substance of Christianity, they had failed to follow the teaching of God’s word in many respects. The purpose of the new reformation was to persuade Christians in the various churches to abandon human creeds and accept the Bible as the basis of unity. 2. Each local church should be independent with its own autonomous government of elders and deacons, and, while remaining an independent body, should fellowship churches of like faith. 3. The unscriptural distinction between clergy and laity should be abandoned. 4. Infant baptism is without Scriptural authority, although it was not abandoned at this time. 5. If the Association were rejected by the religious parties, it might be necessary for it to resolve itself into a distinct church so the members could carry out their duties according to the Scriptures. 6. The principle of receiving and practicing nothing except what is expressly taught in the Scriptures would result in the abandonment of many things held to be important by the existing churches. It was not until 1816 that the second fully organized church of the Campbell movement was established at Wellsburg, West Virginia.

Barton W. Stone and four other men broke their connection with the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky to form the independent Springfield Presbytery in 1803. But the Springfield Presbytery lasted only nine months before it was dissolved on June 28, 1804, when *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* was written. This document opposed human organizations over churches as unscriptural, pled for the unity of believers, empha-sizing that there is “but one Body,” and advocated the Bible alone as the “the only sure guide to heaven.” It was agreed at this time to take the name Christian to the exclusion of all sectarian names. After this, Stone signed his name as, “Barton W. Stone, E.C.C.” (Elder in the Church of Christ).

The fifteen churches that had made up the Springfield Presbytery now became independent “Christian churches” and were on their way to restoring the apostolic order of organization, work, and worship. Stone was the only one of the men who led this movement who proved to be stable and dependable. While he was not of the temperament to lead a religious movement, he was by circumstances placed in that role and filled it ably. His greatest contributions to the movement were his peaceful spirit (the need of which has too often been ignored in the quest for doctrinal soundness), a sense of urgency in evangelism, which led to thou-sands being converted and numerous churches being established, and great stress on the importance of the unity of Christians.

The first independent churches of the Stone movement were Presbyterian churches that separated from that denomination to become independent churches of Christ, while the first churches of the Campbell movement were started as independent churches patterned after the New Testament order from the beginning. But both made it their aim to follow the apostolic pattern of congre-gational independence.

**Their Understanding of the Plan of Salvation**

During the first two decades of the Stone movement, Stone followed the “mourners’ bench” system of conversion. He believed that the gospel is for all, that sinners may to come to Christ or refuse to come, and that baptism is immersion, but he sought to bring sinners to a state of conviction before they obtained relief in assurance that they were saved. While he paid little attention to the purpose of baptism at first, a controversy led him to study the Bible and he concluded that baptism is the immersion of believers and he himself was immersed. Infant baptism was rejected and believers’ baptism practiced. Early in his restoration work, Stone saw that baptism is for the remission of sins and preached it. But he said it had such a cooling effect on the people that he soon abandoned it. It was not until Campbell made the connection of baptism and the remission of sins in the early 1820s that Stone began preaching the gospel plan of salvation. He freely acknow-ledged his debt to Alexander Campbell in this regard.

Campbell accepted believers’ immersion as Bible baptism near the beginning of his work as a reformer. He rejected infant baptism after a thorough study of the Bible following the birth of his first child and was himself immersed June 12, 1812. But it was not until his debate with W.L. McCalla in 1823 that he turned his attention to the design of baptism. The publication of this debate helped spread this teaching to those of the Stone movement, as well as to Baptist churches with which the Campbells were then loosely affiliated. While both Stone and Campbell came to believe that baptism is for the remission of sins, they differed on its relation to Christian fellowship. Campbell objected to fellowship with the unimmersed, but Stone believed the unimmersed were not to be excluded from church membership. He urged the practice of admitting the unimmersed with “patience and forbearance toward such pious persons as cannot be convinced” that they should be immersed. However, in l826, he said there was not one in 500 among them that had not been immersed. Campbell felt that the judgment of the unimmersed is in the hands of God, but he also held that if the testimony of the Restoration was to be pure and undefiled, the unimmersed must not be admitted to fellowship. He believed this so strongly that it was one reason he was skeptical about the union of the Christians and Reformers in 1832.

Campbell’s willingness to let God determine the eternal destiny of the unimmersed, while insisting that baptism for the remission of sins is essential to Christian fellowship, may help explain his seeming contradiction regarding the now famous “Lunenburg Letter.” A lady in Lunenburg, Virginia asked him whether he thought the unimmersed were Christians. In answer, Campbell said: “Who is a Christian? I answer, Everyone that believes in his heart that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of God, repents of his sins, and obeys him in all things according to his measure of knowledge of his will.” As to whether an unimmersed person could be a Christian, Campbell sought to view the whole life of the person, rather than whether or not he had been baptized. He said: “Should I find a paedo-baptist more intelligent in the Christian Scriptures, more spiritually minded and more devoted to the Lord than … one immersed on a profession of the ancient faith, I could not hesitate a moment in giving the preference of my heart to him that loveth most.”8 This is not a repudiation of baptism for the remission of sins, but the key to Campbell’s answer, it seems, turns on “the preference of my heart.” James D. Murch writes: “What many people failed to see in the statement was that he was expressing his personal judgment and feeling in the matter. This irenic spirit characterized his life and work. But he drew a line between his personal feelings and the clear teaching of the Word of God. His love and respect for Christians did not go beyond their willingness to investigate and learn the whole truth about baptism, and to comply with the truth as they discovered it. Neither was he willing to call a church a New Testament church that compromised the expressed teaching of the Scriptures by admitting the unimmersed to membership.”9

Both Campbell and Stone taught baptism for the remission of sins, but neither was willing to pass judgment on those who sought to be Christians without being immersed. Their disagreement lay in the fact that Stone fellowshiped the unimmersed in the local church, making Christian character the sole test of fellowship, while Campbell did not, insisting that only the immersed should be received into fellowship. Campbell’s feeling in the matter was tempered by the phrase “according to his measure of knowledge of his will.” But what Stone said about the immersed among them, no doubt, could also be said the Reformers. It was not until 1902 that open membership became an issue in the Christian Church by men who had aban-doned the principles of the Restoration.

Such a storm of protest arose against Campbell’s reply to the Lunenburg letter that he was inundated with critical letters from his brethren, claiming he had surrendered on a vital point. Neverthe-less, he sought to defend his position, insisting it was what he had always believed. A brother tried to help him out with a series of articles, but the controversy became so hot that Campbell stopped the series with a rather ambiguous editorial. He then closed the discussion until “a more convenient season,” but, as Leroy Garrett said, “he was too wise a leader to allow that season to soon become convenient.” Campbell’s brethren argued that his own logic excluded from the pale of the church the unimmersed, and since rationality and liberality do not easily mix, he had difficulty handling it. Garrett said: “He saw there was no way to win through argument, so he preserved the Movement through appeasement.”10

Part of the problem with both Stone and Campbell arose from the religious environment out of which they came. Neither suddenly discovered the gospel plan of salvation, but they came to it slowly through much agony. They had moved in a realm where they regarded people in the denominations as Christians, although divided by creeds, names, and organizations which they repudiated. Their original plea was for the unity of the Christians in the denominations on the Bible alone. Their first independent congregations were not constituted on the basis of gospel obedience, but of people of “Christian character” who professed to believe the Bible and to accept it as their final authority in religion, while renouncing the creeds of men. As they gradually came to see the importance of baptism in the new birth, they fully accepted it and taught it, but they could not bring themselves to believe that others, who were just as devoted to the will of God as they were, although misunderstanding the importance of baptism, were not also Christians. They at least were willing to leave the judgment of the matter in the hands of God. This was an issue less troublesome with others and this explains, we think, the reaction Campbell received from his answer to the Lunenberg letter. It is significant that in the matter of baptism for the remission of sins and its relation to Christian fellowship, neither Stone nor Campbell prevailed. After 1832, immersion for the remission of sins was generally made a test of Christian fellowship as the movements merged into one.

This shows that as great and as highly esteemed as these men were among their brethren, the movement was first of all Bible oriented. Campbell said one thing was evident from this experience with the Lunenburg letter: there were very few Campbellites in the country.

**Their View of Extra Organizations**

When *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* was written, it came down heavily against regulating bodies over Christians and congregations and heavily in favor of congregational independence. The document willed that the presbytery’s “power of making laws for the government of the church, and exercising delegated authority” forever cease and that the people have “free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of *the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*” and that “the church of Christ resume her native right of internal self-government.” It further stated that “each particular church” assumes its independence in choosing and supporting its preacher and admitting members and removing offences, and that it “never henceforth *delegate* her right of government to any man or set of men whatever.”11 Congregational independence was a cornerstone of the Stone movement. The churches guarded their independence. Very early there arose the practice of having “conferences” among the brethren in certain definable districts. While these were strongly opposed by some from the beginning, they were held simply for the purpose of fellowship and discussion by the often scattered brethren. They were not, as Stone said, to “meddle in the government of the churches.”

The Campbells rejected the authority of the Presbyterian Church because it imposed a human creed. They began their Restoration work with the Christian Association of Washington to promote reform within the existing churches. They made an effort to reunite with the Presbyterian Church on liberal terms, which that church would not accept. In Alexander Campbell’s reply to the Synod’s charges against them, he said it might be necessary for the Association to form an independent church to do God’s work. This, in fact, was done the following year when the independent Brush Run church was organized. But that church applied for and accepted membership in the Redstone Baptist Association where they remained until they were driven out by opposition. The Wellsburg church joined the Mahoning Association on the Western Reserve, which was made up of Reform churches. Campbell continued in this Association until 1830, when his brethren decided to dissolve it as an unscriptural organization. Campbell did not agree with this procedure, but when he was about to protest, Walter Scott dissuaded him and the Association ceased to exist. Campbell later advocated cooperation of the churches in an organized manner, and the American Christian Missionary Society was organized in 1849 with him as president. While Campbell’s teaching originally was opposed to missionary societies and he certainly opposed religious bodies with authority over the churches, he seems to have favored some extra-congregational organization.

Stone died in 1844 before the missionary society came into being. But Alexander Campbell became a leading influence in its promotion, although it contradicted his earlier teaching and he seems to have been uneasy about the harm it might do. He urged the brethren to “act in this great affair advisedly.” And he called for “a free and full exchange of our views on the whole premises.” Jacob Creath, Jr., the foremost early opponent of the society, accused him of changing his position from his writings in the *Christian Baptist*. Campbell made two significant points in reply. He denied that he had changed his views, and he avowed that no significant doctrine advanced in the *Christian Baptist* had ever been refuted. Since there is an evident change between what Campbell opposed early in his life and what the society was as established in Cincinnati in 1849, there is but one plausible explanation: Campbell was not fully aware of what the society was. John T. Lewis makes a good case for this view. Both Benjamin Franklin and David Lipscomb gave credence to it. Franklin said: “Alexander Campbell approved, and was for years nominally president, although so advanced in years and feeble in strength that he never presided over the sessions. He was present a number of times, and read an address at the opening of it sessions.”

Lipscomb also explained Campbell’s action on his age and condition. In the Newbern, Tennessee, trial, Lipscomb made two significant points. (1) He said: “My own conviction is, that Alexander Campbell never, consciously, changed his position at all; that he reached a period in his life, and had done so … that while his mental grasp of things that occurred years before seemed good, and he could make a brilliant and strong oration, and everything of that kind, at the same time, his mind had failed to grasp events around him, he never did realize what kind of a society [it was] of which he was president.” (2) He said: “Another thing is, he was exceedingly amiable. He loved his friends, and his friends love him. Such a man in old age and failing will power, I know from experience, is always easily influence by his friends, and Mr. Campbell fell under the influence of those friends that were building up this society right around him.”12

The latter point was acknowledged by Campbell himself. Regarding the society just prior to its establishment, which he thought would be a good thing, Campbell said: “It is important that the brethren act in this great affair advisedly, and that they may do so the interval should be devoted to the ascertainment of their views, and to the general enlightenment of the churches on what is yet wanting to the full attainment of the great object contemplated and desired by us all. For this purpose, during the interim, a free and full exchange of our views on the whole premises should be attempted. All of which I submit with much deference to their judgment and decision.”13

While neither Stone nor Campbell objected to brethren assembling together in districts, states, or nationally, for edifice-tion, encouragement, sharing news, and such like, neither seems to have accepted the idea of an extra-congregational organization, such as was opposed by them in the early years of their work and such as was organized by their brethren in at Cincinnati in 1849.

**Their Editorial Work**

By the 1820s, Stone’s correspondence became greater than he could handle. People would write, telling of new churches and conversions, or asking his advice on problems that arose among them or the meaning of Scriptures that troubled them. This is one of the factors that led him to begin the *Christian Messenger* in 1826. The journal continued monthly for the rest of Stone’s life and a year beyond, except for brief periods (1836-1840, 1842-1843) due to his illness and financial difficulties. The *Messenger* reflected the life’s work of the editor. It breathed the spirit of Christian unity and evangelism. Practically every spiritual idea that Stone held appeared in the *Messenger*. Through it, he taught the plan of salvation, promoted Christian unity, and advocated a return to the apostolic order. “Prove all things: hold fast to that which is good” (1 Thes. 5:21) was carried on the masthead of every issue of the paper except the last three years, along with the words “by Barton W. Stone, an Elder in the Church of Christ.”

After a stroke in 1841, he almost gave up the paper, but being convinced of the need for a religious journal in the “far west,” he decided to continue it. He then simplified the masthead to carry only the name of the paper, the date, volume, and number. But he had difficulty printing the paper all along, due to his lack of finances, the absence of a related business to support it, and the proneness of many to take the paper without paying for it. He often struggled to keep up the publication and had to use such poor paper that the printing quality was poor.

The *Messenger* fully represented the man behind it. Lin D. Cartwright, a former editor of the *Christian-Evangelist*, speaking on the influence of religious journals in the Restoration, said: “The temper of the journal was irenic and conciliatory. Like Campbell, Stone attacked the divisive tendencies in manmade creeds and was equally insistent upon the sufficiency of the scriptures and the restoration of primitive Christianity, but he was no iconoclast. He wrote: ‘Would it not be better, and would not the cause of Christianity be more gloriously advanced, if all would cultivate brotherly affections toward each other, and bear with each other’s weakness and errors, which affect not their pious and holy life? Forbearance would more speedily affect a reformation of those errors, than an intemperate zeal, and a rigid course.”14 Stone and the *Messenger,* paved the way for the unity of the Christians and Disciples at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1832. From the beginning of the *Messenger* he said: “Let the unity of Christians be our polar star.” But he not only advocated a practical unity of Christians, he worked to bring it about.

Without Stone, and especially his humble and gentle spirit, it is our conviction that the union of the two branches of the Restoration would not have taken place. Campbell was cool to the idea and Stone could have made some of the personal differences between them and their movements a chasm too wide to cross, if he had been so minded. If he had been jealous of Campbell in regard to leadership, he could have clogged the process with hindering excuses of one sort or another. But Stone recognized perhaps as clearly as any man ever did that there can be no real unity among brethren in the organization, work, and worship of the church without a scripturally imposed toleration of “each other’s weaknesses and errors, which affect not their pious and holy life.” Personalities are often as much a bar to unity in the church as doctrine and practice. Stone never sought preeminence among his brethren, and this was no bar to unity with the Reformers.

The *Messenger,* being more conciliatory than the *Christian Baptist* and the *Millennial Harbinger* in the years when they were contemporary was less effective in securing a popular response to its appeals. It seems to have lacked the vigor and drive of Campbell’s papers and, therefore, at the time, exerted less influence on the movement as a whole. “However,” Cartwright observed, “it is another lesson of history that often in the long run, when the smoke of battle has cleared and the bitterness of the immediate contention has died down, the conciliatory spirit triumphs. In the *Messenger*, Stone pled for the unity of Christians and a cessation of the spirit of bitterness that had worked such havoc in the warring denominations. In our opinion it has been so with Barton W. Stone.”15 In every age, we have had our iconoclastic and fiery proponents of the ancient order, but we have also had men like Stone who tempered the heat of controversy and kept the movement from becoming Pharisaic. Perhaps this is one of the greatest contributions Stone made to the movement. The strict adherence to the ancient order together with brotherly love and a tolerant fellowship will ever remain the essential ingredients for real Bible unity.

But the editorial work of Alexander Campbell must always remain the hallmark both in quality and influence of any man among the Restoration editors. Henry Smith Stroupe, writing about the religious press, said Campbell “was the most successful editor and publisher of religious periodicals in the South Atlantic States and ranks high among the important religious leaders of the century.” Campbell was a master of the English language and used it deftly to deal severely with religious error wherever he found it. Cartwright said: “Instead of opposing certain theological positions taken by certain separate denominations, he turned his guns against them all. Or, to change the figure and perhaps do him better justice, he ploughed deeper in a sincere effort to undermine the whole system of denominationalism which had led the frontier to its disastrous spirit of bitter sectarianism.”16 He wanted peace among Christians perhaps as much as Stone did, but his method of achieving it was to fight fire with fire. Like the fabled Irishmen, he would have peace if he had to fight for it.”

In comparing Stone and Campbell’s editorial approach to unity, Cartwright says, “we have here the background of two diverse approaches to the cause of Christian unity, which have characterized Disciple journalism through most of our history and the battleground of our major divisions.”17

The *Declaration and Address*, although published and distributed in tract form, exerted little immediate influence. It was not until Campbell began the *Christian Baptist* in 1823 that the movement made any appreciable headway. And the paper itself was only launched after the publication of the McCalla debate made Campbell see the potential of such a publication. His success on his preaching tours to advance the Restoration depended, he thought, on his paper. He said: “I have felt that my power to do good in all places that I have visited, has been, without exception … in the ratio to my readers, where there are few or no readers little or nothing can be done … The press had, in the reformation, pioneered the way. Before there was an evangelist in the field at all, the press had broken up fallow ground and prepared the soil over a great surface, on which the labor of our first evangelists told so well, and made so favorable an impression.”17, without his journals, the work of Alexander Campbell might have been very limited.

There can be little doubt that it was the excellence of the editorial work of Stone and Campbell that gave religious editors among the Restoration churches the status of a separate calling. Campbell seems to have been aware of this. He gave a list of qualifications for “Christian editors” somewhat like Paul’s qualify-cations for elders. He referred to them as “a class of men,” or a “corps.” But he overreached reality when he said: “Editors of religious journals are under the highest obligations to cultivate the virtues of prudence, patience, and general courteousness. If any class of men should all speak the same thing, mind the same thing, cultivate the most cordial cooperation, theirs, superlatively is that duty.”18

Cartwright said: “The influence of the *Christian Baptist* during the seven short years of its publication can hardly be over estimated. It has been said that very few basic ideas have appeared among the Disciples since that were not first advocated, either explicitly or implicitly, within the pages of the *Christian Baptist* during its turbulent existence from 1823-1830. True, Campbell later changed his spirit and many of his viewpoints. In some case he reversed himself in his later writings in the *Millennial Harbinger,* still the core of his contentions, whether valid or not, contains to this day the major determining concepts around which the movement revolves.”19

**Their View of Christian Unity**

Barton W. Stone took an active part in the union of the Christians and Reformers at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1831-1832. This was the beginning of the merging together of the two groups, but the union itself had to come church by church because there was no superstructure to deliver the groups into such a union. The similarities between them had become such by this time that union seemed inevitable. Each held the Scriptures to be the sole authority in religion and denounced human creeds and lawmaking bodies. Each advocated unity on the basis of a return to the ancient order in teaching and practice. In 1831 Stone said: “For nearly 30 years we have taught that Sectarianism was antichristian, and that all Christians should be united in the one body of Christ—the same they teach.” Each rejected the Calvinist theology of the Presbyterian Church, denying the doctrines of inborn sin, predes-tination, limited atonement, the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion, and the impossibility of apostasy.

They taught that responsible persons of their own free will can be saved by believing and obeying the gospel. There was some difference between Stone and Campbell on the special work of the Holy Spirit apart from the word, but both agreed that there could be no salvation apart from the word. Each rejected infant baptism and church membership and practiced believers’ immersion. Both came to see that there was a relation between baptism and the remission of sins. Each rejected unscriptural names, and while there were differences over what name to wear, they agreed that only scriptural names would do. Each also, in time, rejected denominational organizations such as synods, presbyteries, and associations. Stone rejected these from the beginning. Although he approved consultation meetings, they had no authority or power over the independent congregations. The Reformers did not give up associations until 1830, when the Mahoning Association was dissolved, but they maintained congregation independence from the beginning.

The union began at Lexington where there were churches of both Christians and Reformers. Stone was the only one of the four major leaders of the movement to take an active part from the beginning. The meetings for union were initiated by Stone and John T. Johnson. “Raccoon” John Smith and John Rogers also had an active part. They meet in November and agreed to seek the approval of their respective congregations for unity. Two meetings were arranged, one at Georgetown, December 23-26 and the other in Lexington, December 30-January 2. No minutes of the meetings were preserved. But references to them show their nature. Lexington was a small church meeting in a renovated chair factory. But brethren from far and near came, overflowing the building. There was no formal agenda. The fellowship and speaking was spontaneous. A representative of each group spoke. Smith spoke first. He pled for unity on the Scriptures and concluded: “Let us, then, my brethren, be no longer Campbellites, or Stonites, 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 that we need.”20

Stone was emotionally stirred by Smith’s words and responded with “irresistible tenderness.” He agreed that unity could never be based on speculation or controversial subjects. He confessed his own weakness to theological speculation, saying: “after we had given up all creeds and taken the Bible and the Bible alone as our rule of faith and practice, we met with so much opposition, that by force of circumstances, I was led to deliver some speculative discourses upon certain subjects. But I never preached a sermon of that kind that once feasted my heart; I always felt a barrenness of soul afterwards. I perfectly accord with Brother Smith that those speculations should never be taken into the pulpit; but that when compelled to speak of them at all, we should do so in the words of inspiration.”21

Even though he recognized that there were some differences between himself and Campbell, and consequently between the two groups, Stone concluded his moving speech with these words: “I have not one objection to the ground laid down by Brother Smith as the true Scriptural basis of union among God’s people; and I am willing to give him here and now, my hand.” Stone then turned to Smith and they shook hands and the great audience stood and joined in song and prayer. On the next Sunday, the two groups met together to take the Lord’s Supper and the union was sealed. All this was done without any formal motions, documents, or agreements signed.

They were united in all the things essential to brethren working together in a congregation, but reserving their individual right to otherwise study and think for themselves while main-taining fellowship as Christian brethren. Stone said: “We were united on no written compact, no association, no conventional constitutions…. They were free to think for themselves without the dictation of ghostly bishops … were drawn together by the spirit of truth as taught by our common Lord and experienced by us, the subjects of his kingdom.”22 The brethren who brought about the union meeting at Lexington did not intend for this work to stop there. They were thinking from the beginning of this work spreading to other churches throughout the nation. Stone made John T. Johnson co-editor of the *Christian Messenger*, which continued until Stone moved to Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1835.

The union at Lexington was not as smooth as some might suppose. The two churches agreed to meet February 19 to become one congregation. But when the time came for the enrollment of names on that date, there were no ordained preachers present and the Christians were reluctant to have the Lord’s Supper. A dissension arose over the matter and the union was postponed and a formal union was not affected until 1835 when T. M Allen became the preacher for the Lexington church. He persuaded them to drop their prejudice in this regard and the unity was affected.

During this time Stone and Campbell had an extended correspondence on union. Campbell was wary. He was concerned about Stone’s theological speculations and some of the practices of the Christians, which he felt had carried them “past Jerusalem after departing from Babylon.” Campbell was not ready to admit that Stone had antedated the Reformers in their return to the pure gospel and in advocating the restoration of the New Testament church. When news of the union meetings at Lexington reached Campbell, he was stunned. While he preached Christian union, he was not ready for such precipitate action. In reporting the news, he spoke with caution. He said: “These brethren need not to be told that to convert persons is not merely to baptize them, to loose them and let them go; nor to give them the name Christian, and induce them to protest against human leaders, against human creeds, and to extol the sufficiency of the inspired writings; but ‘to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified’—*to teach them to observe and do all* that the Lord has commanded.”23

Campbell, in announcing the Lexington meeting, was glad to know they had renounced their former speculations. He luke-warmly bade them Godspeed in their undertaking. Nevertheless, he said nothing at the time that could be construed to be either in favor or in opposition to the union. It seems that he felt that the Christians had not gone as far toward Restoration as he would like; yet, he himself had only recently severed his association with the Baptists and only reluctantly kept quite when the Mahoning Association was dissolved. In a short time he would be advocating a national missionary society which he headed in 1849, and this was five years before his disconcerting Lunenberg letter. Indeed, some of the Christians were so fearful of Campbell and the Reformers that they refused to join the union, breaking away to become part of what is known as the Christian Connection. The union of the Stone and Campbell groups came about because they regarded themselves as one brotherhood, even though there were differences among them that troubled them for years to come. They did not have to reach perfection to be united. If they had waited until then, the union would have never come. The com-bining of the two groups strengthened both and ushered in the golden age. But Campbell simply was not the leader in this regard.

Why was the union successful? It was primarily because the spirit and will of Christian unity pervaded the ministry of both groups. Stone seemingly stressed this more than Campbell and he was more willing to effect the union while differences existed. But he stressed the importance of the union being built on the members’ union with Christ. He said: “How vain are all human attempts to unite a bundle of twigs together, so as to make them grow together, and bear fruit. They must first be united with the living stock, and receive its sap, and spirit, before they can be united with one another. The members of the body cannot live unless they are united with the head—nor can the members of the church live united, unless first united with Christ, the living head. His spirit is the bond of union. Men have devised many plans to unite christians—all are vain. There is but one effectual plan, which is, that all be united with Christ and walk in him.”24

James D. Murch, writing about the reason the union suc-ceeded, said: “They both opposed sectarian bigotry in others and recognized the fact that they might be guilty of it themselves if they refused to consider union with any Christians of like mind and heart. They both desired to build on the Bible and the Bible alone; were opposed to creeds as terms of Communion; desired to win souls to Christ and to disseminate the apostolic gospel; were persecuted and maligned by the established churches; and had no overheard organization that could prevent them from full fellow-ship and co-operation if they desire it.”25

Stone was more practical than Campbell in regard to “uniformity of faith.” “The attempt to make all believe alike, has always been followed by the most painful results,” he said. He noted how men through the centuries had insisted on unity of faith and imposed it with the power of the sword. For instances, he said: “‘Let there be uniformity of faith,’ said the Pope of Rome, and issued his bull from the Vatican, and one million of simple Waldenses in the peaceful vales of Piedmont, were slaughtered for daring to be honest.” Uniformity that is imposed by force on brethren, he said “should dress heaven in mourning, and wake exultation in hell.” “Uniformity of faith is desirable; but in the present state of things, it can hardly be expected. The church has been laboring to effect it for near sixteen centuries, but has failed in their attempts. From past history we should learn wisdom, and no longer attempt to bind the free mind by civil power, and church censure [and he might have added “by editorial fiat”], to believe the same things.”

Stone further said: “We grant, that there is, or ought to be uniformity of faith among Christians. All should believe, and do believe the Bible is divine—as the truth of God. Not a fact, or truth there stated, but all receive. Yet the various opinions, formed of that fact or truth, no man can receive. It is impossible to force an honest, intelligent mind to believe. Coercion has divided christians in every age; ever since the introduction of laws to enforce uniformity. The Reformers of the 16th century saw this, and for a while protested against it. They boasted that the Bible was their religion. But the free mind soon began to form different opinions of Bible facts, for this they were reproached by the Catholics—and to remedy the supposed evil the Reformers began to embody their opinions of Bible truth in a creed or book, and required all members to subscribe to it. Thence division ensued, and it has continued and increased to the present time—and will continue as long as uniformity of faith is required.”26

**Their Differences**

Aside from differences in personality, background, and circumstances of life, there were some serious differences between Stone and Campbell, and by extension in some things to the two branches of the movement at the time of their union. These might be classified as doctrinal, sociological, and personal. But some of the conflict between Stone and Campbell did not reach their respective movements and in time faded away having no lasting impact. They had a controversy regarding the nature and work of Christ. However, this controversy did not effect the church, did not cause a break in fellowship between Stone and Campbell, and ceased when Stone decided, in deference to the wishes of his brethren, to stop writing about it. It does show that Stone was somewhat given to speculation on these themes, but he made no attempt to inculcate his views in these matters on his brethren and he made it clear to them that it was not necessary for people to have an intellectual understanding of the death of Christ before he could become a member of the church.

After their first meeting in 1824, Stone and Campbell became good friends. They recognized the commonality of their work, but there seemed to be irreconcilable differences between them. Stone thought Campbell was heterodox on the Holy Spirit, and Campbell suspected Stone’s soundness on the divinity of Christ. But on further investigation, while the differences remained, these were perceived to be no bar to their working together. The friendship, in spite of some sharp controversy along these lines, continued to the end of Stone’s life. Near the end of his life, Stone said: “I will not say there are no faults in Bro. Campbell, but there are fewer, perhaps, in him than any man I know on earth; and over these few my love would throw a veil, and hide them forever from view. I am constrained, and willingly constrained, to acknowledge him the greatest promoter of this Reformation of any man living.” And this feeling, at least to some extent, was reciprocated by Campbell.

Their earliest controversy of consequence was about the name they should wear. They agreed that all unscriptural and human names in religion should be discarded and that only Bible names were to be used. While different names were used for congregations and individual Christians before the unity meeting in 1832, it was soon after this that attitudes began to crystallize favoring either “disciples of Christ,” which Campbell preferred, or “Christians,” which Stone preferred. Incidentally, both Walter Scott and Thomas Campbell agreed with Stone in his discussion with Alexander Campbell over the name Christian. After the union, “disciples” and “Christians” were used generally for individuals, but congregations were called “Christian churches” or “churches of Christ.” Those who saw the controversy as useless held that “any name that is a Scriptural name is a proper name for the church.” As a result of this controversy, different names were used interchangeably until the divisions that took place in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The ordination of preachers was considered important to Stone. A holdover from Presbyterianism, the Christians maintained that baptism and the Lord’s Supper could be properly administered only by ordained preachers. Also, the ordination of preachers had to be by the hands of men who themselves were duly ordained. Thus, a church with men who desired to preach might invite “elders” (preachers) from other places to carry out the ceremony. The consultation meetings while largely for the purpose of edification and exchanging news, functioned to ordain preachers. When strong opposition arose to these meetings, Stone and others were concerned about how preachers might be ordained without them. Also, because of this view of preachers, the Lord’s Supper was not always kept weekly among the Christians in earlier times.

The Reformers, holding to “the priesthood of all believers,” thought any member of the church could administer the Lord’s Supper and baptize people. Among them the Lord’s Supper was observed weekly. After the union, Campbell’s view prevailed. Ordination was carried on by individual congregations, the Lord’s Supper was observed weekly, and baptism could be administered by any member of the church. Both rejected human creeds and disciplines and agreed that the Bible alone contained the standard for all teaching, faith, and practice, including church government.

The Stone movement became in revival and tended in the early years toward camp meeting revivalism with highly emotional conversions. Campbell had a dislike for emotionalism and “mystical impulses.” He branded popular revivalism as “the greatest delusion of our age, and one of the most prolific causes of the infidelity, immorality, and irreligion of our contemporaries.” He so feared its presence among the Reformers, that when he learned of Walter Scott’s successful evangelism on the Western Reserve, he sent his father to investigate the conversions. However, Scott and his “school of evangelism” found revivals and “protracted meetings” popular with the people. If Stone contributed a strong sense of evangelism to the movement, Campbell’s more rational approach to conversion prevented the emotionalism from going to seed, and Walter Scott’s presentation of the gospel plan of salvation stabilized the difference and melded into the evangelism that swept across the frontier and bringing in “the golden age” of the Restoration in the years between the union of the two groups and the Civil War. The action and inter action came to favor the Scott type of revival and even Campbell came to admit the value revivals, or protracted meetings. Otherwise, as Murch observed: “The infusion of the spirit of evangelism from both Stone and Scott insured the rapid and amazing growth of the movement which might have degenerated into an abstract adventure in Biblical polemics”27

Closely related to the revival issue was the work the Holy Spirit in conversion. Stone and his associates held that the Spirit operated in harmony with the word, but also as a personality apart from the word. They believed the Spirit operated in the world as a reprover of the wicked and comforter of the good, and that this holy influence would continue until the coming of Christ. Campbell believed the Spirit operated only through the word in conversion. He was not so much at odds with Stone on this as he was concerned about the popular doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit apart from the word of God, and “experimental salvation” that considered “impressions” and “operations” as superior to the word. Campbell said: “How the Spirit operates in the Word, through the Word, by the Word, or with the Word, I do not affirm. I only oppose the idea that anyone is changed in heart or renewed in the spirit of his mind by the Spirit without the Word.” While the movement agreed that the Holy Spirit operates only in harmony with the word in conversion, the degree and manner of his operation remained controversial, but it had no practical appli-cation to the gospel plan of salvation as preached by them.

**Conclusion**

An event took place in 1833 that marks a contrast between the spirit of Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell. There was a great meteor shower that covered much of the land. (“Stars fell on Alabama.”) This was the decade of the millennial fever among the brethren that came close to wrecking the Restoration Move-ment at the beginning of its most glorious period (1832-1861). Campbell saw this and rationally report what to him was simply the marvels of a heavenly display in God’s universe. Stone, being more emotional, upon seeing the same phenomenon thought it was surely a sign of things to come.

The church needs both rational and emotional men. It needs the one who can analyze the Scriptures to their depths and enlighten the brethren with his study, and who can man the polemic platform and defend faith in God, the Bible, and apostolic Christianity without embarrassing brethren by their behavior. But it also needs the more irenic, peace-loving, tolerant, and emotional, like Stone, who never had a public debate in a time when debating was the rage, who was willing to walk in the shadow of Alexander Campbell but not to bow to him, who was able to address great crowds but was as much at home preaching to a family around the fire place on a cold winter night.

We may need men who have the self-confidence to recog-nize their importance to the brethren, but we certainly need the humble men who are able to uphold the truth without been tempted to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think. We need men who will stand for the truth, but who are unafraid to stand for what they believe to be the truth when it is some ways out of sync with what has come to be tradition. We need men who will stand forthrightly for the truth, but we also need men who are willing, to acknowledge that they might be wrong about some things. We need men who will not only uphold the truth, but we need men who are willing to recognize that some differences among brethren is inevitable. The Restoration Movement needed an Alexander Campbell, but it just as surely needed a Barton W. Stone. We believe that God in his providence provided both.

**Notes**

1 Barton W. Stone, *The Life of Barton W. Stone*.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell,* Vol. 1.

6 *The Christian Baptist*, Sept. 1824.

7 Richardson, *Memoirs*, 2/236.

8 *Millenial Harbinger*, September 1837.

9 James D. Murch, *Christians Only*.

10 Leroy Garrett, *The Stone-Campbell Movement*.

11 F.L. Rowe, Pioneer *Sermons and Addresses*.

12 John T. Lewis, *The Voice of the Pioneers*.

13 *Millennial Harbinger*, August 1849.

14 Lin D. Cartwright, *The Influence of Religious Journals,* Unpublished.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 *Millennial Harbinger*, January 1840.

18 Ibid, April 1844.

19 Cartwright, *Influence*.

20 John A. Williams, *The Life of Elder John Smith.*

21 Ibid.

22 *Christian Messenger,* February 1833.

23 Millennial Harbinger, March 1832.

24 *Christian Messenger*, December 1833.

25 Murch, *Christians Only*.

26 *Christian Messenger*, October1833.

27 Murch, *Christians Only*.

Earl Kimbrough, Annandale, Virginia, November 1997.