



# Campbellites

MANY “catch phrases” have been formulated about the Lord’s church and His people. Most of them are the result of folk’s ignorance of what God’s word says about the church of Christ. One of these phrases is that we are “Campbellites.”

Without giving a full biography of Alexander Campbell; let me be brief. Alexander Campbell, who lived from the late 1700’s thru much of the 1800’s, studied his way out of denominationalism, while his father did the same. They both finally obeyed the Gospel according to the Bible. Alexander became active and well-known throughout America as a preacher, writer, debater, and teacher. Because of his well-known association with the church of Christ, many in denominationalism began to call members of the church of Christ “Campbellites” in reference to this prominent Christian Alexander Campbell. This “catch phrase” was not given as a compliment, but rather as a name of derision. Not because Alexander was a bad man, but because those in denominationalism wanted to characterize the church of Christ as just another denomination started by another man.

Now to the facts about the Lord’s church. The church of Christ was started by Jesus Christ around AD 33 in Jerusalem as recorded in Acts chapter 2. It was called the church of Christ in scripture (Romans 16:16) centuries before Alexander Campbell was born. Christ promised to build the church (Matthew 16:16-18), He built the church (Acts 2:47), and He is the head of the church and the Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:22-23), etc. It is His church and should be called such. Those who obeyed the Gospel in the Bible were called Christians (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16) and were not to identify themselves by any human-devised names such as “Baptist,” “Methodist,” “Catholic,” “Campbellite,” etc. (1 Corinthians 1:10-17).

A preacher friend of mine issues this challenge to anyone who calls him a “Campbellite:” “Show me one thing I believe that originated with Alexander Campbell.” While the term “Campbellite” is no longer commonly heard, if anyone ever calls you such, issue them the same challenge, “Show me one thing I believe that originated with Alexander Campbell.”

If Alexander Campbell believed and followed everything the Bible teaches without adding to or taking away, he was a true Christian (2 John 9). If I do the same, then I am a Christian. I am not a Campbellite, and Campbell was not a Pickfordite.

While we should certainly learn from and follow the examples of faithful men and women, we are not to wear their names in religion. We are Christians, followers of Christ.

The danger in becoming any type of “ite” is that if the human we are following strays into error, we may also stray into the same error. Paul wanted Christians to follow him only so far as he followed Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

-Michael Pickford  
Mpickford3@comcast.net

# Scripture Memorization

*“Your word I have hidden in my heart,  
That I might not sin against You.”*  
-Psalm 119:11

*“The law of his God is in his heart;  
None of his steps shall slide.”*  
-Psalm 37:31

*“I delight to do Your will, O my God,  
And Your law is within my heart.”*  
-Psalm 40:8

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*  
-Colossians 3:16

*“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”*  
-Philippians 4:8

*“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”*  
-1 Peter 3:15

*“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”*  
-John 15:7

*“Keep my commands and live,  
And my law as the apple of your eye.  
Bind them on your fingers;  
Write them on the tablet of your heart.”*  
-Proverbs 7:2-3

*“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”*  
-Joshua 1:8

*“My son, give attention to my words;  
Incline your ear to my sayings.  
Do not let them depart from your eyes;  
Keep them in the midst of your heart.”*  
-Proverbs 4:20-21