

**THE BEST OF
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL'S
MILLENNIAL HARBINGER
1830 ~ 1839**

**Volume I
Church History and Restoration
Reprint Library**

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The Best^{of} Alexander Campbell's *Millennial Harbinger*

*Many of the articles about denominations are meetings regarding
returning to the first-century way,
or people who came out of those denominations to unite.*

(Spelling of the 1800s was maintained)

VOLUME I, 1830 ***(January-June)***

JANUARY 1830, pg. 26 BAPTISM

Paidobaptist Richard Baxter said of Baptists: "My sixth argument shall be against the usual manner of their baptizing, as it is by dipping over head in a river, or other cold water. That which is a plain breach of the 6th commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill,' is no ordinance of God, but a heinous sin. "And, as Mr. Cradock shows in his book of 'Gospel Liberty,' the magistrate ought to restrain it to save the lives of his subjects. That this is a flat murder, and no better, being ordinarily and generally used, is undeniable to any understanding man. And I know not what trick a covetous landlord can find out to get his tenants to die apace, that he may have new fees and cheriots, likelier than to encourage such preachers, that he may get them all to turn Anabaptist....

"In a word, it is good for nothing but to dispatch men out of the world, that are burdensome, and to Ranken church yards. I include, if murder be a sin, then dipping ordinarily over head in England is a sin; and if those who would make it men's religion to murder themselves, and urge it upon their consciences as a duty, are not to be suffered as a commonwealth, any more than highway murderers, then judge how these Anabaptists, that teach the necessity of such dipping, are to be suffered." ("Baxter's Plain Scripture Proof," pg. 124)

JANUARY 1830, pg. 126-127 THE BIBLE

[A Letter to the Editor for the Episcopalian "Philadelphia Recorder"]: "Ah! sir, I am afraid of this rising disposition to make the word of man supersede the word of God. It looks too much like an attempt to substitute the priest for the Divinity. It is too near akin to that singular delusion (an honest one I

believe in my heart) which would prohibit the scriptures from going out in their mission of mercy unless a Prayer Book can go along to explain their meaning, and prevent them from leading the people into error....

"We look to ages past, and call them dark ages, when ministers of the gospel were projecting and manufacturing a hundred thousand laws and forms and ceremonies, for the promotion of christian piety among men. All the while these ministers themselves never thought of the Bible; or if they thought of it, they said it is too difficult for the common people to understand; or is not sufficient to direct and regulate the present age; or whatever they said, they must have thought that the cause of truth and piety requires some human aid and regulation not provided for in the bible; and so they went to work to supply the desideratum.

They made bad work of it undoubtedly; we all see that; and we cry, 'Why did not these ministers study the Bible themselves?' and 'Why did they not diffuse it among the people?' O! the reason is obvious; they actually thought that if the Bible were let loose in the world, it would turn the world upside down, and banish all rational piety. They have actually told us as much; and that we might more readily believe them, they have taken the trouble to have the matter decided in presbyteries, synods, and councils, in all the infallible dignity which human impotence can confer upon human folly.

"After all the pious pains of the ministry to keep the Bible from doing mischief in the church of god, it at last got out into the world, and began its tremendous operations. The people were soon as wise as their priests....And, sir, the boast which some of us are so fond of flourishing in the face of our Roman Catholic opposers, that 'the Bible and Bible only, is the religion of Protestants,' will never be appropriate until all our 'human Bibles' shall be thrown into the fire, or at least dislodged from that place in our churches and our schools, which can only be safely occupied by the simple, unadulterated oracles [word] of

God."

MARCH 1830, pg. 136-138 Campbell's conversion

You are pleased to commence with the good old catechism of the church of my grand father. I was taught the Westminster, 'Larger and Shorter;' but 'when I became a man, I put away childish things.'...The question is, 'At what instant of time do we enter this kingdom, or come under this reign of God, and by what means?' I say, the moment we vow allegiance to the King in the constituted way - the moment we are naturalized - the moment we are born of water and the Spirit - the moment we put on Christ - the instant we are converted, and not before....

From the age of sixteen I read devoutly, at intervals, the most 'evangelical' writers. I bought 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted' and 'Allen's Alarm,' that I might be converted, hearing them highly commended by the pious. Boston's 'Fourfold State,' Newton's, Bunyan's, and Hallyburton's 'Memoirs,' and all the converting books were sought after and read with avidity. The accompanying influences of the Holy Spirit were prayed for most ardently on these and other works, as well as on the holy scriptures. After I had hope that I was converted, and differed much from those mere moralists of whom you speak, who you called prayer and devotion, except in a stone house denominated a church, 'fanaticism.'

After I hoped that I had passed from death to life, I began to examine this subject, and with the aid of the great and 'evangelical Dr. John Owen.'....his 'Treatise on Independent Church Government;' and, above all, his work on the Holy Spirit, in two large [volumes]....For the space of one year I read upon this subject [faith] alone. Fuller, Bellamy, Hervey, Glass, Sandeman, Cudworth, Scott, McLean, Erskine...were not only read, but studied....

Although I was considered at the age of twenty-four a much more systematic preacher and text expositor than I am

now considered, and more accustomed to strew my sermons with scores of texts in proof of every point, I am conscious that I did not understand the New Testament - not a single book of it. Matthew Henry and Thomas Scott were my favorite commentators. I read the whole of Thomas Scott's commentary in family worship, section by section. I began to read the scriptures critically...the Greek article were resorted to. While these threw light on many passages, still the book as a whole, the religion of Jesus Christ as a whole, was hid from me....

But, alas! as I learned my Bible I lost my orthodoxy; and from being one of the most evangelical in the estimation of many, I became the most heretical. Experience has taught me that to get a victory over the world, over the love of fame, and to hold in perfect contempt human honor, adulation, and popularity, will do more to make the new testament intelligible, than all the commentators that ever wrote....

I differ not from you in the conclusion that the Holy Spirit begins, carries on, and consummates the salvation of men. But the question is whether independent of, accompanying, or simply BY the word of life?"

MARCH 1830, pg. 140 BAPTISM

(Letter to the Editor, signed "N" re. Baptism): "Many a gloomy and melancholy hour did I before spend, when my feelings alone were the grounds of my hope. Often it was suggested to my mind, 'Would not the Bible believed have the same effect on an individual if all that is there revealed were a fable;' and sometimes I have been almost driven to the position I once heard a pious divine taking that, 'if false or true, it was better to be on the safe side of the question.'"

APRIL 1830, pg. 146: BAPTISTS

"Carey County, Ky., November, 1829, PERSECUTION BY BAPTISTS]. "The Baptist church of Christ at Mount Vernon, holding the principles of the General Union, dismissed brother

C. H. Trabue, not in full fellowship, for his stating in his preaching that he believes the Old Testament law is fulfilled and of no more power over the sinner, and that both saints and sinners are now under no other law but the law of Christ - and also, without the liberty of the church, hearing of experiences, and baptizing in the bounds of a church." (William Payne, Clerk)

APRIL 1830, pg. 178-180 HOLY SPIRIT & PREDESTINATION

Where is the man now living, and where is the history of the man now dead, to whom God has specially revealed anything in the Oracles but by studying them. The students of systems have become learned in systems; and the students of the Bible, and none else, have become learned in the sacred writings. How many myriads of praying non-readers have prayed for light without finding it! How long did John Bunyan, Newton, cum multtis aliis, pray for light without finding it, before they betook themselves to the Oracles? How many now pray for the spirit to guide them into all truth? And since the apostles died, to whom has this prayer been answered?

Was Newton, Bunyan, Gill, Fuller, Wesley, Calvin, or Luther, or are the myriads of preachers now praying for the same favor, led into all truth?...The spirit, you will agree with me, teaches Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, etc., etc., alike. Why, then, do they all continue as they were?...

You say that the result of your inquiries was 'a firm belief that without the influence of God's Spirit directly on your heart, you could not be saved.'...But would not any other person, who sought with equal sincerity, have found all that you found? And if so, why do you ascribe it to a special grace in your particular case? The Lord promises the Holy spirit to every one who asks, desiring it, just as certain as natural parents give good things to their crying children....

What did you find that was not before written? Any new

promise, any special promise, any new light, which was not before as distinctly and as clearly proposed as God could propose it in human language? Had you not faith before you asked, and was not this faith a persuasion that God exists, and is the rewarder of all who diligently seek him? You could not have asked for anything which you did not before believe God had promised to bestow...

This I knew, for my experience was like yours in this particular. I desired to feel a special interest, and for this I prayed....

No one in the primitive age ever made such a prayer as you and I were taught to make; no one languished then for a day or a week to be born again. All were commanded to reform [repent], and instantly all who obeyed received forgiveness of sins. Our converts are sometimes agonizing before they are born again for months - for years. This destroys the figure, and it proves that a false philosophy has perverted us from the simplicity of the gospel....

The popular doctrine of the Calvinian school...an omnipotent act is necessary to produce faith in God....When I see a grain of corn, I am willing to say it is the act of omnipotents; but if any man ask me, 'Does God put forth an act of omnipotence in producing every grain of corn?' I answer No: He gave birth to a system that creates it."

MAY 1830, pg. 207-208 DENOMINATIONS

[Sermon by Mr. Howell based on Jude 5:3 preached in the church in Cumberland Street and published in the 'Religious Herald' - DENOMINATIONS & BIBLE] "The pride of numbers, and the arrogance of wealth and power, led them into the absurdity of setting themselves up as an authority to dictate to the world what they should and what they should not believe. Secessions from Popery have since claimed the same right; and at last, what originated in corruption and led missions into hypocrisy, has become fashionable in every

denomination. Now 'Creeds and Confessions of Faith' are almost as numerous as parties themselves. In the greater part of these instruments the most opposite and contradictory opinions are fearlessly asserted and perseveringly maintained....the partisans of each one of those systems defend it with the utmost zeal and pertinacity, as being beyond doubt 'the faith which was once delivered to the saints.'...

"They are as certainly false as they are contradictory. The Bible reveals but one system of truth....The amount of falsehood and human innovation which abounds in them generally, is equal to their difference one from another, added to the difference of the whole from the word of revelation. To contend then, my brethren, for 'Creeds and Confessions' is one thing; and to 'contend for the faith' of Jesus Christ as originally delivered is another; and but too often they are antipodes of each other.

"But the question is again asked, 'What do you conceive to be the faith referred to in the text?' We reply, the Bible contains it - the Bible 'without note or comment.' Not the bible as some take upon themselves to interpret it; for there are many professing to be ministers of Christ who wrap up the word in much critical acumen; so force the meaning even of its plainest passages, and so overwhelm its simplicity with distinctions and subdistinctions, with technicalities and spiritualities, that they make it speak almost anything else than 'the faith which was once delivered to the saints.'...

"Hence denomination after denomination arises, modeled to suit the depraved views of men, and the prejudices of the age, with little or no regard to the word of God....and the next thing we see are 'Creeds and Confessions of Faith.'...If an advocate for truth dare expose the absurdity or inconsistency of opinions thus originated, immediately as on another occasion, the cry resounds from every quarter, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' - Yes, this modern idol the foolish and ignorant are taught to believe certainly 'fell down from

Jupiter,'...But, my brethren, the secret of all this was exposed by Paul long since - 'By this craft they have their wealth.' But there is also another secret involved in the business, which we will expose in its proper place: Honor - fame - popular applause."

MAY 1830, pg. 209 CREEDS

(Letter to Editor from a REFORMING Methodist preacher against CREEDS): "Some, it may be, do not tolerate reform because it comes in competition with their prepossessions. Ignorance, however, is generally the mother of Prejudice. "Like priest, like people," is a very appropriate adage for these days of degeneracy.

"I do most ardently wish that you could accomplish a revolution in the creed-making world. The miserable flummery which now fills the confessions of faith, and poisons the spirits of millions in christendom, should be combated by all the weapons of truth....Whosoever walks by the New Testament standard has no need for the puny auxiliary of a human creed: whoso follows the dictates of a human creed cannot easily obey the mandates of the New Testament.

"There is as much craft (call it "priestcraft," or what you please) in the arrogant and unscriptural assumptions of creed-making power, as in the pretended infallibility of His Holiness in the chair of St. Peter [the Pope]. My soul loathes all such assumptions. Point christians to the New Testament, and ask for the proof from that holy book....The very circumstance that creed-mongers are always at war with each other, and that some of the most bloody civil wars have been generated by their conflicting speculations on scripture doctrines; and that they have produced as many different systems of orthodoxy as they have entertained opinions, renders their inspiration very suspicious....

"Who, that has ever read a church history, will say that creeds have not done infinitely more mischief than they have counteracted or prevented?....Let men be convinced that their

own works are imperfect, and they will be the more easily persuaded that the work of God is perfect, without their intermeddling to give it a finishing touch."

MAY 1830, pg. 214 BAPTIST

(From an article entitled "Historical Sketch" RE BAPTISTS): This denomination is distinguished from others by their opinions respecting the mode and subjects of baptism. They administer baptism only by immersion: and to none but adults. They claim an immediate descent from the Apostles, and assert that the constitution of their churches is derived immediately from Jesus Christ. Others affirm that they had their origin at a much later day, even as late as the 16th century. The following are the principal sects of Baptists:

(1) Particular Baptists of England and Wales; (2) General Baptists of England and Wales; (3) Mennonites of Holland and other countries; (4) Scotch or Weekly Communion Baptists; (5) Associated or Calvinistic Baptists of the U.S.; (6) Seventh Day Baptists; (7) Six Principle Baptists; (8) Mennonites of America; (9) Tunker Baptists; (10) Free Will Baptists; (11) Christian Society; (12) Emancipators; (13) Free Communion Baptists....totaling 392,427.

MAY 1830, pg. 226 BAPTISM

(From "London Paper," December 1829 RE BAPTISM)

"An extraordinary occurrence took place in St. Martin's church on Tuesday last. A very amiable young lady named Prossor, who was brought up a Dissenter from the Church of England, having attended for a considerable time at St. Martin's Church, under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Richards, was anxious to become a communicant with this church; but not having been christened, it was necessary she should previously undergo that ceremony.

"She, however, objected to the form of christening, viz, throwing or sprinkling water on the fact, as contrary to the

language of the gospel, as well as to the formula in the prayer book, the former of which says, speaking of adults who were baptized by the Apostle, "And they straightway went down into the water and were baptized," etc., and the latter, speaking of infants, saying, "And they shall warily dip them," etc.

"She therefore applied to Dr. Richards to be allowed at her christening that the ceremony might be performed according to what she conceived was the literal scriptural meaning of the words of the Apostle - by submersion. The Doctor, at first, said it was quite impossible, and attempted to convince the lady, by argument, that sprinkling was equally efficacious. The Doctor's argument only went to convince her that, if baptism were good for any thing at all, it was essential that the form adopted by the Saviour and the Apostles should be strictly adhered to.

"In this dilemma it was suggested that, upon an application being made to the Bishop of London, he might grant a dispensation to have the ceremony performed in the manner the lady desired it - by dipping. The application was made, and it was granted. Last Tuesday was appointed for the ceremony to take place; and about mid-day a large oblong wooden tub was placed close to the baptismal font in St. Martin's Church, and the lady made her appearance, suitably attired, with woolen under clothing. It was a bitter cold day, but the lady was nothing daunted, and the Doctor "warily dipped her" over head and ears, after reading the appropriate service....

"The only instance of baptism by immersion having taken place in one of our churches before, occurred at Leicester, and with the consent of the Bishop of the diocese."

JUNE 1830, pg. 276 CREEDS

(Letter to Editor signed "Philaethes" RE CREEDS)
"Dear Sir: It is very possible that there have been in use among the people called Christians for upwards of seventeen centuries

two instruments of religious instruction, very different in their origin....Of these one has been devised...and transmitted to his perishing creature man by an unerring and compassionate God...In it truth and nothing but truth, is to be found....untouched, unaltered, unmixed, uncorrupted by any debasing intermixture of human conjectures, fictions, and conceits.

"The other instrument is a human contrivance...who at a very early period embraced the religion of Christ and corrupted it. It consists generally of some portion, more or less, of revealed truth, mixed up in a huge mass of human fables, conjectures, opinions, and fancies. In this horrible jumble of divine and human conceptions....commentaries, expositions, paraphrases, economies, catechisms creeds, confessions....However little impregnated with divine truth, or however much crammed with human falsehood, nonsense, and reverie....almost universally preferred to that Word and Gospel...who greedily devour the pernicious fiction, and defend it with all the fury of an excited bigot."

JUNE 1830, pg. 281 TOBACCO

(Article entitled "Tobacco" from Philadelphia May 10, 1830) "Tobacco is, in fact, an absolute poison. A very moderate quantity introduced into the system - even applying the moistened leaves over the stomach - has been known very suddenly to extinguish life. The Indians of our own country were well aware of its poisonous effects, and were accustomed, it is said, on certain occasions, to dip the points of their arrows in an oil obtained from the leaves, which being inserted into the flesh, occasioned sickness and fainting, or even convulsions and death."