

Why I Am Not In A... Church of Christ

We turn our attention now to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, otherwise known as Mormons.

I. History

A. "Restoration Movement"

1. A movement that began during the Second Great Awakening (1790-1840) that sought to reform and unify Christianity
2. Major leaders were Barton Stone of Kentucky and Thomas and Alexander Campbell of Pennsylvania.
3. Divisions led to a split in 1906, when Stone's followers would become the Christian (Disciples of Christ) denomination while the Campbells' became the Church of Christ.

B. Alexander Campbell (1788-1866)

1. Immigrated to America from Scotland in 1809, following his minister father to Pennsylvania.
2. Published the *Christian Baptist* from 1823-1830, then *The Millennial Harbinger* from 1830 until his death.
3. You may see people from 100 years ago call the Church of Christ "Campbellites".

II. Close Isn't Good Enough

- A. So far we have dealt with groups (Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons) that hold drastically different doctrines than what the Bible plainly teaches.
- B. With the Church of Christ, we can find some areas of common ground or concern that is admirable, such as:
 1. Desire to return to a simpler Christianity based on the Bible
 2. Autonomous, congregational rule of churches
- C. BUT there are a few areas of major concern that separate the Baptists from the Church of Christ that cannot be ignored.

III. Sampler of Beliefs

A. Salvation requires baptism

1. "In the act of baptism remission of sins or pardon is received." - Foy Wallace, Jr.
2. "God saved us by means of baptism. Baptism is a bath of regeneration and renewing, in both of which the Holy Spirit is the actor. That is why God could use baptism as such a means (*dia*), why baptism is by no means a mere symbol or picture but a true means of divine grace ... To reject baptism is to confess the absence of regeneration" (R.C.H. Lenski, St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, pp. 935,936).
3. The misinterpret certain verses (Acts 2:38, John 3:5, Mark 16:16, I Peter 3:21, Acts 22:16)
4. The minimize other verses (John 3:16, Acts 16:31, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9-10, Titus 3:5)

B. Church governed by plurality of elders

5. "Congregations referring to themselves as Churches of Christ believe that local congregations should be led by a plurality of biblically qualified elders, assisted by deacons, often with an appointed minister in each congregation." (Wikipedia article on Elder)
6. This type of church government is called presbyterian.

7. I Timothy 3:1-13
- C. A Capella singing
 8. "One prominent feature of music in churches of Christ is that it is unaccompanied by mechanical instruments" - housetohouse.com, "Why Do Churches of Christ Not Use Instrumental Music?"
 9. This is based on a logical exercise that says since the Bible doesn't say use instruments in church worship then we shouldn't.
 10. Psalm 92:1-4, and many others
- D. Postmillennialism
 11. "However, we noticed that the idea of a literal thousand year reign of Christ, along with the concept of a Rapture, are simply not taught in the Bible. These theories have arisen through the misapplication of figurative passages of Scripture. Revelation 20 has been misused by many to teach the idea of a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth." - <http://truthfortheworld.org/second-coming-of-christ-part-2>
 12. Um, all of Revelation, and I Thessalonians 4:16-17
- E. "One True Church" syndrome
 13. too lengthy to copy here - <http://truthfortheworld.org/only-one-is-the-true-church-of-christ>
 14. This idea is based on a false notion of a need for a "pure" and "holy" church to exist. We are men who are imperfect, and not perfect church exists. Besides, the church does not save, it is Christ who saves! My faith is not based on a human organization, even if it was ordained of God.
 15. I Corinthians 1:11-13