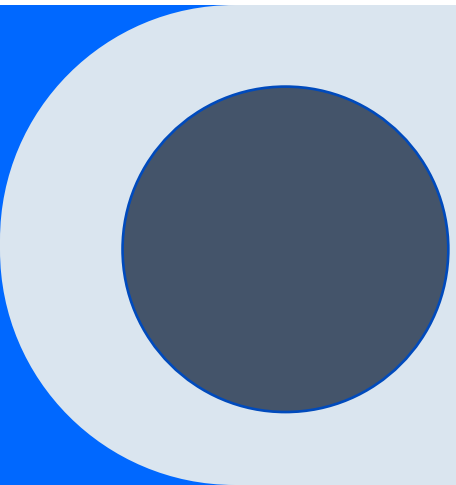
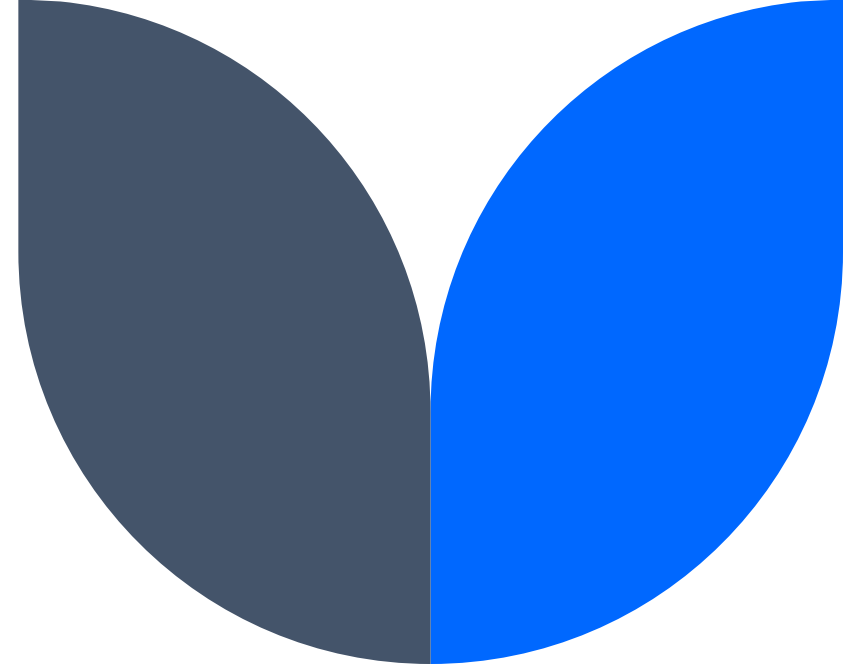




# Seeking Undenominational Christianity

Tom Rucker – Hardin Valley Church



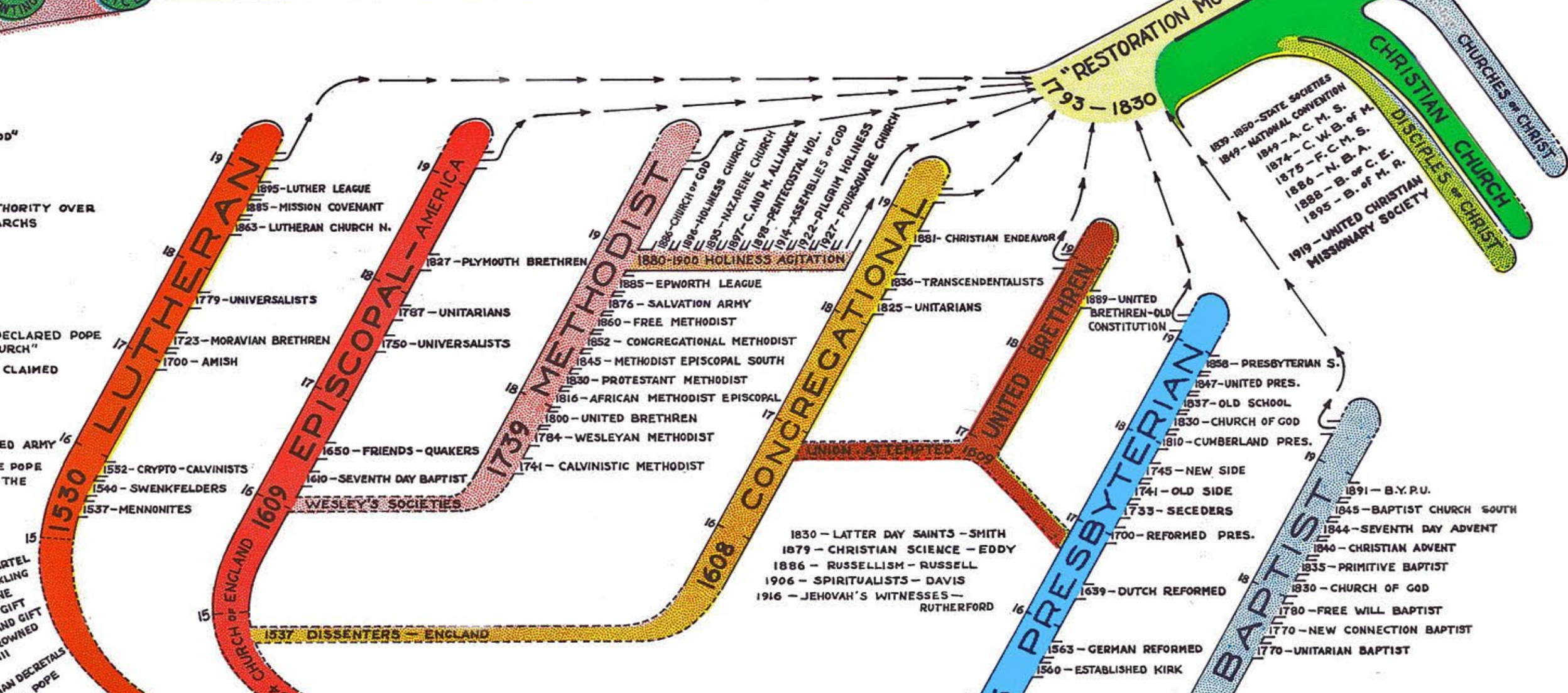


# Seeking Undenominational Christianity

The Restoration Movement



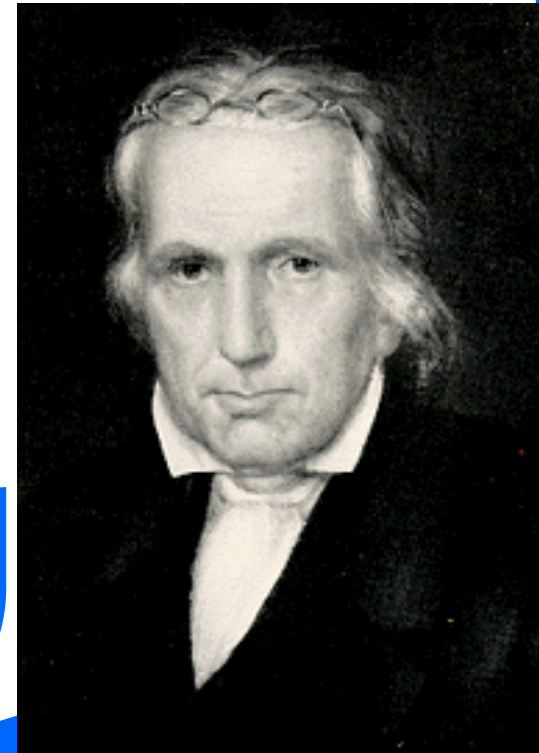
# APOSTASY FROM IT AND RETURN TO IT - HISTORICALLY TRACED



IMMUNIT

# The Declaration and Address

- Thomas Campbell never intended the principles of the *Declaration and Address* to be the basis of a new religious group.
- Instead, it was a call to unity among Christians of all denominations.
  - “The cause that we advocate is not our own peculiar cause, nor the cause of any party, considered as such; it is a common cause, the cause of Christ and our brethren of all denominations.”



## John 17:20-23

<sup>20</sup> “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may all be **one**, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be **one** even as we are **one**, <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly **one**, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

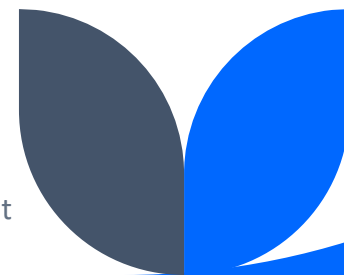
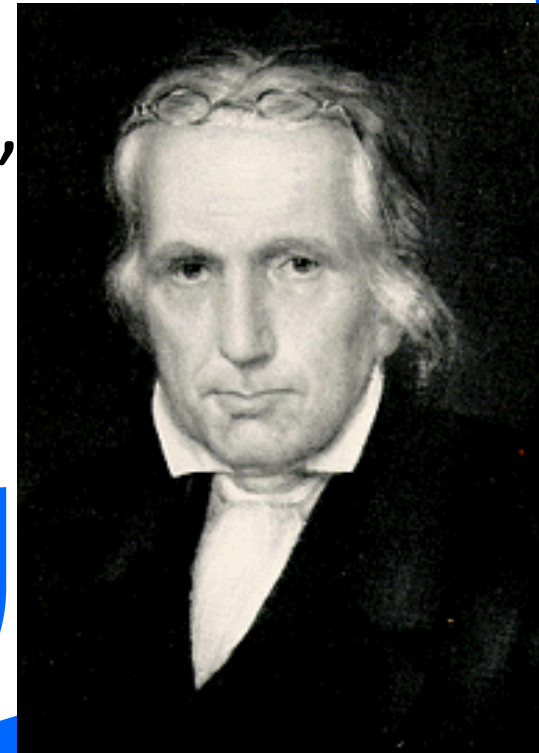
# Discussion

- Are all Christians one?
  - In what sense?
- Are Christians divided?
  - In what sense?
- Do we as a people pray for the unity of the church?
  - If not, what are some concrete ways we can encourage such praying?
- How often do we preach and teach on Christian unity?
  - If not often, why?



# The Declaration and Address

- This intent not to form a new religious group got much harder.
- On 4 May 1811, the Christian Association reconstituted itself as a congregationally governed church.
- With the building it constructed at Brush Run, Pennsylvania, it became known as Brush Run Church.



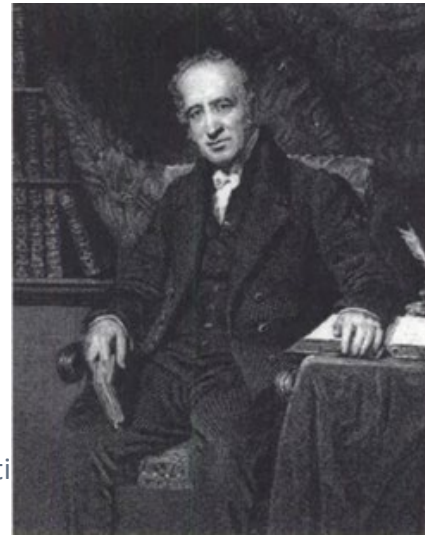
# Discussion

- How is having an undenominational unity in a Bible Study Group different than an undenominational unity in a church?
- What questions must be answered?
  - How will they worship?
  - Who will lead?
  - Who can be part of the church?
  - What does the church believe and teach?
  - What name will they use for themselves?
- Would it have been better not to start a church?



# Alexander Campbell in Scotland

- In 1808 Thomas' family, including his oldest son, Alexander (1788-1866) boarded a ship in Ireland to join him in America.
- Storms shipwrecked them off the coast of Scotland
- This allowed Alexander to attend the university in Glasgow for about a year.
- He became friends with Greville Ewing and others who had broken from the Church of Scotland and formed independent churches.



# Alexander Campbell in Scotland

- Ewing associated with James and Robert Haldane, who were influenced by John Glas and Robert Sandeman.
- All wished to unify Christians and return to the practices of the New Testament Church. Although they did not agree on every detail, these practices included:
  - Local church leadership by elders
  - Weekly Lord's Supper observance
  - Love feasts with foot-washing & the holy kiss
  - Believers Baptism by immersion
  - Opposition to ministerial titles
  - Separation of Church and State



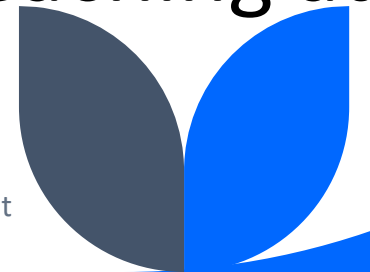
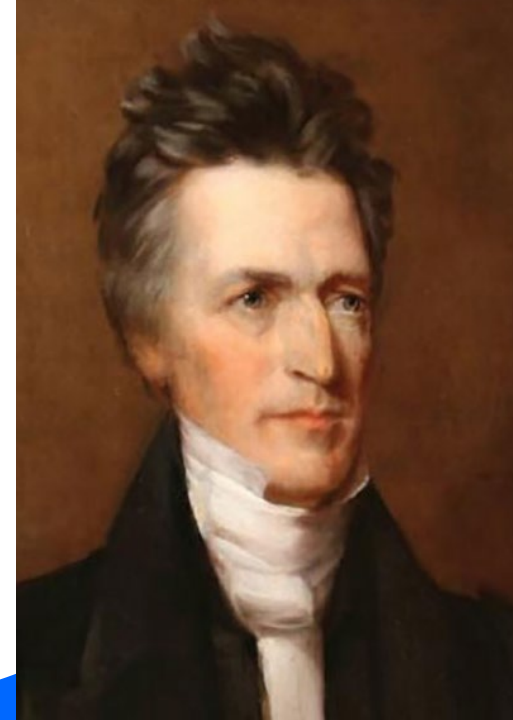
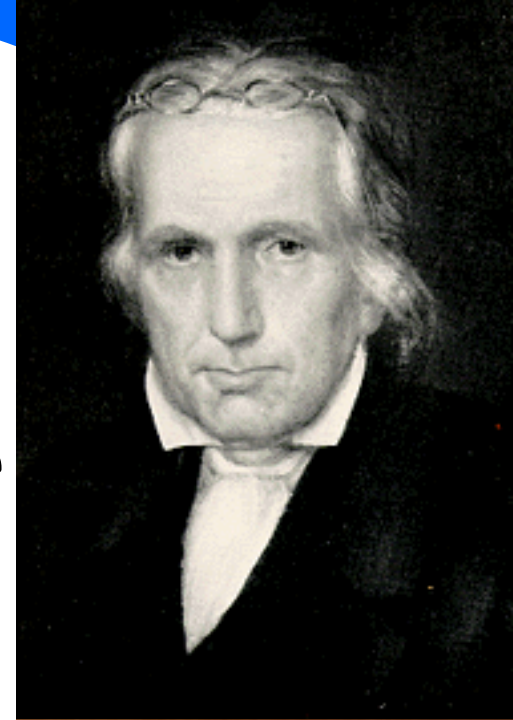
# Alexander Campbell in Scotland

- While in Scotland, Alexander never joined any of the independent churches, but became increasingly dissatisfied by the narrowness of the Seceder Presbyterians.
- As a last act before sailing to America in 1809, he quietly began to refuse to commune with the Seceder Church.



# Father and Son Reunion

- After sailing to America, the family were reunited in Western Pennsylvania.
- Thomas and Alexander both told of their separate difficulties with the Seceder Presbyterian Church.
- Alexander read the Declaration and Address and pledged to dedicate life to promoting its principles.
- Alexander began to study for the ministry under his father and both did their share of preaching at the Brush Run Church in 1811.



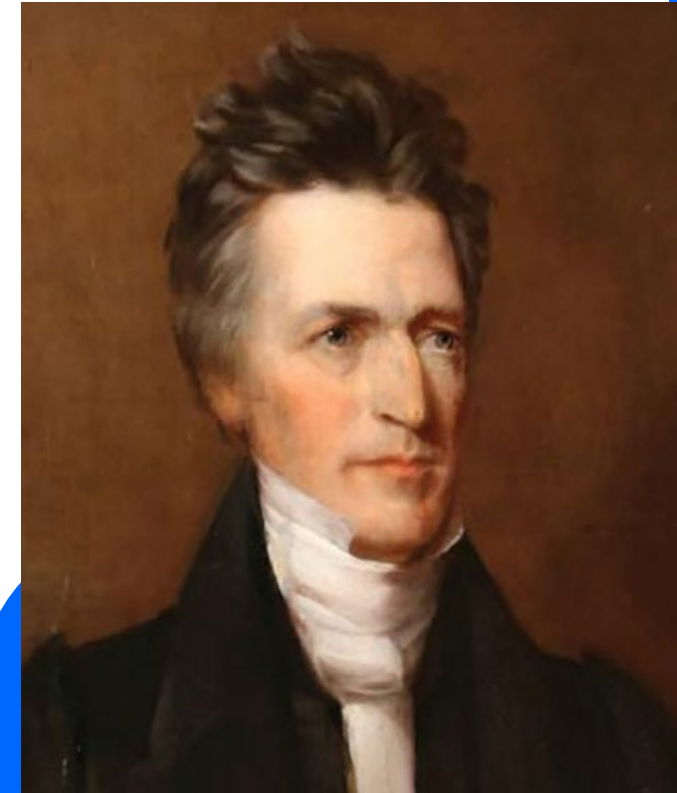
# Alexander Campbell on the Western Frontier

- Also in 1811, Alexander married Margret Brown, a daughter of a farmer lived just over the border, in what later became Bethany, WV.
- They lived on her father's farm until it was deeded to them and then until his death.
- In 1812 they had their first child, Jane.
- This not only was a time of joy, but led to a theological crisis.



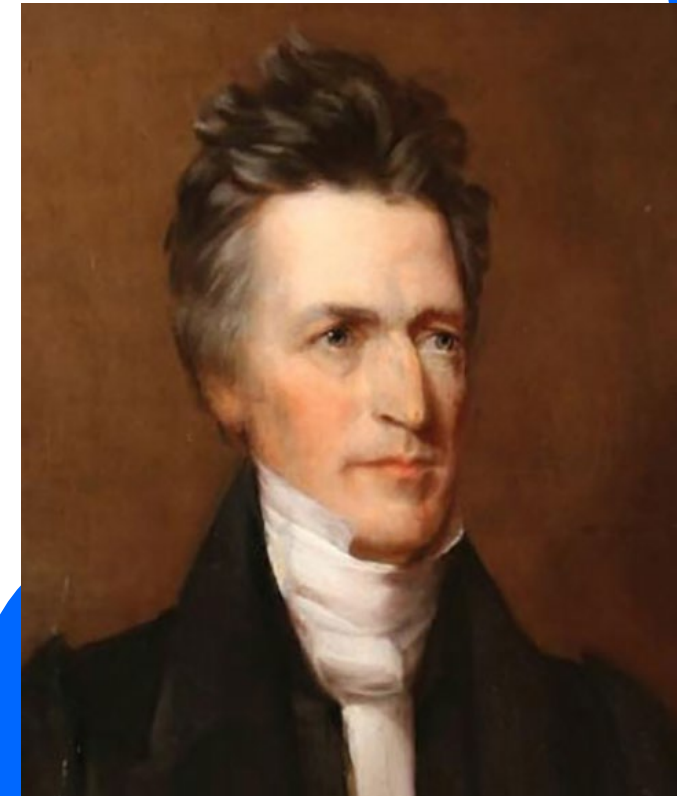
# A Theological Crisis – Immersion of Believers

- Some in the Brush Run Church had questioned the validity of their infant baptism and were immersed.
- After months of study on the questions ‘should baptize his infant daughter?’ ‘should he be baptized?’ he concluded biblical baptism was immersion of believers.
- In June 1812, a Baptist minister baptized Alexander and Thomas, their wives, and three others from the Brush Run Church.



# Results of the Practice of Immersion of Believers

- Soon most of the members of the Brush Run Church were baptized as believers.
- This practice further separated them from their Presbyterian roots, but brought them closer to the Baptists one frontier.
- After much discussion, the Brush Run Church joined the Redstone Baptist Association in 1815.
- For 15 years, the Campbells were reformers among the Baptists.

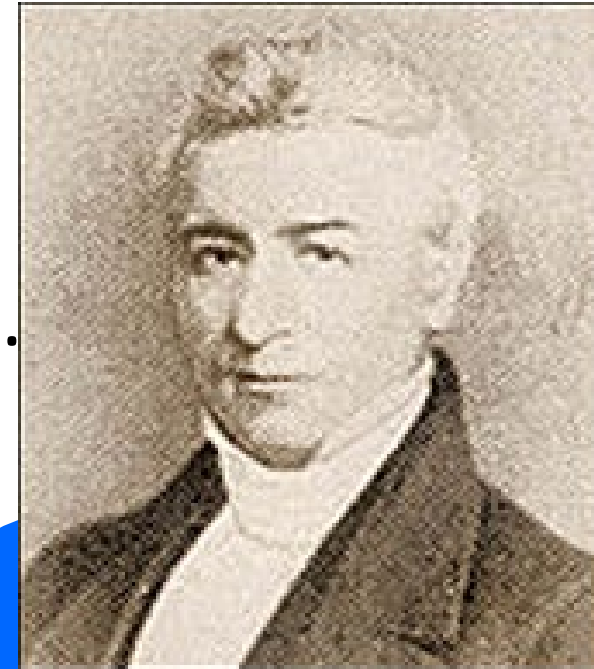


# Discussion

- Was the joining of the Redstone Baptist Association and abandonment of the Campbells goal to unite all Christians?
- How could they call for Christian unity when they belonged to a particular denomination?
- The Campbells, especially Thomas, felt any visible unity was a step toward ultimate unity of Christians. It was better to be part of a Baptist association than to be solely an individual congregation. What do you think about that?

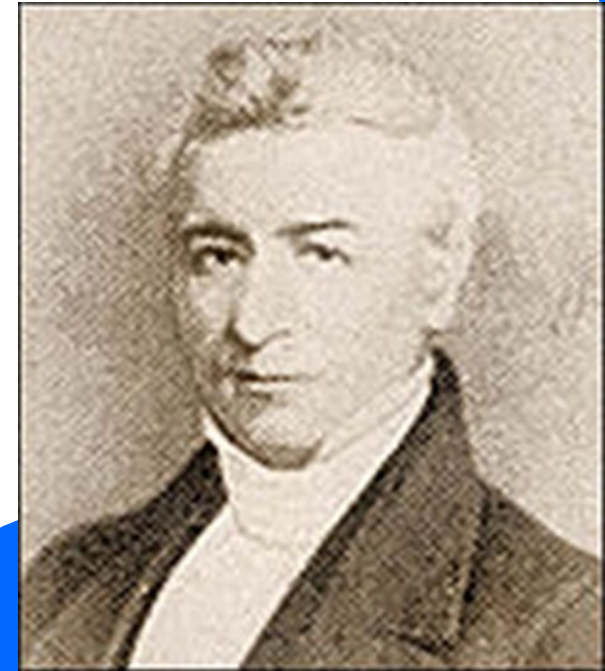
# Reformers Among Baptists

- Soon the Campbells followers planted new congregations
- Alexander Campbell became influential through his work as an educator, publisher, and debater.
  - From 1818-1823 he educated young men for ministry in his home.
  - In 1823 he began publishing a monthly periodical the *Christian Baptist*. (The tone was iconoclastic.)
  - The Baptists encouraged him to defend believers immersion in debate, which he did in 1820 & 1823. These, especially in printed form were widely influential.



# Difficulties Among Baptists

- As early as 1816, Alexander offended Baptist leaders with Sermon on the Law, arguing the Law was not authoritative for determining beliefs and actions of the church.
- Strong opposition led Campbell to transfer his membership to the Mahoning Baptist Association.
- The Mahoning Association grew due to the influences of Walter Scott, causing jealousy.
- Other Baptists Associations turned against him because of his increasing understanding that baptism is the place where God forgives sins.





# Thank you

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