

25-1026sc Transcript

25-1026sc - *History of the Restoration Movement, Scott Reynolds*

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25-1026 - History of the Restoration Movement

Transcript (0:04 - 41:40), Teacher: Scott Reynolds

(0:04) Okay, it's time to get started. Steve's preaching today in Toledo Road, but that's why I'm here, (0:14) to cover for Steve. Okay, when trying to think of what I wanted to do for class, (0:23) I didn't want to do any of the series that I'm preaching, so I went through my, (0:32) looking through my book.

I had one on the story of the restoration by Bill Humble. (0:41) Let's begin with a prayer. Holy Father, thank you for this time we can come together and study, (0:48) and we pray that you bless our efforts, give us wisdom, help us to understand our history, (0:55) your history, that the unfolding of your plan, and from the time of Christ to present day also, (1:07) and we pray, Father, that you'll bless our efforts to see where we fit in, (1:12) and help us to be your people, and learn then to conform more closely to Jesus.

(1:22) Be with us in Jesus' name we pray, amen. So, I don't know about you, but I grew up in the church. (1:34) I didn't get baptized until my early 20s.

I'm 23, I believe, and in all my years (1:43) growing up in the church, listening to all the preachers, we've had some extraordinary (1:50) preachers, guest preachers come in. So, in all that time, it wasn't until I went to Tri-C (1:59) and took a class on Western Civilization that I heard anything at all about Campbellites. (2:09) I go, what? And we went through Western history and religion.

Christianity plays a huge role (2:18) in the Western Civilization. It tremendously influenced the culture, and you had, (2:30) as we'll see, which I want to go over, the history to our time. But you had all this influence, (2:43) and in this class we got up to the Reformation, and the professor ended with the Reformation and (2:50) said, there is another movement that took place, and it's actually rather interesting, (2:59) but if there's nobody here, if there are any Campbellites here, you know, (3:05) does anybody want to continue? I had no idea what a Campbellite was, so I didn't say, yeah, (3:11) let's do it.

But they didn't know what it was. It's the Restoration Movement, by the way. (3:18) Alexander and Thomas Campbell were highly influential, so much so that the Stone and (3:26) Campbell Movement is how it's referenced.

So we didn't do it, and that's a shame because (3:35) you've probably heard, I've heard in the Brotherhood that we're a first century church, (3:42) and we're the church that was there in

Jerusalem, and that's just not so. (3:48) The Churches of Christ, as we know them today, was not the church in Jerusalem. (3:55) There's a lot of history that takes place, and there's a reason why there is a restoration of (4:03) the first century church today, and we are a restoration of that church.

But that church (4:12) didn't have a direct line from Jerusalem through history all the way to the Churches of Christ. (4:17) That's not how it worked. And if we don't understand that, then what we believe is just (4:24) broken, and we're believing a tradition, and you don't want to be in the position (4:32) of basing your religious beliefs on tradition, unless it's the Apostle tradition in the New (4:41) Testament Bible.

That's the tradition we're to follow. So that said, history is important, (4:51) and in Bill Hackett's The Truth Project, his number six, I believe, tour was history, (5:01) and they're wondering, what's history got to do with your worldview? And he started out by saying, (5:10) God commands us to remember his deeds in Isaiah 46, verses 9 through 11, and this is in your notes (5:17) on the first page, I believe, isn't it? Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there (5:25) is no other. I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning.

He tells (5:34) how things, he declares how things will go from the beginning to the end, or end to the beginning, (5:40) as he said. And from ancient times, things that have not yet done, so things from the past, he's (5:52) told the things that haven't occurred yet, and indeed, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to (6:00) pass. So God wants us to know history, and there's other passages I didn't put in our notes about (6:09) that.

The Israelites coming out of Egypt, they pass through the departed Dead Sea, and they pick (6:21) up, they're told, once they get to the other side, God tells Moses to tell the leaders of the 12 (6:29) tribes, pick 12 men, go back out into the sea, that's still dry land, and pick up 12 stones, and (6:43) then bring them to the land there, and pile them up, and when your descendants say, what are these (6:53) stones, then relate the story of them coming out of Egypt, so they were memorial stones. And then (7:02) Del came up with this interesting idea in his presentation of history, and he was warning about (7:12) revisionism, when you change history, when you revise the past. He warns, here too, we come face (7:25) to face with yet another manifestation of the cosmic battle, and the cosmic battle between truth (7:31) and lies.

So man resists the idea of a sovereign God, he wants, man wants to be, wants to control his (7:43) own destiny, live inside his own little story, and free himself from all connections with, or references (7:50) to, an all-inclusive divine plan. Thus he devises ways to propagate the pernicious lie of self (8:00) determination, which self-determination, Del's calling a pernicious lie, a really dangerous and (8:12) destructive lie. I am my own God, or I believe in myself.

By taking the larger story of history into (8:22) his own hands, and turning it into a powerful tool for the manipulation of other people, and the (8:29) accomplishment of his own selfish purposes, so historical revisionism, or the agenda-driven (8:37) rewriting of history, operates on the basis of the premise, if I can change your historical context, (8:47) I can change what you believe about the past, then I can determine the way you view the present. (8:56) And that's what we see going on in our culture today, a revising of the past. (9:07) And it's really popular in politics, so if you can think of the revisionism that takes place, it's (9:19) all over the place.

And then, to sum that up, point number two there, what you believe in the (9:25) present is based upon what you believe about the past. So it's difficult to change someone's mind (9:32) today. You

have to come up with points and arguments, and they won't necessarily believe (9:39) what you're saying.

But if you can change what they believe about the past, then they base their (9:48) future on what they believe on the past. And that's why history is important. We need to know (9:56) the truth about the past.

So, going through church history from the first century, and the reason why (10:06) we're going through this is the churches of Christ today did not come about all by itself. (10:16) Some things happened in the past that caused people to look for a different way of viewing (10:28) the scriptures. So, history of the church.

In the first century, you have the origins, and this is (10:34) in the scripture, Jesus' life, teachings, death, and resurrection. He lived approximately, or (10:41) around circa 4 B.C. to 30 A.D., which is what the Chosen is using, so that time span also, (10:51) and 30 A.D. That would put him around 33, 34 years old at the time of his death. That's a third (11:00) of a century.

And more specifically, it's real close to being the first third of the first century. (11:08) That caught my attention. I did use Grot to help me with the notes, but this is my idea.

(11:17) The first third. Jesus lived the first third of the first century, and his influence on the world (11:25) was a result of him being alive for a third of a century. Okay.

His followers, initially Jewish, (11:35) believed he was the Messiah and the Son of God, that we know, and we know a lot about the Gospels, (11:41) and we know a lot about the New Testament, so I really didn't go into that. And after his (11:46) crucifixion and resurrection, the apostles, particularly Peter and Paul, spread his (11:52) teachings. And that's the Acts.

You have Peter in the first part of Acts. You have Paul primarily (12:00) in the second part of Acts. Extrabiblical sources place Peter and Paul's death, outside the Bible, (12:09) doesn't tell us, but their death occurred around the same time, extrabiblically, we (12:18) get that information, after the great fire of Rome in A.D. 64.

So Peter and Paul's death, (12:29) I'm sorry, Peter and Paul's direct influence covers approximately the second third (12:37) of the first century. That goes on to the 90s, by the way, A.D. 90s. (12:44) But Peter and Paul's influence are about the second, the major influences in the second half (12:50) of the first century.

The first Jewish-Roman War, also known as the Great Jewish Revolt, began (13:04) in A.D. 66. Peter and Paul were dead when the revolt against Rome started. (13:15) If you remember, when Jesus is on trial, Caiaphas, the high priest, says that he had a prophecy from (13:28) God, and the prophecy was that one should die so that Israel might live.

So, and he interpreted (13:39) that to be that Jesus has to die, or what they were afraid of is that he would start a revolt (13:48) against Rome, and the Romans would squash it. Because at the time, they're the power. (13:56) They control all of Europe, around the Middle East, and Northern Africa.

So they have a lot, (14:06) they're very powerful, and he's afraid that the high priest, that if Jesus, if they believe he's (14:13) the king, the Messiah, the son of David, who is rightful heir to the throne and would be the king (14:24) of the Jews, that he would start a revolt against Rome, and they didn't

see him as being able to (14:33) defeat Rome. So the very, the very thing that Caiaphas was worried about didn't happen (14:46) with Christ. It was another 30 years, and it did happen.

The Jews did revolt against the Romans, (14:57) and history shows us that what Caiaphas was afraid of occurred. The Romans came in (15:04) after initially allowing it to happen for a little bit, and they got bloodied by the Jews, (15:14) and then they came in, and they totally destroyed Israel. In AD 70, four years after it started, (15:22) they obliterated the temple.

And so Jesus' prophecy that no two stones would be on top (15:35) of each other in the temple when it was destroyed came about, and the general specifically knew (15:43) about the prophecy and specifically did that, made sure that no two stones were in the temple. (15:54) General Titus was in charge of that campaign anyway. So that starts in AD 66.

So the (16:06) end, the destruction of Israel and Jerusalem begins the third, the third third of the first (16:15) century. Who knew? And this is what intrigued me. Who knew you could break down the history (16:22) of the first century in thirds? The first third is Jesus' influence, the second third is Peter (16:29) and Paul, and the third third is Roman dominance over and destruction of Israel.

To the point, (16:38) by the way, that destruction, they are no longer a nation at that point, not until 1948. So 1900 (16:49) years later, they become a nation again. So that was rather destructive.

Okay. (16:57) The second century, the fourth century, what you have, and we're looking at the church here, (17:03) growth and institutionalization. You have persecutions and martyrdom.

(17:10) The Christians face intermittent, if not continuous, intermittent persecutions under (17:18) Nero, AD 64. He's the one that burnt Rome down and it was under him that they believe Peter and (17:29) Paul were executed. And it's not until Emperor Constantine's edict of Milan in AD 313, 313, (17:43) in the year 313, legalized Christianity.

So from the beginning in the first century, (17:53) from Christ and the beginning of the church on Pentecost to 313 before Christianity becomes a (18:02) legal religion. That's longer than the United States has been a nation. We aren't 300 years (18:12) old yet as a country.

So the time the church took to become with minimal fear of persecution (18:26) is 313 was longer than the U.S. has been a nation to put it in perspective. (18:33) Doctrinal developments, early church fathers like Ignatius, Justin Martyr, (18:43) Irenaeus, defended Christianity orthodoxy against heresies like Gnosticism and the Nicene Creed (18:54) and AD 325 affirmed that the Trinity, there's a God in three persons, and Jesus divinity against (19:07) Arianism, which is not like the Arian nation. I had Brock clarify that for me.

You're not talking (19:15) about the Arian nation of today. The similarities only that they sound the same, (19:23) that they're not spelled the same either. But anyway, and I got notes on that, but that's not (19:30) the, that's outside our purview.

So the organization, the church developed a hierarchical structure (19:41) with bishops, priests, and deacons in Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople. (19:54) If that would have been bishops, evangelists, and deacons, it would be the hierarchy of (20:03) the biblical church. We do have elders, and we do have deacons, and we do have evangelists.

(20:14) But this is moving towards what they call a clergy, a profession, well, (20:21) I was a

professional too, but anyway. So, and the Christianization of the empire occurs in AD (20:36) 380, when Emperor Theodosius I declared Christianity the official religion of the Roman (20:47) empire. And if you've ever read Homer Halley's handbook, it said the worst thing that happened (20:54) to the church was that Rome made it the official religion.

That's what that meant was, (21:02) in practice, was if you were going to work as an officer of the Roman government, (21:12) then you had to be a Christian. So people were becoming Christians, not based on faith, (21:21) but to satisfy a job requirement, which means they weren't Christians, and they had no (21:29) interest in being Christians. But now you have a huge influx and influence of non-Christians (21:39) and probably authorities in Christianity too, since they're the state, and the state bears (21:49) the sword.

The state is the sphere of power in society. So that really wasn't a good thing that (22:01) happened. And if, well, then we move on from the 2nd to 4th to the 5th through the 15th (22:12) centuries, the rise of Catholicism.

The church being, (22:22) Christianity becoming the official religion was a stepping stone towards Catholicism. (22:29) Because the Catholicism inherited the hierarchy of the Roman government (22:40) and all the different things that they have. So Rome, that little bit of yeast worked its way (22:52) through and did a lot of damage.

But the 15th century is a thousand years. (23:06) So you have the rise of Christianity for over a thousand years. And they split into two, (23:16) because the empire splits in two, from the Western empire and the Eastern empire.

(23:24) And the Western empire falls in AD 476. The barbarians come in and take over. (23:35) And the church in the West, centered in Rome, grew under the papacy, under the bishop of Rome, (23:42) and to the point of having the papacy, a pope.

And the Eastern church, (23:47) based in Constantinople, also called the Byzantine Orthodox Church, (23:55) and the two diverged in theology and liturgy, the way they do their services, (24:02) and the authorities, culminating in a schism where they split in 1054 into Roman Catholicism (24:11) and Eastern Orthodoxy. And you see that here. You see all the religions here in the U.S. (24:21) You don't see that necessarily, didn't see that in Europe, which we'll get to when we talk about (24:31) 16th century.

So, under Catholic dominance in the West, the pope became a central spiritual (24:41) and temporal authority. So he wasn't just the church leader, he was also a leader in politics. (24:58) And with figures like Gregory the Great, from 590 to 604, strengthening the papal influence.

(25:08) Monastic orders, Benedictines and Franciscans, are created to preserve, learn, and spread (25:16) Christianity. And the church spread, shaped, rather medieval European culture, politics, (25:24) and education, with cathedrals, universities, and scholasticism. And (25:30) Thomas Aquinas, if you know about him, he was big in that part.

I have a note here, (25:39) I think it's in your notes, that says the Eastern Roman Empire, also known as the Byzantine Empire, (25:46) also fell. The Western and the Eastern Empires, the West falls in 476 or so. (26:03) Yeah, 476, and the Eastern falls in 1453.

That's 977 years after the Western Empire fell. (26:21) So for another almost thousand years, the

Eastern Empire is alive and functioning. (26:30) The Turks take over, the Muslims, and the Eastern falls.

It falls in 1453, that's (26:44) 23 years short of a thousand years, and it's only 39 years before, they fall 39 years before (26:55) Christopher Columbus discovers America. They're within the awareness of Americans, (27:14) since Columbus is about the beginning of our awareness as a nation here in the Western (27:24) hemisphere. Okay, so I thought that was mind-boggling.

In the 16th century, (27:34) the Protestant Reformation occurs. You have, and as we'll see, let me do that. By the late (27:45) Middle Ages, with satisfaction with Catholic practices, the indulgences where you can pay (27:53) for somebody who's already died and give the church some money, they'll have a better time of (27:59) it in the afterlife.

Simony, that's where you can get a permanent paid position somewhere in the (28:17) clergy. And so they would pay to get a paid position somewhere. And then papal authority (28:27) of the Pope fueled the reform movement, and humanism and the Renaissance encouraged critical (28:33) thinking and the access to scriptures via the printing press.

It's 16 centuries before the (28:43) printing press. Prior to this, scriptures had to be written by hand, which you can imagine is a (28:53) lengthy process. Not everybody was literate.

Not everybody could write. Paper and the time and the (29:04) materials were expensive. So to have even a portion of the scriptures was a huge cost.

(29:17) And if you don't have access, first-hand access to the word, then you're relying on somebody else (29:24) telling you what the scriptures say. So those first 16 centuries are pretty tough (29:33) for the common person. How do you know? You don't even have access to, even if you knew how to read (29:44) and write, you'd have to copy some, if you could get close to it, to do that, because they were (29:51) expensive.

Then key figures in the 16th century, Martin Luther, 1517, that German monk, Luther (30:01) nailed his 95 theses to a Wittenberg church, a city in Germany, criticizing indulgence and (30:20) asserting salvation by faith alone. Here's where you get that idea. Why do you think he came up (30:26) with that? All these criticizing indulgences, well, all it takes is a little money to change (30:35) the outcome of someone's life.

And so he asserted, no, it's not based on Paul's teaching, where Paul (30:48) criticizes works and favors faith. You cannot be saved without faith, and that's just planks. (31:00) But he makes it, he adds something, that we are saved by faith, but nowhere in the scriptures (31:11) does it say we're saved by faith alone.

And the only place in the scriptures that even has those (31:18) two words together, faith and alone, is in James, where he specifically says we are not saved by (31:29) faith alone. So that's pretty hard to overcome there. Anyway, number two, John Calvin in the (31:43) 1530s.

The first third of the 16th century has Martin Luther and now John Calvin in Geneva, (31:53) Switzerland, and Calvin developed Reformed theology, emphasizing predestination and church (31:59) governance by elders. This is also after the printing press, so the scriptures become available. (32:06) That's the first thing that was printed.

And anyway, influencing Presbyterianism and other (32:15) denominations. And that's the beginning of Calvinism, what we know as Calvinism. Henry VIII (32:23) in 1534 in England broke with the church in Rome over his divorce, establishing the Anglican church (32:33) in England under royal control instead of people control.

So the Anglican church still has a head, (32:44) it's just not the Pope, it's the king. The king or queen, Queen Elizabeth, was the head of the (32:51) Anglican church, as is King Charles. So not much changed from Catholicism to the Anglican church, (32:59) other than who controls it.

And they don't have priests, they have vicars, and their guys are able (33:07) to marry, but the priests aren't. So you have people becoming influenced by the scriptures, (33:13) seeing that the current church, the Roman Catholic church, doesn't match what they read (33:21) in the scriptures. So over 15 centuries, the church had gone from Jesus to a church that (33:32) doesn't match the scriptures.

They've moved pretty far away from what was there, to the point that (33:43) now in the 16th century, people start taking action. They are becoming knowledgeable because (33:50) now the scriptures are available. You still had to have money because it was still expensive at (34:00) the time, but it was a lot cheaper.

But it's more readily available, the word, which is the truth, (34:09) to allow people to see that, hey, you know, what's going on in Rome just isn't (34:17) what the scriptures talk about. So you have this change taking place, and they want to change the (34:27) church, and that's where the Reformation movement came from. So the Catholic church, there was a (34:34) counter-Reformation, so they didn't go quietly.

They're the ones that said, you know, you're not (34:43) allowed to read the scriptures. You have to go to one of us to tell you what the scriptures say. (34:49) So they're trying to undo the printing press there, instead of allowing people to have the truth, (34:56) and then forcibly also.

So with the Reformation, Western Christianity is fractured, (35:04) creating the Protestant denominations, like the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anglicans for three. (35:10) Religious wars occur, the 30 years wars in 1618 to 1648, so you have a lot of turmoil (35:20) when the Reformation starts. This change hurts.

That brings us to then the 19th century, (35:30) so it's going to be another, from the 16th to the 19th, another 300 years (35:36) from the beginning of the Reformation to the point where in the United States, (35:43) the Restoration occurred only in the United States. It occurred here first. It didn't occur in Europe.

(35:53) The Reformation occurred in Europe. Then with what you have taking place in (36:01) America is you have all the dissatisfied religious people in Europe coming to the new world, (36:11) and so in the new world, you have all the different denominations, and they were denominations. They (36:22) were Protestant denominations that were in Europe.

However, you have them all together here (36:30) in Europe. The Germans had Lutherans, and the Swiss had Calvinites, and England had Anglicans, (36:41) so that's what took place in Europe. If there was a difference in religion, you had conflict, (36:49) and America, what happened was they all came over here to get away from the conflict, (36:55) so you have the different denominations here, and at the time, Catholicism isn't a denomination.

(37:03) It's the church apostasy, and you have off of that the Protestant Reformation, (37:12) and at the time of America's founding, that's all there was, Catholicism and the Protestant (37:20) Reformation, so we are the result of the melting of all the different influences that were in (37:31) Europe and America, and so you have this exchange of ideas going on, and that's what brings about (37:44) the Restoration Movement, and in 1790 to 1840 in the United States, there's the Second Great (37:53) Awakening, and that got me to thinking, wow, if there's a second great which spawned (38:00) the Restoration Movement, the Second Great Awakening, I'm thinking, wow, what was the (38:07) First Great Awakening? The First Great Awakening occurred during revolutionary times in the 1700s, (38:17) but at the time again, all you have are denominations, so the broader context is you (38:24) have Catholicism remains the largest Christian denomination with a global presence. It's the (38:30) largest. It still is.

Catholicism is the biggest. Centralized authority in the Vatican and focus on (38:38) tradition, sacraments, and papal leadership. Protestantism encompasses diverse denominations (38:45) like the Lutherans, Reformed, Baptists, Methodists, emphasizing scripture, faith, (38:54) and varied governance structures, so they have their own structures, (38:59) and the Restoration Movement, while smaller, reflects ongoing efforts to return to biblical (39:05) roots influencing modern evangelical and non-denominational movements.

(39:12) Okay, and that brings us up to the end of class. Is there any questions? (39:18) Okay. We are the result of the influence of the scriptures over now 19, now 20 centuries, (39:31) and it took over a thousand years to apostatize, and it's 500 years since struggling to get back (39:44) to what the scriptures say, and we're still struggling, but that there's movement in this (39:51) direction should give us faith in the Word.

It's the Word that is causing what's happening to (39:57) take place. When the Word wasn't readily available, it apostatized. Now that it's back, (40:04) there's change taking place, and whatever you want to think of the Protestants, they were necessary.

(40:10) We wouldn't exist. The Restoration Movement would not exist if it wasn't for those who (40:19) first attempted to reform an apostate church, so we need to consider that when we look at our (40:28) religious neighbors, and we need to know our roots, to know why we believe what we believe, and why (40:36) it's necessary to go back to the first century and see what the source says. Okay, we'll leave (40:44) it there.

I hope it was informational and that you got something out of it, and maybe even the (40:50) desire to research it more. It's so easy anymore today to look things up and research than it used (41:00) to be, but you can get an understanding of where what's happened, and history is important. (41:08) We're a restoration of the church that was in Jerusalem, and that's what we're striving to be.

(41:13) So let's close with prayer. Holy Father, we pray that you help us learn more about you, (41:22) learn more how we can please you, let us be fruitful, and do the things that you have (41:31) created for us to do before time even began. Help us to be your people.

In Jesus' name we pray it. Amen.