

**Singing the Cleansing Flow: Baptism in the Hymnody of Churches of Christ and Baptist Churches in the Twentieth Century**

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## **Singing the Cleansing Flow: Baptism in the Hymnody of Churches of Christ and Baptist Churches in the Twentieth Century**

Every Sunday, across the globe, churches, chapels, schools, rented rooms, warehouses, and buildings of every kind are filled with people who come together to worship God. When they gather, they join their voices together in praise, as written in Revelation four, of the “one who was, who is, and who is to come.” What a strange practice to onlookers this must be. The church comes together and sings. Why might they do this? Yes, scripture commands it throughout the pages of the Old and New Testaments, throughout the Psalms, and the writings of Paul. Yes, the Bible offers examples of God’s people coming together to sing. Still, there’s another reason. What is that? The practice of their singing forms what they believe—they want to be formed spiritually by the words they sing together. Moreover, because they believe, they sing. And the power of singing in community makes the music, the hymns, the texts sung in worship by the gathered people of God even more powerful to form and transform those who come together to sing them.

Another way of saying this would be to recall one’s childhood church experience. Through the singing of one’s youth and preschool years, there would be memories of the children’s song, “Jesus Loves Me.” Though these lyrics are seemingly simple, they have engendered in countless generations of believers a love for Christ and a belief in his unfailing love. That is to say, before children can read or write, they have learned in their hearts and minds

that Christ loves them and they can believe and trust it because “the Bible tells me so.”<sup>1</sup> They learned to believe by singing these simple words.

This paper will take a look into how the hymns and songs of worship forms what a group of people believe and practice about a core theological belief, namely baptism. This paper will compare the major hymnals in Southern Baptist churches and Churches of Christ from the latter portion of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Through these lenses, this study will observe hymns about baptism. This research will also examine what these findings show with regard to each group’s belief about baptism. One will see that for such an important topic, not only is the list of baptismal titles short, but that these denominations who value the practice so much sing about it even less.

### **Baptism in Two Contexts: A Brief History**

For this study, it is important to have an historical background on these two groups’ beliefs about baptism. These two communions share some common history that is important for this study, especially given the great volume of compositions about the subject of baptism found in the early years of the Restoration Movement.

#### **Baptist Baptism**

First, a bit of background about Baptist baptism is important. Given this group’s denominational moniker is “Baptist,” one can assume that this group would heavily claim their

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<sup>1</sup> “Jesus Loves Me.” [https://hymnary.org/text/jesus\\_loves\\_me\\_this\\_i\\_know\\_for\\_the\\_bible](https://hymnary.org/text/jesus_loves_me_this_i_know_for_the_bible), Accessed November 18, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Forrest M. McCann, “The Hymns and Hymnals of the Restoration Movement,” (Abilene: *Restoration Quarterly*, 1976), 26.

identity in terms of what they believe about baptism. Of course, one can make statements about their theology using broad, negative strokes to say “Baptists do not baptize babies” or “Baptists do not use fonts, sprinkle, or pour over.” But what is there to be said positively about what Baptists believe with regard to baptism? B.H. Carroll, in his *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, asserts a six-point theory using a passage that is also important in Churches of Christ: Acts 2:38.<sup>3</sup> Coming out of this passage that, Carroll offers that:

(1) The plan of salvation by grace has ever been, is now, and will ever be, just one plan in its essential requirements of man. (2) These requirements are all spiritual. (3) They are the new birth, repentance toward God, and faith toward (in) the Messiah. (4) The great model of the faith which brings salvation is the faith of Abraham, prior to his subjection to any external ordinance. (5) Salvation before ordinances. (6) Blood before the laver...<sup>4</sup>

Carroll is clear about the place of baptism as a culminating act in this process and about the act of baptism being something undertaken after the receiving of salvation and that would bind the person being baptized into the fellowship of a Baptist church. Salvation and baptism, Carroll says, are not mutually explicit, and leaves room for one to read his theory here saying baptism is not necessary for salvation. Carroll would expand his thoughts and use Alexander Campbell as the perfect exposition of “the opposite theory” to dichotomize his position against baptismal regeneration or baptismal remission.<sup>5</sup> The remainder of Carroll’s paper targets Campbellites and seeks to discredit the Campbell’s theory, especially in light of numerous textual situations where individuals come to salvation without baptism by immersion. At the very least, one can identify this practice of baptism by immersion as core to both groups.

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), location 166.

<sup>4</sup> B.H. Carroll, *An Interpretation of the English Bible: Acts 2:38*. (Nashville: Broadman, 1913), 79. 1913.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 83.

Tom Elliff, a former senior vice president for church relations with the International Mission Board, wrote more recently on the subject of Baptist baptism and a Baptist theology of baptism. Elliff is writing in 2006, almost 100 years removed from Carroll's work, *The Interpretation of the English Bible* in 1913, and he contends that Southern Baptists are still "not as clear on the subject as we think." He posits that a new examination is in order.<sup>6</sup> Elliff discusses the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as being the only ordinances by way of New Testament example. He is quick to offer the difference between ordinance and sacrament as well. He submits these are "outward expressions of an inward reality."<sup>7</sup> He goes on to offer five conditions that identify a properly administered Baptist baptism:

Using scripture as a guide, we find that the ordinance of baptism is properly observed when five issues are satisfactorily addressed: **(1) The proper candidate.** This would be someone who has already experienced the grace of God unto salvation and now desires to make that a matter of open confession (See Acts 8:36-38; 10:47-48). **(2) The proper mode.** This is clearly immersion. The word itself is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*, which means to immerse or plunge into. This is the manner in which Christ was baptized (Matthew 3:16). It was the manner of the disciples' baptism (John 3:22-23). In fact, the picture of death, burial, and resurrection demands immersion (Romans 6:4). **(3) The proper understanding.** Baptism is a picture of our total identification with Christ in His atoning work and glorious resurrection. It is an expression of our belief that salvation is His work and, like His resurrected life, complete and eternal in nature. It does not affect or secure our salvation. **(4) The proper authority. . .** **(5) The proper life.** Baptism is to be observed by individuals who portray an appreciation of grace and a

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<sup>6</sup> Tom Elliff, "Understanding Baptism," (Nashville: *SBC LIFE: Journal of the SBC*, 2006), 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 2

<sup>8</sup> "The ordinance of baptism is a public expression; it preaches a message. The message is one consistent with the beliefs of the church authorizing the baptism. Thus, in the understanding of church authority that unfolds for us in the New Testament, Peter could ask of the representatives of the Jerusalem church who apparently accompanied him to the house of Cornelius the Centurion, "Why should these not be baptized seeing they have received the Spirit as did we on the day of Pentecost?" (Acts 10:47-48). If a local church does not feel that a candidate's beliefs are in concert with its own, it should resolve that issue before granting participation. It is obvious in the Scripture that, in addition to the profession of the candidate, there is an obligation on the part of the church. Otherwise Paul was overstepping his bounds in his instructions to the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 11)."

willingness to adhere to the Scriptures. When the eunuch asked Philip if he could be baptized, Philip responded by clarifying the eunuch's confession of faith (Acts 8:36-37).<sup>9</sup>

Carroll, Elliff, and many in between argue how baptism, or “believer’s baptism,” has been a unique identifier of Baptists, even going so far as to call it their singular distinguishing mark. To one degree or another, it seems that nearly all Baptists would agree on the importance of a believer seeing, and his or her church practicing this critical rite of passage. A survey of the pertinent literature reveals that Baptist do not, generally speaking, adhere to the belief that Baptism in itself conveys or delivers salvation or transformation in any way, but, rather, that it is a demonstration of what has happened in one’s life, heart, and mind in a spiritual sense for a new believer. It is a way in which an individual can profess his or her faith in Christ. It is also God’s gift, not only to the individual, but a gift to the Church. For in community, the church can agree together for the believer’s profession and collectively give thanks to God on the individual’s behalf. Baptist believers share this practice in common with one another, strengthening the bonds of Christian fellowship and the seal of the promises of God which brings them together as a congregation.<sup>10</sup> It is safe to say, with these things ever-present in the writing, history, and the theology of Baptist churches, and denominational organizations and conventions, that Baptists place a high priority on the baptism of the believer in the life of the church. But what will a survey of hymnody among Baptists reveal?

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> William H. Brackney, “Doing Baptism Baptist Style: Believer’s Baptism,” (Nashville: *The Center for Baptist Studies’ Baptist Style for a New Century*, 2001) No. 1 of 9.

## Churches of Christ and Baptismal Theology

Restoration Movement churches, founded by and initially led by Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone, have also historically held baptism in great esteem. While its practice of individual congregational autonomy and a lack of formal, denominational, organizational structure have precluded the Churches of Christ from achieving a total denominational uniformity, history affirms several crucial beliefs held by its congregants about baptism. Dr. Douglas Foster, noted historical scholar, and Restoration Movement Scholar-in-Residence at Abilene Christian University synthesizes these beliefs by saying Churches of Christ have historically contended:

(1) that scriptural baptism consists of the immersion of penitent believers and (2) that this act is the culmination of a process of salvation begun with faith in Jesus Christ and followed by faithful service to him in the setting of a congregation of fellow believers—the church. (3) With those prior understandings we could affirm, if we were creedal people, the words of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, “We believe in one baptism for the remission of sin.”<sup>11</sup>

To consider the overall beliefs and theology of this movement of Christians often called “Campbellites,” there are a couple of important delineations to be made. The first of these lines is drawn around those who were leaders in the early, evolving, and more formative years of the movement, such as Campbell, Stone, Walter Scott and others who did not see their group as a denomination in the sense that Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and others did in these early days. In another group are those from more recent years who only know of Churches of Christ as just one of a long line of American denominations. This later understanding knows the Churches

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<sup>11</sup> Douglas Foster, “Churches of Christ and Baptism: An Historical and Theological Overview.” (Abilene: *Restoration Quarterly*, 2001) 79.

of Christ as “only *a cappella*.”<sup>12</sup> The split that occurred in 1906 alongside the United States Census of that same year helped to more clearly separate these three groups that were originally one unified movement. The census recorded three distinct groups: Churches of Christ (*a cappella*), Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, and Christian Church/Church of Christ, as three distinct and different communions. With these lines of demarcation now implied, one can explore the baptismal theology and beliefs of the Restoration Movement, primarily those in Churches of Christ (*a cappella*).

Three groups of ideas sit at the core of the baptismal theology of each branch from the Churches of Christ/Campbellite group, particularly in the early, more formative years of the movement. First, it is universally agreed upon that a scriptural baptism is a baptism that is practiced by immersion.<sup>13</sup> Many even agree regarding connecting passages of Paul from Romans chapter six and First Corinthians fifteen to support this contention. Second, it is accepted that the act of baptism is where God forgives the sins of the repentant believer. Next, it is unanimously believed that baptism’s role in the salvation process is absolutely critical, if not necessary.<sup>14</sup>

Among the Restoration Movement churches, especially in the time of Stone and Campbell, three significant differences in opinion and interpretation are worthy of notice. As Foster puts it, these are “whether knowledge of the design of baptism (remission of sins) is necessary for its validity, whether the pious unimmersed (at least some of them) will be saved,

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<sup>12</sup> Carl Royster, “Churches of Christ in the U.S. : 2017,” (Nashville: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian, 2017), iii.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunnivant, D. Newell Williams, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone Campbell Movement*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 61.

and whether the pious unimmersed may be admitted to membership in the churches, or, open versus closed membership.”<sup>15</sup> With these contested items in mind, Campbell, the Baptists, and their common roots are again worthy of further consideration.

#### Campbell, Relationships with Baptists, and Baptism Going Forward to Today

Campbell was associated with the Baptists in northern Virginia in his early years as a Restoration Movement leader. The relationship was tenuous, to say the least, but as his own personal theology of baptism evolved over some twenty years, he eventually left or was removed from the Baptist fellowship to formally introduce a new group of nondenominational Christians whose primary desire was to “speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible was silent.”<sup>16</sup> “In 1811, the Christian Association of Washington (PA) became the Brush Run Church with Thomas Campbell as an elder and Alexander Campbell as preacher. Upon the birth of Alexander’s daughter, Jane, the church adopted immersion as its form of baptism after extensive study on the subject.”<sup>17</sup> Because of this practice, the Redstone Baptist Association allowed the Brush Run Church to be a part of its association in 1815. Between 1815 and 1843, Campbell would write voluminously on the subject of baptism as an outlet to the churches that followed his leadership to share his evolving theology. Significant events in 1824, 1842, and 1843 would lead to the dissolution of all relationships with Baptists and churches practicing what Campbell taught, not only about baptism but about the Lord’s Supper as well. One writer, in speaking of

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 86-87.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* (Indianapolis: Religious Book Service, 1), 235-238.

<sup>17</sup> Foster, Ibid, 88.

the wedge now driven between these groups gaining ground on the religious frontier, jokingly was quoted as saying, “Baptists affirm there is ‘power in the blood’ while the Campbellite affirm there is ‘power in the tub,’ and that their view of baptismal efficacy was assumed to imply salvation by works.” Campbell’s group, those who would become known as Churches of Christ, who emphasized baptism as a critical step for salvation and Baptist churches who “jealously guarded the *sola fide* character of salvation and asserted that we submit to baptism because we have been saved” will forever be separated.<sup>18</sup> In the years to follow, J. W. Graves, a leader among Baptists, particularly those in the Baptist Restoration movement known as Landmarkism, would be outspoken against this “alien immersion” preached and taught by Campbell and his followers. He wrote his *Alexander Campbell and Campbellism Exposed* in 1854 and had numerous written debates with Campbell and others on the subject. Others like Jeremiah Jeter in his *Campbellism Exposed* of 1855 followed suit.<sup>19</sup> Over the next 100 years, Baptists, Churches of Christ, and Disciples of Christ congregations would make several attempts at unity. Between 1941 and 1955, American Baptists and Disciples of Christ even co-produced a hymnal together. But after 1950, those desires and discussions appear to have ended. Small gatherings across the country have continued sporadically between small groups, colleges, dialogues, and other lesser discussions since these formal talks of the 1950’s ceased.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Stanley K. Fowler, “Baptists and Churches of Christ in Search of a Common Theology of Baptism” (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2007), 2.

<sup>19</sup> Foster, 70.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

## Baptism in the Hymnody of Two Denominations

These two denominations, though different in their worship practice, have a few hymnological commonalities that anyone might expect from North American congregations. But with contrasting beliefs and practice with regard to baptism Lord's Supper, a varying soteriology, and different eschatological beliefs, there is little uniform similarity across the hymnody of these groups other than pockets of coincidental hymns and songs. For each group, this study will employ a hymnal of the early to mid-twentieth century as a baseline for comparison moving forward to present day. For Churches of Christ, this hymnal will be E. L. Jorgenson's *Great Songs of the Church, Number Two* of 1937. For Baptist churches, this will be the 1940 *Broadman Hymnal*.<sup>21</sup> While there is much to be evaluated as far as these hymns and gospel songs are concerned, this study will be limited to those titles deemed by each hymnal as appropriated under a subject, section, topic, or index concerned with baptism.<sup>22</sup> When considering the subject of baptism, it is also helpful to know some semblance of an idea regarding what titles, texts, and songs are or have been available for those who have compiled these hymnals from which to choose. A cursory search of [hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org), using search filters for the time period of publication of 1937 going forward, hymnals of North American origin, and parameters that limit the titles to songs in English as the primary language, yields some 1,065

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<sup>21</sup> Harry Eskew, "Southern Baptist Contributions to Hymnody," *Baptist History and Heritage* 19, no. 1 (January 1984): 30.

<sup>22</sup> There is an additional study to be done concerning those songs that have secondary or tertiary references to Baptism or to water altogether. Those are beyond the scope of this particular study, though the author would like to follow up with such a study, individually or collaboratively.

titles.<sup>23</sup> Recognizing this number of titles, and using these two hymnals as the bookends of this timeline, the following hymnals from each group will be considered:

### Figure 1

#### Churches of Christ

1. *Great Songs of the Church, Number Two* (Jorgenson, 1937)
2. *Sacred Selections* (Crum, 1958)
3. *Songs of the Church* (Howard, 1971)
4. *Hymns for Worship-Revised* (Stevens, 1995)
5. *Praise for the Lord* (Wiegand, 1992, 1997)
6. *Songs of Faith and Praise* (Howard, 1994)
7. *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* (Sumphonia, 2012)

#### Baptist Churches

1. *The Broadman Hymnal* (McKinney, 1940)
2. *The Baptist Hymnal* (Sims, 1956)
3. *Baptist Hymnal* (Reynolds, 1975)
4. *The Baptist Hymnal* (1991)
5. *Baptist Hymnal/Worship Hymnal* (Harland, Lifeway, 2008)
6. *Celebrating Grace* (McAfee and Simons, 2010)

Utilizing these items to form a composite list of hymns and titles, and with these hymnal dates forming our bookends, the attention of this research turns to the hymns themselves.

#### Churches of Christ and their Contributions to Baptismal Hymnody

Churches of Christ have remained remarkably insulated with regard to their contributions to mainstream hymnody. Over almost 200 years, they have offered very little contribution to broader hymnody as a whole. But for one or two hymns and gospel songs, very few of the hymns written by the composers who have written a large portion of the corpus of the hymnody of Church of Christ members have been included in hymnals outside of Churches of Christ. That is

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<sup>23</sup> Hymnary.Org, accessed November 2, 2017.

not to say that they should or should not be included, but simply that they have not. However, it is impossible to properly frame this conversation without first considering Campbell's own contribution.

In addition to his work as a preacher, writer, speaker, debater, and movement leader, Alexander Campbell was himself the father of Restoration movement hymnody. Between 1828 and 1865, Campbell published fifty editions of significant hymnals.<sup>24</sup> These hymnals were considered the denominational hymnal of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ/Church of Christ, which, at this point, was still a unified denominational group led by Campbell and Stone.<sup>25</sup> This book was titled *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. "Alexander Campbell gave the copyrights to his *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs* to the American Christian Missionary Society in 1864. The society published editions of this work every year for fourteen years (1865—1878). All have the same number of songs. Campbell published his last edition in 1865, the same year that the Society published its first edition,"<sup>26</sup> under the title of *Christian Hymn Book*.

Campbell's books began with a strong theological statement about baptism. Listed throughout these hymnals are subsections not only for the broader subject of baptism but also for John's baptism and Christ's baptism. The baptism sections contain no less than some twenty-two titles, depending on the particular edition and printing. Three other titles, included in the section on evangelism and missionary songs, are directly about the subject of baptism in at least one

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<sup>24</sup> Enos Dowling, *The Hymnbooks of Alexander Campbell*, (Lincoln, IL: Lincoln Christian College Library, 1983), 1-4.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p4-5.

stanza. In total, Campbell's hymnals contain at fewest, eight or nine, and at most, a total of forty songs about the subject of baptism. Listing every title about the subject of baptism in a Campbell hymnal from 1828—1844 yields some forty-nine different titles. He placed a very high value on baptism's role in the salvation of Christ-followers. Though his position seemed to evolve, perhaps in the same pattern seen in the steady increase of titles on the subject throughout his hymnals as the years progressed, baptism by immersion for the forgiveness of sin was of great significance to Campbell, and thus to the movements that followed his leading.

No hymnal since these from Campbell contains near the volume of titles on the subject of baptism.<sup>27</sup> None of the hymns he or his immediate contemporaries composed have made their way into modern hymnals. Only one or two texts and tunes combined remained in use or even in publication at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Why? Is their theology too explicit? Is it the strength of the language with which they wrote about what they so vehemently believed and contended for in the movement's early days? Did popularity drive the day? Was the rise of the mainstream hymnal and popular hymnody a factor in the driving out of these rich theological texts about items so core to the beliefs of Campbellite believers? For whatever reason or reasons, none of these texts about baptism have been sung by Churches of Christ since prior to the turn of the twentieth century. This is certainly an issue worthy of redeeming.

Starting with Jorgenson's hymnal and continuing forward through the most recent hymnal from Churches of Christ, Sumphonia's *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, there is an aggregate list comprising thirty-four baptismal songs and hymns. Of this catalog, there is only

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<sup>27</sup> The author endeavors to continue this study looking at secondary references of baptism as well as hymns and gospel songs using references to "water," "immersion," "river," or other poetic imagery.

one hymn that is unanimously included in each of the Church of Christ hymnals that is also universally categorized as being about baptism. Moreover, it is a hymn that is distinctively written by a Church of Christ author. This hymn will be considered shortly. While there was only title to be found in all of the books, only two titles were found to be in six of the seven books. Neither of these two titles are unique to Restoration hymnody. In fact, one of them is also found in almost all of the Baptist hymnals considered for this study as well. This would be Sammis' "Trust and Obey."<sup>28</sup> The other hymn found in six of the seven books' sections about baptism is Louisa Stead and William J. Kirkpatrick's "Tis so Sweet to Trust in Jesus."<sup>29</sup> Two hymns found in five of the seven hymnbooks are "O Happy Day," attributed to Phillip Doddridge and Edward Rimbault and "Take My Life and Let It Be," with tunes by both Mozart and McIntosh. Each of these two hymns also make appearances in this study's list of Baptist hymnals on the subject of Baptism. One of several hymns that finds its way into four of these hymnals is Thomas Chisholm and Charles Gabriel's "Only in Thee." Chisolm's text is dually significant because his name will also appear on that hymn that is found in all seven hymnals. Alongside "All to Jesus, I Surrender," "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," and "Only in Thee," is one other title, Stebbins and Sleeper's "Ye Must Be Born Again." Three hymns appear twice, and a staggering twenty titles appear in one of the hymnals. Four of these titles are written by Restoration Movement figures. One is written by a modern song writer from Churches of Christ, Ken Young's "Wake Up, O Sleeper" is found in Howard's 1994 *Songs of Faith and Praise*.<sup>30</sup> And finally, in the 1992 *Praise*

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<sup>28</sup> Hymnary.Org, Accessed October 30, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Alton Howard, *Songs of Faith and Praise* (West Monroe, LA: Howard Books, 1994), 931.

*for the Lord* edited by John P. Wiegand, for the first time in over a century, a text attributed to Alexander Campbell has returned: “Upon the Banks of Jordan Stood.”<sup>31</sup> The musical setting of this Campbell text is unique as well, being written by Max Wheeler, a Church of Christ singing school teacher, itinerant song leader throughout Texas in the 1980’s, who was associated with the Preston Road Church of Christ in Dallas for over thirty years. His tune, however, was not written until the late 1980’s shortly before the first edition of Wiegand’s book went to press.<sup>32</sup>

#### Lloyd Otis Sanderson’s “A New Creature”

It has already been mentioned that from the hymn writers in Churches of Christ, little has been offered to mainline hymnody. There are a few individuals, such as Albert E. Brumley, Will L. Thompson, E. O. Excell, the Fillmore Brothers, and Knowles Shaw among others whose songs have been disseminated and some more widely accepted. Perhaps one of the best composers from this movement who wrote hymns worthy of sharing with the mainstream of hymnody but who never achieved such an accolade was Lloyd Otis Sanderson (L. O.), 1901-1992. Sanderson’s hymn, “A New Creature” is the only hymn written by a twentieth-century Restoration Movement composer on the subject of Baptism that has endured to present day. Sanderson did the majority of his musical teaching work in singing schools across the mid and southwestern part of the United States, and in service of *Gospel Advocate* magazine as its music

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<sup>31</sup> John P. Wiegand, *Praise for the Lord* (Nashville, TN: Praise Press, 1992), 692.

<sup>32</sup> Those hymns that only have one instance are: “Arise, My Soul, Arise,” “Awake, O Sleeper,” “Beautiful,” “Bring Christ Your Broken Life,” “Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine,” “He Touched Me,” “His Grace Reaches Me,” “I Love You, My Jesus,” “Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken,” “Jesus, Our Lord and King,” “Live For Jesus,” “Love Lifted Me,” “Nothing But the Blood,” “Something Beautiful,” “Take My Life, O Father Mold It,” “There Is A Fountain,” “Thou Your Sins Be A Scarlet,” “Upon the Banks of Jordan Stood,” “Wake Up, O Sleeper,” “We Give Thee But Thine Own,” and “Whiter Than Snow.”

editor and staff composer. He composed hundreds of songs and texts as well. But there are two that rise to the top of the list of his output which are most widely accepted and still known and sung in Church of Christ congregations today. The first of those is his “Be With Me, Lord,” which he co-wrote with Thomas Chisholm, a well-known and beloved composer and lyricist of broader hymnody in 1934. The other, also a co-write with Chisholm, is a song dealing explicitly with baptism entitled “A New Creature,” sometimes titled or subtitled, “Buried with Christ.” Its lyrics read:

Buried with Christ, my blessed Redeemer,  
 Dead to the old life of folly and sin;  
 Satan may call, the world may entreat me,  
 There is no voice that answers within.

Think it not strange that things I once cherished  
 Cannot allure me or charm as before;  
 For in the flesh with Christ I have suffered,  
 Old things are passed, I love them no more.

Dead unto sin, alive through the Spirit,  
 Risen with Him from the gloom of the grave,  
 All things are new, and I am rejoicing,  
 In His great love, His power to save.

Sin hath no more its cruel dominion,  
 Walking in "newness of life," I am free--  
 Glorious life of Christ, my Redeemer,  
 Which He so richly shareth with me.

Refrain:  
 Dead to the world, to voices that call me,  
 Living anew, obedient but free;  
 Dead to the joys that once did enthrall me--  
 Yet 'tis not I, Christ liveth in me.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> L. O. Sanderson, “A New Creature,” *Christian Hymns* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate, 1935), 253.

The language of Christian baptism permeates this wonderful hymn. Language from Jesus as well as the apostle Paul and other writers throughout the New Testament is clear in this very formative and educational text from Sanderson and Chisholm. One might be interested to know that the third verse listed here has only appeared once in hymnals of the Churches of Christ. This verse was only printed once in the very first edition of its publication in 1935, in a book that Sanderson edited for *Gospel Advocate, Christian Hymns*.<sup>34</sup>

### Baptist Contributions to Baptismal Hymnody

Broadly speaking, in comparison with Churches of Christ, Baptist churches seem to have yielded considerably more hymn writers, hymnologists, hymns, and gospel songs to mainstream hymnody. However, if these hymnals tell a story concerning songs about baptism, Baptists appear to have not contributed anything to broader hymnody on the subject. In examining the content of these six Baptist hymnals, one can see a number of interesting idiosyncrasies. The hymnals together yield some twenty-seven different titles topically categorized under a section, subsection, or topical index subject of baptism. One unique difference found in the categorization found in the Baptist hymnals is the location of Baptism within a subsection of the church. This would not be found in a hymnal belonging to Churches of Christ as church membership are not linked.

Beginning with the *Broadman Hymnal* in 1940, and considering *Baptist Hymnals* from 1956, 1975, 1991, 2008 and the *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* from 2010, there is a composite list of some thirty-one different titles on the subject, or in a section about baptism. In two instances,

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

baptism is listed as a subsection of “Church” or “The Church.” In two other instances, in the topical index specifically, underneath the subtitle of “baptism” the reader is instructed to “See obedience” in another section of the index.

Considering these six hymnals, one can see that the book with the most individual titles listed underneath a heading, topic, or section dealing with baptism, is the *Baptism Hymnal* of 1956. It contains thirteen titles in all. A close second, *The Broadman Hymnal* of 1940 contains twelve titles in all. Of the books considered, the 2008 *Baptist Hymnal/Lifeway Hymnal* only offers two selections.

The most common hymn on the subject of baptism among Baptist hymnals is “Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine.” This text, composed by Isaac Watts, is not a distinctively Baptist hymn, having found its way into at least one hundred and thirteen hymnals (113). This is a hymn that, though it has been included in several hymnals from Churches of Christ, it has not often been sung<sup>35</sup>, presumably because of its overt language about the Holy Spirit, a subject that has not been sung about with great regularity.<sup>36</sup>

The next most common baptismal hymns are two titles found in three of the hymnals under the baptism subject. “Trust and Obey,” a beloved gospel song from John H. Sammis, finds its origins in the notes of Daniel B. Towner after hearing a particularly moving sermon from well-known evangelist, D.L. Moody.<sup>37</sup> Sankey began to use the hymn in his campaigns with

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<sup>35</sup> Harold Fletcher, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” (Malibu, CA: 2014), 2.

<sup>36</sup> D.J. Bulls, “Churches Of Christ And The Holy Spirit; Learning From The Hymnals Of 1921—1940,” (Dallas, TX: 2017), 16.

<sup>37</sup> Hymnary.Org, accessed November 2, 2017.

Moody and published it in many of his hymnals, helping it to achieve a widespread popularity through his monopoly of hymnal publishing around the turn of the twentieth century.

The other hymn that finds its way into these hymnals three times is the text of Michael Seward, “Baptized in Water.” He has had a long association with Hope Publishing and has edited several of their hymnals.

There is also a broader list of sixteen titles found only once in these hymnals as well, several of which are distinctive to Baptist churches.<sup>38</sup> Among those unique songs are “Come to the Water,” by Pepper Choplin, “We Are Raised to Newness of Life” by Allison Gilliam.<sup>39</sup>

### **Conclusion**

This research clearly shows that baptism has been and remains at the very core of the theology and practice of both Baptist churches and Churches of Christ. But as this study has contended, for these two groups in which baptism is so incredibly important, the hymnody of these two groups no longer reflects a similar place of importance for baptismal hymns. Churches of Christ seem to have made the largest departure, hearkening back to the hymns of Campbell, whose books were laden with texts about baptism. The texts from the hymnals of Alexander Campbell deserve a new examination and reappropriation into the canon. Including them would not only reassert the importance of baptism in the theology of these churches, but would provide

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<sup>38</sup> Titles found once are: “Come to the Water,” “Come, Be Baptized,” “Down to the Sacred Wave,” “Follow On,” “I’ve Found A Friend,” “Jesus, Our Lord and King,” “Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be,” “Low in the Grave He Lay (Christ Arose),” “O Jesus, I Have Promised,” “O Thou Who In Jordan,” “Praise and thanksgiving Be to God,” “This Rite Our Blest Redeemer,” “Thou Has Said, Exalted Jesus,” “We Are Raised to Newness of Life,” “We Bless the Name of Christ, the Lord,” “With Water Freely Flowing.”

<sup>39</sup> A number of texts are found in two hymnals: “Where He Leads Me I Will Follow,” “Take My Life and Let It Be” (with tunes MOZART, MCINTOSH, and HENDON), “O Happy Day,” “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” “Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken,” and “I’ll Live for Him.”

a new opportunity for new generations of believers to reach back into this rich heritage with new appreciation. There is also work to be done to broaden our indices to look at hymns that make reference to baptism but that have never been identified as such, and to sing them more frequently as well. This seems particularly to be the case in Baptist hymnbooks, where a number of titles relating to baptism have not been categorized as such. Therefore, more work must be done in indexing these hymns to more accurately reflect the subject matter of these books. The same could be said in part for Churches of Christ and perhaps numerous other denominations as well. What is to be said for other baptismal hymns not found in either stream of hymnals? Why have they been ignored or left out? Surely there are texts in mainstream and global hymnody about the subject that are worthy of inclusion. If Hymnary.org lists almost 1,100 titles in total, surely there are those that should not have been overlooked by past generations. Whatever the future of the hymnal may be, there is a task to be considered that is an important one. To reclaim baptismal hymns of old, to survey the volumes of hymn texts at our fingertips today and to redeem them for future use, and to reexamine our hymnals and identify those hymns that God's people have been singing for decades without fully understanding their deeper meanings about baptism and to categorize them appropriately and teach those in the future of this incredible theological depth in this baptismal hymnody that is wider and deeper than either of these two denominations has really ever explored. May our churches take this work seriously, as seriously as they take the subject of baptism. And may generations of believers continue to be shaped and formed in the image of Christ, placing as high a priority on baptism as our forefathers in faith and in hymnody have as well.

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Baptist church in Alabama, USA. Most Baptist churches look like ordinary houses or town halls. Baptists form the fifth largest Christian church in the world. Baptist churches are found in almost every country in the world and have about 40 million members worldwide. They refused to become members of the Church of England, saying Christ - and not the monarch - was head of the Church. The nineteenth century saw a period of significant growth for the Baptist movement. Great preachers such as Charles Haddon Spurgeon in London and Alexander Maclaren in Manchester drew crowds in their thousands. Today, Baptists are represented globally by the Baptist World Alliance which was founded in 1905. In the witness of the Church it welcomes us as a member of the body of Christ. We are given all spiritual gifts in our baptism which are further strengthened in our confirmation. Our heads are anointed by God with Holy oils. So basically it jump starts our life as a Christian, We don't have to do anything to receive this grace (indwelling of the Holy Spirit) because Jesus freely offers it to us. Having spent my formative spiritual years as a Baptist, and my parenting (now grandparenting) years as an Anglican, this is an issue that has captured no little attention from me, and I think I have come to some terms with it. First, my children were baptized as infants, mostly as an act of submission on my part. Baptism has been part of Christianity from the start, as shown by the many mentions in the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline epistles. Although the term "baptism" is not today used to describe the Jewish rituals (in contrast to New Testament times, when the Greek word baptismos did indicate Jewish ablutions or rites of purification), the purification rites (or mikvah—ritual immersion) in Jewish law and tradition are similar to baptism, and the two have been linked. In the Hebrew Bible and other In England the General Baptists of the seventeenth century lost either zeal or identity or both, and many of that number merged with the Universalists. The Calvinist or Particular Baptists maintained both zeal and identity, but in the face of a powerful and sometimes repressive national church, the numbers of these dissenters never approached that of their coreligionists in the United States. In 2000, Baptists in the British Isles (England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) numbered a little over 200,000. Known officially since 1908 as the Church of the Brethren, these Baptists originated in Germany early in the eighteenth century. Fleeing from persecution there, however, they immigrated virtually en masse to America, settling in Pennsylvania, the Virginia backcountry, and the Midwest. Baptisms in the Catholic Church usually take place on Sundays, during the parish Mass or in the early afternoon after all the Masses are over. In most cases, the parish priest or deacon administers the sacrament, anointing the person being baptized with oils, and pouring blessed water over the child or adult's head not just once but three times. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, any Baptism that uses water and the invocation of the Holy Trinity, as in "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," is a valid sacrament. So if a follower of a Christian church