



By Paul S. Williams

Roots

My family has never been one to look very far into its past. We'd rather live true to our perceived roots than examine the real ones. Outside of knowing my middle name, Stone, was my mother's maiden name, I didn't know much about my family tree.

But still, when I was growing up, every now and again my uncles talked about their wives being descendants of Barton W. Stone. I found that interesting, since my mother was the sister of those wives. And they did grow up in the shadow of Cane Ridge, Kentucky. But when I asked my mother follow-up questions, she just said, "Yeah, I think Barton Stone is a relative of some kind." The lack of enthusiasm made me suspicious.

So, I let it go. I did read Stone's autobiography before I was out of my teens. The book included a portrait of Barton W. I did see a sort of resemblance, although that made me more frightened than proud.

This past year it all came to mind again when I stumbled across documents that seemed to confirm Barton W. Stone as my great-great-grandfather! But the further I dug, the more doubtful it looked. I mentioned my findings to Dad. "Well, you know my mother's people go back to the Brush Run Church," he said. Dad grew up in the shadow of Bethany, West Virginia. And Dad's point? Whether

Barton's on the family tree or not, for more than 150 years our "people" have been deeply connected to the churches of the Stone-Campbell Movement. And why do I mention all of this?

Because I love the Restoration Movement that traces its roots to Barton W. Stone, Alexander and Thomas Campbell, and the Brush Run Church. Deep in my DNA I believe its plea—unity, by restoration, for mission. I believe a movement that developed in the Enlightenment can find its way in a postmodern world. I believe the growth we've experienced in the last decade is no fluke, but a sign we were made for these times. I believe independent churches choosing to work together is as fine an idea today as it was 150 years ago. I believe the thousands of churches that go by the name Christian do, in fact, look a lot like the Christ who established His church.

I see our weaknesses, excesses, and sibling spats, and love us still. And ultimately, I believe our greatest days are in front of us, as we continue to participate in this great ministry of reconciling the creation to the Creator.

As for my new responsibility as editor-at-large of CHRISTIAN STANDARD, I consider it an honor to serve this venerable magazine. I pray my work will honor those who came before, as we work together to honor the one who is the Father of us all.

Seen & Heard

Compiled by S. J. Dahlman

"To know and serve God, of course, **is why we're here**, a clear truth that, like the nose on your face is near at hand and easily discernible but can make you dizzy if you try to focus on it too hard."

—Garrison Keillor, "The Meaning of Life," *Life*, December 1988

The **Salvation Army** office in Naples, Fla., **refused a \$100,000 donation** from a state lotto winner because its leader didn't want to take

money associated with gambling. Major Cleo Damon believes "he would be talking out of both sides of his mouth" if he accepted the money, according to a Salvation Army spokeswoman.

—Associated Press

Spurred by his need for reminders to pray, Alan Wostenberg of Colorado is running an Internet service that delivers a **daily "reminder psalm"** to the **cell phones**,

paggers, or e-mail accounts of subscribers. The service, which costs \$19.95 per year plus a \$4 set-up fee, provides daily Psalm readings adapted from the Roman Catholic schedule. The service is available at www.psalmsweaver.com.

—Associated Press

Sign of the times: "60 INCH TV / COLD BEER ON TAP / GOD BLESS AMERICA."

—Champ's Deli, Johnson City, Tennessee