

# The Development of the Church of God Abrahamic Faith: 1845-1921

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## Introduction

Gary Land of Andrews University wrote, "After Christ failed to come in 1844 the Millerites splintered into several groups."<sup>1</sup> It is with those groups that we wish to begin and one of those groups will be the focus of this article.

The non-Millerite groups that emerged after the Bitter Disappointment were primarily those who had not attended the Albany Conference, called by William Miller to salvage the splintered Adventist movement. The people who formed these groups had been part of the Adventist movement, but now wished to disassociate themselves from it. It might also be noted that the Millerite movement did not fail because "Christ failed to come." Christ had not failed; rather, men erred by setting dates for his return.

What were these groups? Several historians have defined and discussed them<sup>2</sup> but this article is principally interested in the emerging groups as detailed by LeRoy Froom. Froom identifies three movements arising out of the Adventist movement: 1. The inheritors of the Millerite tradition, the Advent Christians; 2. Extremists from New England who eventually disappeared; 3. The Seventh Day Adventists who gained strength through the visions of Ellen White.

I contend that there is a fourth branch, which Froom alluded to but did not thoroughly discuss. This branch began as the Age to Come movement, also

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Land, "Strangers Together: Adventism's American Experience," *Newsletter of the Adventist Movements Historical Association*, Pilot Issue 1993, Morrow, GA: Atlanta Bible College.

<sup>2</sup> LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1954, vol. IV. Also, Gary Land, "Strangers Together," and David Graham, "Northwest Christian Association," *History Newsletter of the Church of God General Conference*, ed. J. Stilson, vol. 1:4, winter 1985. Graham's list includes Evangelical Adventists, 1858, the Advent Christians, Jonathon Cummings, 1861, Life and Advent Union, John T. Walsh, 1863, all carrying components of Miller's views. Those departing from Miller include Seventh Day Adventists, James and Ellen White, 1863, Church of the Blessed Hope, Mark Allen, 1863, Christadelphians, Dr. John Thomas, 1862-4, and Seventh Day Church of God, Gilbert Cramer, 1865.

called restitutionists, soul sleepers and judaizers.<sup>3</sup> It was led essentially by Joseph Marsh of Rochester, New York, and carried westward into Canada, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, and south into Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

### Marsh Profile

Joseph Marsh became prominent as an elder in the Christian Connexion.<sup>4</sup> He knew Abner Jones and Elias Smith who founded the movement, and who originated and published its paper, *The Christian Palladium*, a respected religious journal. Elias Smith, member of the editorial board, was no stranger to publishing religious newspapers. He had the distinction of beginning the genre in America when he introduced the first religious paper, *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, to American readers in 1808. Marsh followed in this tradition. He accepted an invitation by the editorial board to edit *The Christian Palladium*, and from 1838/39-1843 he did so very well. *The Christian Palladium* had a large readership and Marsh was well respected.

Marsh left *The Christian Palladium* at the request of the editorial board for emphasizing Adventism. Olbricht says, “Joseph Marsh assumed editorship in 1839 and almost immediately plunged into a discussion of millennial doctrines which were popular in his New York region. He was able to swing large numbers into the [Millerite] Movement.”<sup>5</sup>

Marsh next published *The Voice of Truth* (1844-1847) which was essentially the voice of William Miller. Marsh was a dedicated Bible student but during this time was still promoting date-setting of Christ’s return. He believed Christ would return before 1847 was concluded. In this respect many of the writings in *The Voice of Truth* seem sympathetic to Miller. Yet, in fact, Marsh was growing away from Miller and leaning toward the Age to Come.<sup>6</sup> This eschatological doctrine embodied the idea of Israel’s return to Jerusalem before the return of Christ, and Miller and his followers did not agree with it.

There is no doubt that *The Voice of Truth* was sympathetic to William Miller as many of the writings are couched in terms of fondness, yet by the time Marsh finished the run of *The Voice of Truth* and picked up a new title, he was able to distance himself entirely from the restructured movement. The transformation in

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<sup>3</sup> Jan Stilson, “An Overview of the Leadership and Development of the Age to Come in the United States: 1832-1871,” *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*, 10:1, Fall 2001, 20-54.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the Christian Connexion, refer to Tom Olbricht’s article in the *Restoration Quarterly* 9:3, “Christian Connexion and Unitarian Relations 1800-1844.” This work together with Marsh’s *Age to Come* may be found at [http://www.rq.acu.edu/Volume\\_009/rq00903olbricht.htm](http://www.rq.acu.edu/Volume_009/rq00903olbricht.htm). *Age to Come* was posted on this web site at the request of Greg Demmitt.

<sup>5</sup> Olbricht, “Christian Connexion and Unitarian Relations 1800-1844.”

<sup>6</sup> Kent Ross, “When Time Was Supposed to Be No More,” paper presented at the Theological Conference at Atlanta Bible College, 2002.

Marsh occurred rather rapidly, in slightly over three years, for he published four volumes a year for a total of fourteen volumes.

Marsh began to publish a new title, *The Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate*, in 1847. Marsh's focus in this title clearly was on the eschatology of the Age to Come as it related to the return of Jesus to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Marsh had become acquainted with Dr. John Thomas of Illinois and Virginia, and they became friends. They probably met when Thomas toured the "burned over district" during 1842.

### **Thomas Profile**

Thomas emigrated from England in 1832, and began in Virginia within the Restoration Movement introduced by Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Dr. Thomas was an avid Bible student and he had come to believe several doctrines which Alexander Campbell could not tolerate, but which were closely aligned with Joseph Marsh's beliefs. After certain doctrinal difficulties arose between Thomas and Campbell, Thomas was asked to leave the fellowship. He then relocated to Illinois for about three years.

While in Illinois, Thomas published a newspaper at St. Charles and also began a religious paper, *The Investigator*. Unfortunately, his press and business were burned out. Since he was a physician, he was invited to teach anatomy at the Franklin Medical Institute in St. Charles, the first medical college on the Illinois frontier. This he did for about three years. While there, he traveled extensively in the virgin territory meeting people and teaching the Bible everywhere he went. He made many contacts and taught his unique doctrinal ideas. Many of his contacts were already acquainted with the Kingdom of God on earth as they were receiving *The Christian Palladium*, *The Voice of Truth* and *The Advent Harbinger*.

Eventually he grew restless teaching science, and traveled first on the eastern seaboard in 1842 and then to England in 1848. There he traveled around to established Christian churches connected with Alexander Campbell, stirring up controversy because his teachings did not mesh with Campbell's message. Having already split with Campbell in the States, Thomas was forced to recognize that he could not preach in Christian churches any more.

Returning to America, he settled in New York and established a church there. As Dr. Thomas was an editor and publisher also, he and Marsh exchanged ideas through their papers. In 1851 Thomas began publishing *Herald of the Coming Kingdom and Age to Come*, and Marsh published a book, *Age to Come*. Thomas began to instruct Marsh that he should be re-baptized because he had repudiated the Millerite doctrines. Marsh did not believe in rebaptism, believing that once a person was converted and immersed, the rest of the Christian walk was a process toward maturation.

Thomas believed that when one came out of a faith due to conversion to a better doctrine, he should repent and be re-baptized to signify a new walk with

Christ. Thomas himself had been baptized by Walter Scott of the Campbellites in 1832, but after leaving that movement, Thomas requested rebaptism. For a long time this writer thought the baptizer was Marsh, but given his position on the question, it doesn't seem possible. In fact, Thomas does not tell us who the baptizer was, but he was re-immersed in 1847.

This topic became a source of contention between the two friends. Dr. Thomas turned against Marsh and succeeded in turning Marsh's church friends against him. The Church of God at Rochester, New York voted to disfellowship Marsh. Out but not broken, Marsh resumed his association with the Christian Connexion and later traveled to a midwestern conference in Indiana. He published *The Prophetic Expositor and Bible Advocate* until 1860 when he sold his press and subscription list to Thomas Newman. Newman eventually sold everything to Thomas Wilson, who published *The Restitution* in Chicago in 1870. In this way the influence of Joseph Marsh directly touched the frontier even after his death.

Thomas continued his ministry throughout the frontier, formally organizing his denomination, the Christadelphians, in Ogle County, Illinois, during the Civil War.

As Marsh's ministry declined in the east, Thomas' ministry continued in the west, and another man began to gain prominence.

### **Benjamin Wilson Profile**

Benjamin Wilson and his brothers relocated from Halifax, England to Geneva, Illinois in 1842. Wilson was a Greek scholar who published the local paper in Geneva. He settled in the area just after Thomas left the region for his tour of New England. Even though St. Charles and Geneva, Illinois are sister cities, and both men were publishers of their cities' local papers, evidently they did not meet on the frontier.

Wilson believed in the promises made to Abraham. He preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and believed in the soon return of Christ to earth. Yet, in his writings, he promoted the "One Faith" more than the "Age to Come." These doctrines are not mutually exclusive as one sees the latter in the former. The promises made to Abraham include the promise of the Kingdom of God to be established in the future as a literal kingdom.

The reason Wilson did not pick up on Marsh's idea and continue to promulgate it may have been that they differed on the resurrection. Basically Wilson believed in simultaneous resurrection in which righteous and wicked would be raised on the same day for judgment or reward, while Marsh believed in resurrection in which "the rest of the dead lived not until the 1000 years were ended."<sup>7</sup> Wilson said the Greek did not support that thought.<sup>8</sup> In his book, *Age to*

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph Marsh, "Resurrection," *The Voice of Truth*, 10:1, April 1846, 9-11.

*Come*, Marsh said the Lord would need time to judge men and restore all things to a new order.

### **Organizational Efforts of the Church of God**

Marsh and Wilson never met. Marsh had split with Thomas. Thomas had split with Campbell. Miller was out of the picture entirely. Wilson and Thomas continued to publish, define doctrine and standardize worship and organization within local churches. They often competed for the same readers, the same audience, the same donations. Wilson, like Marsh, did not encourage the organization of a denomination, and he knew he did not want his followers to be associated with Dr. Thomas. So Thomas organized a denomination without Wilson. He reached his organizational goal first.

The effort to organize began during the Civil War to protect lay members from military service.<sup>9</sup> The formalization of the denomination evidently did not happen at the federal level until just before the war was over.<sup>10</sup> Thomas called his new denomination Christadelphians. Wilson and many others disliked the name, saying it was not scriptural.

Marsh had been against organizing a denomination, possibly because of his experience with Miller's movement. He had suggested in the early days of the Age to Come movement that if believers wanted a centralized organization, it could be focused around a journal or publishing house. State conferences consisting of believers and subscribers would be responsible to form new Bible study groups and would educate the members, support the publishing ministry, and train a clergy. Marsh's ideas were tried briefly, but the effort did not last due to lack of leadership in the state conferences and lack of monetary support.

Wilson in Geneva, Illinois also did not intend to form a denomination, but he encouraged the formation of individual churches, Bible study groups and state conferences. David Graham has written that believers formed state conferences early, listing them as: northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, 1857; Ohio, 1857; Michigan, 1858; Iowa/Minnesota and northern Wisconsin, 1858; Indiana, 1867 and Oregon, 1867.<sup>11</sup>

The most active leader of Age to Come/One Faith activity for these conferences was Benjamin Wilson and his church flock at Geneva, Illinois. Wilson and his brothers and nephews made arduous trips through central Illinois into Missouri, through Arkansas into Louisiana and back to meet with people and spread the Word, often at their own expense. Benjamin Wilson also published

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<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Wilson, "Time of Resurrection," *Gospel Banner and Millennial Advocate*, 15:24, December 15, 1869, 442, 443.

<sup>9</sup> This struggle is detailed in my article, "An Overview of the Leadership and Development of the Age to Come in the United States: 1832-1871."

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

<sup>11</sup> Graham, 9.

*The Gospel Banner* from 1853-1869 and translated and published the *Emphatic Diaglott* in 1864 in Geneva. It was truly an organ of the Church of God until some time after 1900 when the Greek plates were sold to the Watchtower as it was felt their publishing house was a better risk for future printing. If the Church of God had been able to organize a lasting general conference work in 1869, the *Emphatic Diaglott* very likely would still be in its ownership.<sup>12</sup>

In this manner, i.e. extensive publishing and circuit touring to local churches, the message of the Kingdom of God spread into the south and southwest United States. Worshippers met together at a local “Adventist” church, which functioned like a community church. Adventists, Christadelphians, and Age to Come believers often worshipped in the same building. Vernis Wolfe, a Church of God pastor who grew up in Texas, was quoted as saying that when he was growing up, “he didn’t know if he was Church of God, Christadelphian or Seventh Day, because every time a preacher from those churches came to town his father would take the family to Bible study.” In response to this quote, Hans Rollman, noted historian of the Church of Christ, wrote, “it must have taken several decades for the institutional memory of the Church of God to develop.”<sup>13</sup> This observation very astutely explains the delay of the Church of God in organizing a national headquarters.

Eventually believers came out of the Adventist community churches, and formed independent Age to Come congregations that had affiliations with state conferences, and who also subscribed to the *Gospel Banner*, or a similar paper teaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God on earth.

### **The First National Conference Organization**

The Church of God took longer than its counterparts to organize nationally, and it did so repeatedly over one hundred years. Why these organizational attempts did not succeed is not easily understood, but the issues of doctrine and money evidently continued to be problematic.

The institutional identity of the Church of God formed gradually around the statement of faith. In 1867, in a *Gospel Banner* article entitled “We Are All Agreed,” J.K. Speers presented 21 major tenets of doctrine. Benjamin Wilson said of this piece in the same issue, “We think Bro. Speers has shown that there is

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<sup>12</sup> The change of ownership has caused confusion over the years as people think the Church of God is an offshoot of the Jehovah Witnesses, when really it was Charles Taze Russell, founder of the Watchtower, who studied the Kingdom of God at Church of God conferences, and preached with A.J. Eychaner in Iowa, preaching also in Ripley, Illinois at the local Church of God Abrahamic Faith. Eychaner’s diary details the brief cooperation of Russell with the Church of God. The diary and an original set of *The Watchtower and Herald of Christ’s Presence*, 1879-1919, C.T. Russell, editor, is housed at the Atlanta Bible College archives.

<sup>13</sup> Greg Demmitt, Hans Rollman, Jan Stilson exchanging e-mails in response to the quote by Vernis Wolfe, January 2003.

not so much difference amongst us as many claim, though all may not agree with him on one or two points.”<sup>14</sup> This endorsement by the noted editor and publisher was tacit approval of a doctrinal statement, and it gained broad acceptance by the people. While this assured that a national headquarters would be organized, it did not guarantee that it would continue.

Graham details the formation of the Northwest Christian Association in Chicago on July 4-5, 1869. Delegates were from Churches of God in the Midwest representing all the state conferences except Oregon. He states, “This important meeting will be remembered in our history as the first attempt to establish a permanent annual conference.”<sup>15</sup>

Eight resolutions were introduced, including choosing the name Northwest Christian Association, merging the *Gospel Banner* by Benjamin Wilson with Thomas Wilson’s *Herald of the Coming Kingdom and Christian Instructor*, printing a hymn book to assist worshippers, and building a subscription list for the new journal. It will be seen here that the model to mold a conference work around a publishing house was completely accepted.

This conference continued in scope, if not in actual name, for several years. Indeed, the state conferences that were represented at the 1869 organizational meeting continue to this day as members of the Church of God General Conference. Yet, somewhere along the way, the name was changed and the national organization collapsed. When the national headquarters collapsed, the state conferences became stronger and the numbers increased. Added to the existing conferences of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Indiana and Washington were Ohio, Virginia, Southeast, Louisiana, Texas/Oklahoma, Arizona, California, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, New York and New Jersey, Ontario and Arkansas. Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century some of those conferences combined.

### **A Second Organizational Effort**

After languishing for several years with no central leadership, several leaders began to talk of forming a new headquarters organization. In anticipation of this meeting, J.M. Stephenson, a noted older leader from the early frontier, published a list of doctrinal tenets in *The Restitution* in 1888. In his early ministry Stephenson had been a Sabbatarian, but he had come into the One Faith work with the Wilsons because of his love for the faith. His list, like Speers’, had more than 20 components. These tenets of faith still focused upon the Abrahamic faith and the hope of Christ’s return to establish a millennial kingdom on earth in the Age to Come.

A committee to reorganize the work was called to Philadelphia in 1888. Officers were elected and members included the state conferences. These conferences had been held loosely together by quarterly and annual meetings and

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<sup>14</sup> J.K. Speers, “We Are All Agreed,” *Gospel Banner*, 13:23, December 1867, 359-361.

<sup>15</sup> Graham, 9.

by a common understanding of doctrinal distinctives for nearly 20 years. Yet, they could not agree on the details, and Stephenson's well-constructed list was given consideration but not enacted as an official creed or statement of faith. A new organization was formed, however, to be known as the Church of God in Christ Jesus. The local churches were encouraged to take that name, or to call themselves Church of God of the Blessed Hope.

A second annual meeting was held in Chicago in 1889, but none was held thereafter. The board continued to meet until 1892 when George Work, one of the officers, cashed it in, the treasury being nearly in deficit. Lack of leadership and interest were cited as the principal reasons for disbanding.<sup>16</sup> Several Chicago church leaders were active in the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. Perhaps that monopolized their time during those years.

### **Reactionary Tendencies**

At the turn of the century the Church of God holiness churches began to be popular in America, across the Midwest and the South where the fervent nature of the Barton Stone movement was still remembered. The Stone movement from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, primarily unitarian in nature and highly energized by the work of the Holy Spirit, had merged with Alexander Campbell's movement, but the fervency lingered on. The charismatic work of the Holy Spirit acting in the believer created lively and in some cases boisterous worship experiences.

The Churches of God (Abrahamic Faith) sprang away from this style of worship in reaction to the startling use of tongues, body movements, and rituals such as foot washing and snake handling. Such worship was foreign to the steady and quiet style promoted by Benjamin Wilson and his followers.

Reacting against a boisterous style of worship and expression, the Church of God Abrahamic Faith, as they popularly called themselves, equated that style of worship with the popular understanding of manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Believing the Holy Spirit to be the power of God, given to Christ and to believers to enable them to walk the new holy life in Christ, leaders and preachers shied away from emphasizing this for fear of being typed as "charismatic," through mere association or misunderstanding over the name "Church of God." One noted Church of God leader from the early years of the twentieth century was quoted as saying, "We don't know what that Holy Spirit is, but we don't want it around here."<sup>17</sup> This doesn't mean the work of the Holy Spirit was neglected in the church, nor that teaching about the Spirit was neglected, but rather that Church of God Abrahamic Faith leaders wished to avoid the problem of being

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<sup>16</sup> Ledger of the conference of the Church of God in Christ Jesus, minutes of Board of Directors, 1888-1892. Atlanta Bible College archives.

<sup>17</sup> At the first organizational meeting of the *Church of God History Newsletter* in Oregon, Illinois in 1985, Pastor Francis Burnett quoted an early leader with that unusual comment.



confused with denominations of the same name but with a vastly different doctrine and worship style.

To explain this kind of thinking that might at first glance seem to be shrinking from the real meaning of preaching, or avoiding recognition by other groups, or hiding one's light under a bushel for fear of having to explain an unusual doctrine, Gary Land offers a thought. He says that Adventists have been strangers within their own culture. They could not embrace mainstream culture, and those within the religious culture of the day did not understand them. While he cites a friendship and fellowship which exists between the Advent Christians and the Church of God Abrahamic Faith, this was not true among other splinter Adventist groups. This has caused "a house divided, a family of strangers. With little sense of historical or theological bonds among the (other) Adventist bodies, there is also little knowledge or awareness of one another, except where splinter groups are still warring against their parent organizations."

Land states further, "the individual denominations or groups within Adventism may have strong individual self-identities, but to a considerable degree they also believe that they are toiling alone to preserve the Advent hope."<sup>18</sup> In the case of the Church of God, not only were they trying to preserve a doctrine different from the Adventists (the Age to Come), but they were also trying to preserve their identity as Church of God — as they were the first to endorse it as a scriptural name — against all the other Church of God denominations that came into existence totally different from them in doctrine and worship style. They truly were "toiling alone," and chose to.

The Church of God Abrahamic Faith was fighting a battle on two fronts: 1. Trying to remain separate from the myriad of Adventist churches in America; 2. Trying to remain separate from new Churches of God not affiliated with them.

There were certain social phenomena during that century which the Church of God shunned also, including modernism as exemplified by Darwinism and liberalism, and the social gospel which denied original sin. While the Church of God did not strictly fit into the mold of fundamentalism due to doctrinal differences, the organization operated as if it were fundamentalist. This contributed in part to strong overtones of legalism. Such reactionary and protective tendencies promoted an inward focus which the Church of God has spent the rest of the twentieth century trying to overcome.

### **A Third Organizational Effort**

It seemed that each succeeding generation wanted to organize a lasting work. In 1910, another organization almost came into being in Waterloo, Iowa. Delegates included representatives of the various state conferences, but also each minister had a vote. Internal politics over the publication of *The Restitution* versus the newly begun *The Restitution Herald* in Oregon, Illinois kept

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<sup>18</sup> Land, 8.

discussion heated throughout the meeting.

Doctrinal questions also were hotly contended. No national conference came into existence at this meeting. W.L. Crowe reported in *The Present Truth* that the Church of God was just too carnal to form a national organization.<sup>19</sup>

It would seem that in reacting strongly against the holiness movement the Church of God had allowed the pendulum to swing too far in the opposite direction. Without acknowledging the full power of the Holy Spirit, the church marched on its own power, or minimized power, and carnality crept in. But this was not to be true for long.

### **A Successful Organization Attempt**

In 1921 at Waterloo, Iowa, the Church of God General Conference was voted into being by the delegates of churches, state conferences and clergy. It came about through the year-long effort of a Committee of Ten who prayed and planned for it. Several meetings throughout the year had been devoted to prayer, Bible study and fellowship. The purpose was to form a lasting "General Headquarters" for the Church of God. The conference would educate and publish, and minister to isolated members. Each time the committee met during the year, the results of the meeting were published and distributed throughout the state conferences. The people began to be excited.

The Committee of Ten communicated frequently through letters. Each letter was typed with several carbons and distributed to the entire committee. J.W. Williams was the chairman and F.L. Austin was the secretary who did all the typing. Through the letters they shared their views on Scripture and how a worship service should be organized.

The committee identified and faced seven obstacles, any one of which could have sunk the effort if it had not been prayed through. Some of these issues included: 1. How and whether to use updated methodology and technology; 2. Which Bible translation should be used; 3. The doctrine of universal resurrection vs. limited resurrection (the same issue upon which Marsh and Benjamin Wilson disagreed); and 4. The doctrine of saving faith. A conflict between the editor of *The Restitution Herald* and F.L. Austin also had to be worked out.<sup>20</sup>

When the committee brought its plan before the General Assembly at the conference in Waterloo in 1921, the General Conference was born. It continues to this day.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> W.L. Crowe and Chas Crowe, *The Present Truth*, St. Paul, Nebraska, 12:8, 1910.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas R. Schmitt, "Our Conference: Its Start and Basis," *The Restitution Herald*, 75th anniversary edition containing *The History Newsletter* 2:2, Fall 1985, 40.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that "Abrahamic Faith" was a phrase added by the people after the name "Church of God." Its usage was noticed in some form or other from the time of the Civil War and can be seen in the literature as "faith of Abraham," "one faith," or "Abraham's faith." It was especially helpful in distinguishing the Church of God from charismatic Church of God denominations springing up across America. It was never part

### **Conclusion**

David Graham contends that the history of the Church of God/Age to Come/One Faith movement may be traced entirely through the history of publications.<sup>22</sup> To this end he created a chart detailing the succession of titles which I further amplified and which was published in the 75th anniversary

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of the official incorporated title of the new General Conference. In fact, the name National Bible Institute was chosen to represent the educational arm of the General Conference. Later, in the 1950s, that name was dropped in favor of Church of God General Conference. A few Churches of God in Indiana and Ohio who believed similar doctrines but did not affiliate with the General Conference in 1921 reportedly officially incorporated their churches as Church of God Abrahamic Faith in the mid-1980s. Mark Drabentstott is a leader in that work. This group is sympathetic to the Christadelphian faith.

<sup>22</sup> Graham, 9.

edition of *The Restitution Herald*.<sup>23</sup> The line showing the succession of Age to Come/Church of God journals continued to the then-present editor, Russell Magaw.

To this end, we have a great need to preserve the archives of these published materials, all of which are rare and distinct and not completely owned by any other Adventist archives in the world. The Church of God archives are owned by the General Conference and are being restored and preserved for future generations should the Lord tarry. The Church of God extensive archives form the basis for this article.

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<sup>23</sup> David Graham and Jan Stilson, "Age to Come Adventists Periodical Chart," *The Restitution Herald*, 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition, October 1985, centerfold. This issue is still available for sale from the Church of God General Conference, Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.