

*Three
Witnesses
For The
Baptists*

Curtis A. Pugh

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by

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The text of this eBook is as received from the author. However, I have attempted to consistently make the following formatting changes, both to the author's own material, and to the quotes he incorporates.

1.) All abbreviations of Scripture references have been changed to the full book name and appear in **bold face**.

2.) All Scripture quotes or partial quotes appear in **bold face** with the following exception.

In [Appendix II](#) so many Scripture quotes are intermingled with their own words that I have not attempted to single out the Scripture quotes or partial quotes and **bold face** them. I have however attempted to **bold face** all of the Scripture references in [Appendix II](#).

James L. Reynolds
Cornersville, TN
January, 2012

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Author's Preface

Our aim is to believe and follow the Word of God, the Bible. Should any Brethren find error in our views as expressed herein, we ask that they show us our error BY THE WORD OF GOD, and we pledge to mend our error as God may give us grace. If the church views expressed in this book are correct and therefore cannot be refuted by the Bible, we invite all true Brethren to join with us and with that great host of departed "Anabaptist" witnesses in following Christ by serving Him in His Scripturally-baptized Churches.

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FOREWORD

As this work goes to press, religious leaders from evangelical churches and the Roman Catholic Church have met in Columbia, South Carolina, and they have signed a declaration to put aside theological differences and cooperate on social issues. The declaration springs from the visit of Pope John Paul II seven years ago to South Carolina. This Pope urged religious leaders “to work for the unity of all Christians.” This unity is not based, however, on both groups coming to a unified belief of what saves the soul. In fact the declaration acknowledges the difference and “discourages attempts by members of one of the communities to convert active members of the other.” The press reported that members at West Columbia’s First Baptist Church “were glad to hear of the recent agreement, especially the part calling for an end to trying to convert each other.”

This declaration is just one example of the ecumenical thinking of our day and the effect that it is having on Baptist Churches. It is time for Baptists all across the world to speak out against unity that comes through the compromise of truth. True unity is based on the truth. Jesus said, **“God is a Spirit: and they that worship *him* must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24)**

This work by Curtis Pugh is one such voice proclaiming that Christ established His church and that **“the gates of hell”** have not prevailed against it. He gives the testimony of history and Scripture to show that Christ’s true church has existed in every age since its establishment during the ministry of our Lord. May others be encouraged by reading this work to join in the stand for truth. It is our prayer that Baptists will be strengthened and that others will be brought to the knowledge of the Lord’s true church.

Michael McCoskey
Pastor, Beverly Manor Missionary Baptist Church
President, Illinois Missionary Baptist Seminary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this book has been undertaken with a view to the glory of God, for the Bible says, “**Unto him [God] *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages ...**” (Ephesians 3:21). Thus all things are rightfully dedicated to the glory of God.

Many Brothers and Sisters have helped by their interested encouragement concerning this project. Special appreciation goes to those whose criticism and counsel emboldened me to undertake such an endeavor. Many thanks to Baptist elders Milburn Cockrell, Richard Eckstein, Jarrell Huffman, Forrest Keener, Delbert Shults, and to my pastor, Michael McCoskey.

The membership of the Berea Baptist Church, Bloomfield, NM, under the leadership of their pastor, Brother Richard Eckstein, has undertaken the publication of this book. They are to be commended for their faithfulness and love of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to each of them for their love, prayers and interest in this project.

Those many churches and individuals who faithfully support our mission efforts by prayer and financial help have my deepest gratitude and appreciation. Apart from travelling among these churches, this preacher would never have been able to visit the libraries he has visited or to learn the things he has learned. It is by means of these faithful ones that this book has come into being. Thank you!

I wish to express special appreciation to my wife, companion and best friend, Janet. She has helped me much in this project and has borne with me through many hours. Our younger daughter, Anna, has also helped much in this project. Their work in proofreading has been immeasurable.

This book is the result of time spent in the wee hours of the morning after other duties were done and in odd hours here and there over a period of

several years. Any fault is mine.

Curtis Pugh
Carcross, Yukon Territory, Canada
April, 1994

PREFACE

This is not intended to be just another book on the church for preachers! Our purpose is to present the issues as they presently are and to provide concrete evidence as to the apostolic origin of true New Testament Baptist churches. This we have tried to do in a concise, readable and usable format. It is our desire that this little book be useful to every genuine lover of the truth.

This work is presented in four chapters to meet the Bible standard for establishing truth. Thus, as was commanded by the Old Testament Law of God (**Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15**), approved by the Lord Jesus Christ (**Matthew 18:16**), and set forth as sound procedure by our brother, Paul, “... **in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established,**” (**2 Corinthians 13:1**).

After some necessary introductory considerations in chapter one, the three witnesses shall be presented as follows. **THE FIRST WITNESS:** in chapter two our Baptist forefathers shall testify as to their understanding of our origin. **THE SECOND WITNESS:** in chapter three our historic enemies shall attest the continual existence of churches founded on Baptist principles. **THE THIRD WITNESS:** in chapter four the Scriptures shall be examined as to the teachings and promises of the Son of God affecting His church and her ordinances. The Glossary is meant to be read as it has much information for the reader.

While the documentation introduced is not intended to be exhaustive, its cumulative effect should convince any sincere inquirer. Bible believers will be assured of the truth in that we will have more than met the Scriptural requirement of “**two or three witnesses.**” May God give the reader grace to believe and understand the truth and then give him or her the grace needed to practice it! May God be pleased to bring His chosen people into the Lord’s churches that they may serve Him “**acceptably with reverence and godly fear,**” (**Hebrews 12:28**).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

As was aptly stated in a booklet published many years ago by the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptists believe that: “No man can be more liberal than the Bible and be true to Christ.” [1] This is the historic Baptist position! This is also the view of modern, Bible-believing Baptists who want to be true to Christ in spite of the present situation.

The Present Situation

Some liberal “Baptists” are striding toward unification with Roman Catholicism. Many others remain firm in their conviction that continued separation from both the “**Mother of Harlots**” and her Protestant daughters is the only right course of action. The following quotation is furnished merely as an illustration of the unionizing tendencies now prevalent among some Baptist groups. Clearly, certain liberal elements within the once conservative Southern Baptist Convention of the United States are thus actively engaged.

“Southern Baptist and Roman Catholic scholars have declared that they basically agreed on doctrinal issues. Sponsored by the Catholic Bishop’s Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Southern Baptist Department of Interfaith Witness, the dialogue group recently released a report in the “Theological Educator.” Quoting **Ephesians 4:5**, the group concluded “We not only confessed but experienced ‘**One Lord, one faith, and one baptism**’” [2]

As a further example of the present move among some Baptists toward union with Roman Catholicism, and a more current one, consider the following news item.

“COLUMBIA, S.C. - The agreement between evangelicals and Roman Catholics to end their ‘loveless conflict’ is being welcomed in some parts of the Bible Belt.

“The agreement signed a week ago by evangelical leaders, including Pat Robertson, and by Catholic bishops continues progress that began seven years ago when Pope John II visited South Carolina and suggested closer ties, religious leaders said.

“‘Indeed, is it not the duty of every follower of Christ to work for the unity of all Christians?’ the pope told 26 American leaders of several denominations at the time.

“Parishioners at West Columbia’s First Baptist Church said they were glad to hear of the recent agreement, especially the part calling for an end to trying to convert each other...” [\[3\]](#)

Anyone who understands the Bible message of salvation by grace alone and who is aware of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church will agree that the two are poles apart. Although Catholicism mouths the words of the Bible, she teaches salvation by works. Of course, most Protestants teach works for salvation and liberal “Baptists” do the same. Some “Baptists” are just as guilty of desiring a union of all “Christian denominations” as is the Catholic hierarchy. This is evidenced by the following statements made by “parishioners” of the First Baptist Church of Columbia, South Carolina.

“Baptists and Catholics each believe theirs is the only religion to follow, parishioner Dale Finley said.

“‘I think for peace, they should work together and quit trying to shove (beliefs) down their throats,’ she said.

“Helen Ford, another member of the large brick church with a wooden cross of flowers on its lawn the day after Easter, said she welcomed the cooperative effort.

“I’m not so narrow that I cannot accept the fact that there are other very good Christian people in other denominations,’ she said. ‘I think we’re all working toward the same goal; we’re just taking different routes to get there.’” [4]

These last statements quoted are indicative of the sad doctrinal decline among some who call themselves Baptists. They do not know the truth, or have heard and rejected it.

Jesus said “the truth shall make you free.” There is no salvation apart from the truth. Genuinely converted individuals are characterized by a knowledge of the truth. Regenerate persons do not have a perfect knowledge of truth, but a genuine knowledge, nevertheless. Truth, similarly, sets the churches of God apart from those which are false. The Lord’s churches are the **“pillar and ground of the truth.”** Doubtless, therefore, the devil is attempting to do away with true New Testament churches. If true Baptists are New Testament churches, the way to do away with them is to destroy their distinctive principles. This is the “modus operandi” presently used by the enemy of truth, the one whom Jesus said was **“a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).**

Satan is often subtle in bringing about misrepresentations of the truth. He instigates mockery of the Bible and Bible-believers. He promotes manglorifying freewill-ism, the Holy-Spirit-glorifying charismatic movement, doctrine-denying interdenominationalism, and the “universal invisible church” theory which denigrates the Church Jesus built. He attempts to accomplish his goal under the guise of brotherly love, unity and scholarship. After all, he argues, if all Christians are in one great “universal invisible church” and thus all part of one “mystical body” why should they not get together down here? Thus, he persuades the unthinking, and he coincidentally makes Bible-believing Baptists look like unloving, bigoted fanatics because they will not join with “evangelical Christians.”

Satan has actively promoted these hurtful doctrines in leading colleges, seminaries and publishing houses in our own day. Because of this activity, he is enjoying some success as most Protestant organizations are now

conducting “ecumenical dialogue” with the Harlot. Cooperation, pulpit affiliation, reception of immersions, union meetings, etc. between even some so-called “Baptists” and the Protestant daughters of the Harlot are now common. Charismatic Protestants are now one in spirit with Charismatic Catholics. Doctrinal purity has thus been sacrificed on the altar of Christian union.

If Baptist churches could be obliterated, the process of ecumenical union (not unity) would be made easier. Few oppose the merger of all churches into the Romish system other than healthy Baptists. “Evangelicals” in North America are having their distinctiveness eroded away by New Evangelicalism, liberalism and the Charismatic movement. Most “evangelical Christians” do not even realize what is happening! The end-time one-world church is just around the corner!

Many “Baptists” are fed Protestant fodder which is prepared in apostate seminaries and effectively disseminated through unscriptural denominational machinery, literature and programs. In spite of this, God still has a remnant who will not surrender Bible principles. These very principles are what make them Baptists. These historic principles keep this remnant of New Testament Baptist churches from organizing under some earthly headquarters, fellowship, convention or association.

After all, in spite of what you may have been led to believe, it is no sin to be a Baptist in a Baptist church practicing Biblical Baptist principles!

The Issues Stated

Although often accused of believing that they alone will be in Heaven, Baptists do not believe that only Baptists are saved! Salvation is an *individual* matter. Salvation is the result of the work of the sovereign grace of God in the individual heart. We are happy to recognize that God’s people may be found in many denominations. One Baptist writer of another generation has well said:

“Calling on God to witness his sincerity, the author of this book gladly expresses his Christian affections for every blood-washed soul - whatever may be his or her creed.” [5]

Baptist elder Claude Duval Cole, formerly an instructor at the Toronto Baptist Seminary, had this to say:

“While claiming to be the true church, Baptists do not deny the salvation of others. We put salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, and believe any and every sinner who pins his faith and hope to Jesus Christ will be saved. We never tell the sinner to unite with a Baptist Church in order to be saved. Like John the Baptist we point the sinner to the Lamb of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose blood cleanseth from all sin.” [6]

However, there is another matter to be considered here: the matter of *acceptable service* to God. Is everything that goes by the name of service to Christ acceptable to God? If Christ did establish His kind of church and such churches still exist upon the earth, are not those churches important to Him? Will He not surely be angry with all who have thought His work inconsequential? Will he be pleased with those who have refused to serve Him in His church? Shall those who continue to rebel against His order and authority be rewarded along with those faithful servants who have borne the brunt of opposition and persecution down through the centuries? If we would please Christ, must we not do things His way? After all, did He not say, “**Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you**” (John 15:14)? Did He not command His church to teach converts to “**observe ALL THINGS**” He had commanded?

David learned to his anguish that not just any procedure is permissible with God. He tried to serve God in a way that was popularly acceptable but foreign to the Word of God. David’s inappropriate (sinful) method in attempting to return the Ark of the Covenant to its rightful place resulted in terrible judgment. God’s anger was vented on Uzzah! What sorrow, frustration, fear and mistrust must have swept through the nation Israel following this evident judgment of God. Following this tragedy David was both “**displeased**” and “**afraid of God**” (1 Chronicles 13:11, 12). Visualize

the terrible consequences in the nation Israel when the monarch was in such a wretched spiritual condition! Can you see the consequences of disregarding God's revealed will regarding the Divinely ordained way of service today? Do you doubt that Christendom has run amuck with all its man-made organizations, methods, activities and plans?

David was made to see that the reason for the catastrophe incurred in moving the Ark was "...**that we sought him [God] not after the due order**" (1 Chronicles 15:13). How important that principle is! In service to God we must do things the way He instructed!

God had said that His priests were to walk and carry the Ark on poles provided for the work. The nations around them might use oxen to pull their idols about on flower-laden, newly painted carts - and even got by with putting God's Ark on such a cart. But God's chosen people, while not *specifically forbidden* to do the same, were *specifically commanded* to do otherwise. There is a basic Bible principle displayed here! It is important to remember that a specific positive command implies and includes specific negative prohibitions. *The command to do one thing automatically forbids doing anything else!* A clear understanding of that principle causes Baptists to insist that things must be done the Bible way! We have no right to innovate in either worship or service to God!

Sincerity was not enough! Being acceptable to the people round about was not enough! Doing things like their pagan neighbors was not acceptable! There was a right way *then*, and there is a "due order" for acceptable service to God and Christ *today!* Acceptable service to God today is in a New Testament church in submission to the Great Head of the church. There is no other institution that was founded by Christ and authorized by Christ to do His work in the earth!

When God's children have the truth taught to them they are gladly obedient to it. Spiritual "goats" "butt" at the truth; God's sheep are led by Christ, the Shepherd, through His Word. Because of the work of the Holy Ghost, multitudes have been led to be Baptists by the truth of the Scriptures. This writer is one! We urge you to search the Scriptures that you may

perceive the truth and “...let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:28, 29).

Baptist History Versus Religious History

Either by design or by unconscious bias, popularly accepted history is most often the recounting of events in a manner favorable to the dominant party. Throughout history the parties in power have been either a Protestant sect or a branch of Catholicism. First one group then the other was in control. Power changed hands from time to time and from country to country as religious politics fluctuated. Since Baptist churches are not and have never been in that ruling position, though at times they could have been, history is most often slanted against us. It is not our objective here to recount either the history of religion or the history of the Lord’s churches. (These two histories are not the same!) However, the reader should be alert to the fact that what is usually presented as “church” history may not be true at all when viewed in the light of all the facts. Hear the statement of Professor C. D. Cole:

“What is known and taught as Church History is in reality the history of Christianity rather than a history of the church Christ founded and promised perpetuity to. History reveals that the true Church as an institution was represented by local congregations as opposed by a developing and growing hierarchy until the bishop of Rome is made Pope or Supreme Bishop.” [7]

The dominant party soon became what today is known as the Roman Catholic Church. That she is a mixture of paganism and Old Testament Jewish practices under Christian names is clear. Hear the words of an old English Baptist brother regarding “church history” being the history of a corrupt “Judaism”. [We have modernized his spelling.]

“What is all church history but an account of people, who under the name of Christians lived as the Jews lived? Had the Jews a priesthood? So had they. Had the Jews a priest of priests, an high priest? They had one in prospect, and each aimed to be the man. Did the Jews keep the Passover, and

worship God by rituals? So did they. Had the Jews Ecclesiastical courts? So had they. Were the Jews governed by traditions of elders? So were they. Had the Jews a temple and an altar, and a sacrifice? So had they. Did the Jews place religion in the performance of ceremonies and not in the practice of virtue? So did they. Have the Jews monopolized God, and hated all mankind except themselves? So have they. [8]

To understand the history of the Lord's churches, the reader should be aware that until relatively recently, Baptists had neither historians among themselves nor histories of their own writing. Baptists were ravaged initially by civil governments goaded by whatever religious establishment was in power at the time. First the Jews instigated persecution against the Lord's churches. Later, pagan idolaters violently opposed the churches. Afterwards, both Catholic- and Protestant-controlled powers condemned Baptists and turned them over to the "secular arm" for punishment and most often execution. [9]

Our Baptist forefathers were hounded from place to place as outlaws in most kingdoms of the world. Forced to live in constant peril because of their doctrines and practices (neither of which was ever a hazard to any individual or civil power), these Baptists had neither time, opportunity, nor inclination to employ themselves with recording their past. Other more immediate concerns pressed upon them because of their circumstances. Matters of doctrine required their efforts as heresies were rampant in the churches round about them. Doubtless their history would have been entirely lost had not their persecutors written against them and so unintentionally chronicled their existence. J.H. Grime stated it well:

"From the first rupture in the church, 250 A.D., that finally resulted in Catholicism, to the Reformation 1520, A.D., the true churches of Jesus Christ were known as Ana-Baptists and such other local names as their enemies gave them. They were not permitted to keep records or write their own history. But their enemies have said enough for us to gather a fairly good history." [10]

Consequently, if we would find Baptists early on in history, we must scrutinize the writings of their enemies who were then the ruling party. In those writings, Baptists will not be represented as Christ's churches, but as the enemies of Christ. Mention will be made of them in court records. Accounts of persecutions against "heretics" will often present Baptists to view. Records of religious disputations will introduce them to you. Histories of Roman Catholicism, Protestant sects and those dissenters who opposed them will often tell of our Baptist forefathers. The proceedings of church councils who sought to exterminate them give testimony to their patient continuance. Descriptions of the flogging and executions of Baptists who stood against the dead ritualism and worldliness of Popery often shine as beacons in Baptist history. As the "front page church" continued in her departure from New Testament truth and piety, the martyrs of Jesus shone forth as gold. We will find them - if we look carefully - although we must often view them through the smoke screen of dishonesty and fabrication. They will often be slanderously charged with the most abhorrent sins and scathingly condemned as heretics of the worst sort. **But the undeniable fact remains: people holding Baptist principles, observing Christ's ordinances and meeting in church capacity have continued to surface in every generation since the days of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry! This fact cannot be denied by any honest and informed person!**

Baptists Differentiated

Surely to any honest and unprejudiced mind these three witnesses shall resolve the matter of who the Baptists are and conversely who are actually the Baptists! However, it is imperative to point out one more thing. Baptists have waxed "respectable" in the last two hundred years or so of their existence. Being no longer viewed as "the offscouring of all things," churches abound that profess the name Baptist, but who bear little likeness to the churches of the New Testament. This has come about because the name Baptist, given to John and those who baptize with his baptism, has become socially acceptable although the old Baptist doctrines and practices have not. Once this name was used as an epithet of disdain and only those compelled by Bible principles to own it were willing to do so. Now that the name is

socially acceptable and sometimes financially advantageous, many flock to its shadow.

The devil has failed in his many attempts to “murder” the Baptists. He has put that weapon away in most parts of the world. Now he usually resorts to his more formidable weapon, “mixture.” Compromise has replaced killing in his armory. Whereas the devil failed to destroy Christ’s churches by persecution, he now seeks to persuade them away from the truth. We would warn our fellow Baptists, if we may borrow the words of Paul, “**This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you**” (Galatians 5:8).

No doubt there are many members of these quasi-Baptist (see glossary) churches who are sincere in their profession. They have been immersed *somewhere* by *someone* into *something* called a church. Perhaps it was *called* a Baptist church. We persist in the view that such an act does not necessarily constitute them members of the Lord’s church! Our spiritual forefathers would not have received them based on their immersions. Neither can we!

Today, any immersion is sanctioned as valid baptism in most religious circles. “Baptisms” are routinely accepted by many “Baptist” churches today even though administered by ministers of congregations bearing little resemblance to the churches of the New Testament. The fact that such congregations possess no valid claim to being a Scriptural body of Christ seems to matter little to many at the close of the 20th century. Any immersion is acceptable, in the eyes of the religious enthusiasts of our day, if the candidate was “sincere.” Our spiritual forefathers talked of “alien immersion” and refused to accept it as valid. The point we wish to make is that not all who claim the name are, in fact, Baptists in any historical and Scriptural sense of the word! By that we also mean to say that not all churches bearing the name Baptist are true churches of Christ!

The Baptist Name

The fact that some are sailing under false colors is insufficient reason for us to lower our banner or exchange it for another. We are aware that a few brethren are ready to throw away the name Baptist since it has been accepted by so many who are in no way true churches of Christ. To us, to do so would surely be to flee before the enemies of Christ! We do not glory in a mere name, but gladly accept the name “Baptist” for several reasons. S. E. Anderson has well written:

“First, the name Baptist is a Scriptural name. It is found fifteen times in the New Testament. It stands for the man whom Christ approved with high praise. It signifies all that John believed and taught his many converts to believe. They shared his views; they had his viewpoint as to the Lord Jesus: they were as firm believers in his Gospel and in baptism as converts could be. While it is not said they were called Baptists (no need then), they could have been so called with perfect propriety. They *were* Baptist *without* being partisan.

“Second, the name Baptist is a *descriptive name*. It describes one who believes in Christ’s death, burial and resurrection on his behalf, one who has voluntarily buried his past life of sin and has risen to walk in newness of life with Christ, one who believes all that John preached about Christ, one who believes all that Christ said about His forerunner, and one who is obligated by his baptism to exhibit the indwelling Christ in his life.

“Third, the name Baptist is *doctrinally sound*. Besides conveying the salient points of the Gospel as mentioned above... it is solidly based upon Scripture. For the Lord Jesus approved the name Baptist. He used it repeatedly. The Holy Spirit directed its use. And God the Father approved the baptism of John by His voice at the baptism of His Son.

“Fourth, the name Baptist is *unifying*. Here is one act that any convert, no matter how weak, can do in exactly the way Christ Himself observed it. It is the same for all races, for bond or free, for men or women, for all ages, for rich or poor, for the learned or illiterate, for old or young, for entire families, for every country, for every age, and it is accepted by every denomination.

No other “mode of baptism” has all these assets. **“One Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5).**

“Fifth, the name Baptist is *Christ-centered*. It points to Christ Who died and rose again for us; it points to Christ as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world; it points to Christ alone as our Saviour. It therefore denies salvation by works, or by ordinances, or by birth, or by character, or by ancestral covenant. In symbol it puts to death and buries every claim anyone has on salvation by works. It indicates, by complete submission to the baptizer as God’s agent, entire dependence upon God. This name also reminds us of John’s oft-quoted promise that Christ would baptize His followers in the Holy Spirit.” [\[11\]](#)

Having frequently been blackened by vicious and imprecise nicknames from ancient times, we consider the appellation “Baptist” a forthright and honest one. To us the name Baptist speaks of New Testament faith and practice that has successively existed since the days of Christ and His apostles. In our minds it brings to view the kind of church established by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry. It speaks to us of that Heaven-authorized gospel and gospel-baptism instituted by John and continued by Spirit-led men in every generation since then.

Baptist elder C. D. Cole had this to say about the Baptist name:

“The name Baptist is a denominational name to distinguish it from other denominations. There were no denominational names until there came to be distinct denominations. Before the time of the so-called Reformation under Martin Luther there were scattered churches under different names, and the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. The Reformation started in the Roman Catholic Church, and was only partial. The reformers took with them some of the heresies of Rome such as baptismal regeneration, a graded ministry, and a form of government much like that of Rome. And some of the Protestant denominations hated and persecuted Baptists.

“Baptists are sometimes accused of being narrow bigots because we believe Baptist churches are after the N.T. pattern. The line must be drawn

somewhere, for all the hundreds of diverse and conflicting denominations cannot be the church Christ founded and to which He promised perpetuity...

“The writer is a Baptist but not a Baptist braggart. We lay no claim to superiority in character or conduct or education. When you find a Baptist with a superiority complex, you may be sure that he is an off-brand. The churches of the first century were not made up of perfect people in character and conduct. In an experience of salvation the sinner becomes nothing in his own eyes and Christ becomes all in all. Before his conversion Saul of Tarsus was proud and self-righteous, but after he trusted Jesus as the Christ he thought of himself as less than the least of all saints. See **Ephesians 3:8; Romans 7:14-25; Philippians 3:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:9.**

“The first N.T. preacher was called John the Baptist: **Matthew 3:1; 11:13; Luke 16:16.** Proof that John’s baptism was valid is in the fact that the followers of Christ and members of the first church had only John’s baptism. The only difference between John’s baptism and that of Christ is that John’s looked forward to the coming of Christ, and since then valid baptism looks backward to the Christ who has already come. John baptized those who confessed their sins and who trusted the Christ who was to come: we baptize those who profess faith in Jesus Christ who has already come.” [\[12\]](#)

True Baptist churches follow both the instructions and the models contained in the New Testament and stand in succession to the first church. This qualifies true Baptist churches to administer valid baptism just as John and Christ’s apostles did. Both Jesus and His apostles, incidentally, submitted to John’s baptism (**Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:35-37; Acts 1:21-22**).

We can recognize no other baptism as valid, although our Protestant friends assure us that John’s baptism is not Christian baptism. If it is not, we beg, tell us just when was “Christian baptism” begun? And, we ask, just who was Divinely authorized to initiate this modern baptism? We also would want to know just when the apostles and all those obedient to John’s preaching were re-baptized with this new “Christian baptism?” We would also appreciate knowing just what this new “Christian baptism” depicts?

We believe honesty demands that those believers who are sailing under false colors (claiming to be Baptists when they are not) acknowledge their error and become sound Baptists. This would require submitting to the “baptism of John” at the hands of an ordained man administering baptism with the authority of a New Testament church. Such a “re-baptism” is repugnant to many “Baptists” who are Baptists in name only. They do not consider that Paul “re-baptized” twelve men in Ephesus because they lacked Scriptural baptism (**Acts 19:1-5**). If these “modern Baptists” remain adamant in their unwillingness to submit to Scriptural baptism, we would be gratified if they would change their colors. We believe that they would more precisely and honestly portray themselves before God and the world by removing “Baptist” from their names.

The Baptist Distinctive is the Protestant Dilemma

The following quote from one of our own generation represents a clear and thorough statement of the historic Baptist position. To point out that Baptist claims are based upon their concept of salvation and of baptism, it is stated:

“1. Any religious assembly that preaches a false gospel and/or practices a false baptism cannot be recognized as a true New Testament Church of gospel order. All such assemblies who fundamentally, characteristically and permanently preach a false gospel come under the indictment of **Galatians 1:6-9**.

“2. Salvation and a profession of faith are undeniably prerequisite to baptism. Salvation is not by means of baptism. True believing disciples are the only proper subjects for baptism. Immersion is the only proper mode of baptism.

“3. Scriptural baptism is absolutely necessary to church constitution, organization and existence, so much so, that where there is no Scriptural baptism there is no Scriptural church. No baptism, no church.

“4. There is an intimate and inevitable connection between the true doctrine of salvation and the proper administration of baptism. Scriptural baptism is the representation of and the identification with the Scriptural plan of salvation.

“5. According to the commands of Christ, the practice of the early churches of the New Testament, the Epistles of Paul, and the Confessions of Faith of all evangelical religious denominations ... baptism as an ordinance, was delivered to the New Testament church to be administered by it according to Christ’s commands until He returns.

“6. All the aspects of baptism, (the mode, subject, purpose and administrator) are irrevocably fixed and prescribed by Christ’s example and commands. These are to remain permanent and unchanged. A consistent recognition of Christ’s Kingship over the soul demands that these things be so, (**Malachi 1:6; Luke 6:46**), for Christ only has the authority to make, give or alter the doctrines and practices of the New Testament Church.

“7. Only churches of New Testament origin and New Testament order can give Scriptural baptism. Therefore, any religious society that preaches a false gospel cannot give Scriptural baptism.

“What are the **ramifications** of the concepts? Consider the further statements of the author we quote here:

“1. Strict Baptists have always believed that Catholicism is a false religion that preaches a false gospel, described no doubt in **Revelation 17:1-18:24**. Catholic assemblies cannot, therefore, give Scriptural baptism. Many others have taken the same position as to the invalidity of Catholic baptism. The Presbyterians, for example, took the same position at the Presbyterian General Assembly (Old School), May, 1845. This is recorded in “**The Collected Writings of J.H. Thornwell**” Vol. 3, pp. 277-413, Banner of Truth Edition, 1974. We state again, Catholic baptism is unscriptural, invalid, null and void.

“2. Any person with Catholic baptism has no baptism. Any denomination founded upon Catholic baptism has no baptism and therefore

no church validity. [All Protestant groups were formed by persons with Catholic baptism.] The reason?... Number 3 above: ‘No baptism, no church.’ (See R.L. Dabney’s **Lectures in Systematic Theology**,” lecture 64, pp. 774-775, for the same conclusion, i.e., ‘No baptism means no church’). [Had Presbyterian minister, author, and theologian R.L. Dabney been consistent in his practice with the definition of baptism, he would have been compelled to be a Baptist!]

“These concepts are the reasons for the “historic” Baptist practice of baptizing all those who came over to them from any religious society that is not of ‘like faith and order.’ This is why Baptists will not accept Protestant rantism. All Protestant denominations are founded upon Catholic and infant rantism.” [13] [“Rantism” from Greek “rhantizo” - to sprinkle]. [All brackets mine: C.A.P.].

At issue, then, is this: if Baptists admit that Protestant “baptisms” are Scriptural and valid, they must also admit that Romish baptisms are Scriptural and valid because Rome is the originating source of Protestant baptisms. Consider these words:

“...no Christian Pedobaptist [see glossary] has any other baptism than he received from the priests of Rome. Luther, Calvin, Zwingle, Knox, and all the first ministers, and all those who composed the first societies of the Reformers, were baptized by Roman Catholic priests, and in the Church of Rome, and consequently their baptisms are unscriptural and invalid. But if their baptisms are invalid, then their societies can not be considered churches in any sense, as there can be no church without baptism; and if not churches, Protestant ministers have no Scriptural right to preach the Gospel, or baptize others into their societies. Moreover, by so doing they deceive and mislead the people, causing them to believe they are baptized, when, in fact, they are not; causing the people to believe that they are in visible churches of Christ, when, in fact, and according to the admissions of these leaders, they are not, but in human societies that can never administer the ordinances of Christ’s Church.!” [14] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.].

This fact was recognized and agreed upon by representatives of a large Presbyterian body during the last century as follows:

“I was in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1829, (a body of about two hundred members,) when a question was sent us for decision: ‘Are the baptisms of Popish priests to be accepted by our (Presbyterian) Churches as valid Baptisms?’ It was discussed, and we should have voted ‘No,’ nearly unanimously; but an influential and more shrewd one -secretly reflecting that ALL our baptisms originally came from Popery - moved and obtained an indefinite postponement of the subject.”
[\[15\]](#)

That Roman Catholicism became so corrupt as to provoke some within her walls to attempt a reformation is a well-known fact. She had corrupted the free grace of God into a works-religion of baptismal regeneration, penances, ritual prayers, prayers for the dead, prepaid indulgences to sin, grace coming through “the sacraments,” etc., etc. Corruption of the gospel and gospel ordinances caused her to cease being a church of Christ. All agree that there can be no true church without the true gospel. This corruption also made invalid her ordinances that by this time she had perverted into soul-saving sacraments. Not being a church of Christ, she had no Divine authority to administer baptism.

Her “reformers,” upon finding themselves ejected from the Romish church, founded churches suitable to their own thinking. They had been trained as Popish priests and brought much Romish “baggage” with them over into their new “Protestant” churches. They possessed Roman Catholic baptism that was no true baptism since she was apostate. They “baptized” others with that same Romish “baptism” for that was all they knew or had. Thus the Protestant “churches” are not churches at all in the Scriptural sense. Protestant baptisms are invalid, coming from apostate Rome which was no true church of Christ.

To be consistent, Protestants MUST receive Roman Catholic baptisms as equal to their own for Protestant baptisms are nothing more than a continuation of Romish baptisms. To reject persons having Catholic baptism

would require that they “un-baptize and un-church” themselves. Upon the insistence of the individual, many Catholic priests will immerse as the mode of baptism. Protestants, if consistent, will accept these immersions as valid baptisms in spite of the damnable heresies taught by Rome. The only people on earth who can be consistent and reject such immersions are sound Baptist churches.

The pastor of one “Baptist church” in the city of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada related to me that Anglican immersions would be received by his “Baptist church” since they recognized Anglican assemblies as “Christian churches.” This illustrates the point. IF Catholic and Protestant churches are indeed churches of Christ, their immersions of believers must be valid. If such baptisms are valid, then the reception by Baptists of all such immersions is the logical conclusion that consistency demands.

Christ delegated authority to baptize to His New Testament kind of churches. Churches founded by some man are not Christ’s churches. Neither are churches which have gone off into apostasy the Lord’s churches, for if that were the case, Christ would have the Harlot for His bride! Only such regenerate persons as are immersed by Christ’s churches have Scriptural baptism. This is the Baptist distinctive and the Protestant’s dilemma.

In axiom form this can be presented in four statements.

“AXIOM I A true Church of Christ is the only organization on earth divinely authorized to preach the Gospel or to administer Church ordinances.

“AXIOM II A body, though once a true Church of Christ visible, apostatizing from its original and scriptural faith and order, and teaching doctrines in manifest contravention of them, cannot be considered a Church of Christ and its ordinances as valid.

“AXIOM III If the majority of a true church should fall away from the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, perverting the ordinances to the subversion of men’s souls, and should exclude the minority that abides by the truth, such a majority, though it should retain the name, would not be entitled

to the claims of being a Church of Christ, and all its acts and ordinances would be manifestly null and void.

“AXIOM IV The constitutional minority of any church, however small, holding fast the doctrine and order of the Gospel, though excluded and cast out by an apostate majority, must, in accordance with law and reason, be considered a true Church and its ordinances valid and scriptural.” [\[16\]](#)

There can be no doubt among Bible-believing Christians as to the apostasy of the Romish churches. Therefore it follows that her administrations are invalid. Protestant administrations, having issued from Rome, are similarly null and void of any Heavenly recognition. Only faithful Baptist churches established in succession from the first church have any claim to Divine authority to act in the matter of baptism.

Two Canadian Illustrations of Biblical Practice

As illustrative of the ongoing practice of Baptists, let us look at the following instances.

Caleb Blood in Canada

In 1802 Baptist elder Caleb Blood of the Fourth Baptist Church in Shaftsbury, Vermont volunteered to travel into what is now Ontario, Canada to do missionary work on behalf of the Shaftsbury Association. That area was then a wild and largely unsettled place. The inhabitants of this new country were British Empire Loyalists. They had not long before fled the United States and were carving out of the wilderness homes, farms and businesses for themselves. Elder Blood's allotted time for travel ran out when he reached the head of Lake Ontario - about the location of the present city of Burlington. He mentions in his journal that he could not go farther with these words:

“I must here mention a trying circumstance. Word came to me, with a request to go about fifty miles farther, to a place called Long Point Settlement, on Lake Erie, informing that there was a work of divine grace in

that place; that there were thirty or forty persons stood ready for baptism, and no administrator whom they could obtain within two hundred miles of them; but I had my appointments back through the Province, and could not go to their relief ... ” [\[17\]](#)

If Protestant clergy can administer valid baptism, the believers at Long Point Settlement were wrong to send for an ordained man - a man with authority from a Baptist church - to administer baptism. Elder Blood was wrong about the matter and needlessly upset that he could not help these people. If the administrator of baptism is unimportant, Elder Blood would no doubt have taken comfort that there were ministers of other denominations who could baptize these people. The accompanying record shows that there were Protestant ministers not far away and available to these folk at Long Point. Had he believed that Protestant ministers could administer valid baptism no doubt he would have recommended that these “thirty or forty persons” obtain the services of such a minister. The fact is that the immersions of Protestant ministers would not satisfy those people whom the Scriptures had made Baptists. These new converts knew better than to seek Scriptural baptism at the hands of Protestant ministers, and so did Elder Blood!

Neither did they believe that just any believer acting without church authority could administer valid baptism. Otherwise they might have got either Brother Fairchild or Brother Finch (both of whom were un-ordained but who preached in the Long Point area) to immerse them. Obviously these people, including Elder Blood, believed in those Baptist principles of both church authority and succession - the very things for which we contend in this volume.

Lemuel Covell and Obed Warren in Canada

The next year (1803) another Baptist elder named Lemuel Covell of Pittstown, N.Y. travelled into Ontario (then called “Upper Canada”) doing missionary work. His companion in the work was Elder Obed Warren of Salem, N.Y. These two were able to visit the Long Point area previously referred to by Elder Blood. They reported in part as follows:

“At this place we found a number of Christian brethren, who had lived a number of years without the privileges connected with Gospel ordinances for want of an administrator. They had frequently sent the most pressing requests to one and another, but had always been unsuccessful ... There are two brethren who improve in public [an old Baptist way of saying there were two un-ordained men who publicly preached] in that country, by the names of Finch and Fairchild. Brother Fairchild resides at some distance from the body of brethren, but visits them at times. Brother Finch lives among them and labors with them steadily; but neither of them are ordained, and when we arrived there, brother Finch had never been baptized.” [\[18\]](#) [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Historic Baptist doctrine and practice, based as it is on the Bible alone, allows an un-ordained brother to evangelize. That same historic doctrine and practice also maintain that without church authority (baptism, church membership and ordination) none can properly administer the ordinances. This is the pattern of the New Testament! The pattern in the Book of Acts is clear: men baptized who had been previously baptized and ordained as either elders or deacons.

While there was a gathering of brethren who maintained Baptist principles in the Long Point area of Upper Canada, these very principles forbade them organizing themselves together as a church of Christ. Without someone coming to them with church authority to baptize them and set them in gospel order, they knew they could not be a church after the New Testament pattern. The two accounts cited above prove that Baptists both in Canada and the United States believed this, or they prove nothing at all.

Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find any endorsement of “freelance” organizing of churches or baptizing of converts! Indeed, Christ Himself did not enter His ministry of preaching and baptizing (through His disciples) until He (and they) had been baptized by John the Baptist.

John the Baptist is the only man in the world who had authority to baptize who was, himself, unbaptized. Remember, John the Baptist had direct commission from Heaven to preach and to baptize (**John 1:6, 33**). Christ

commissioned His church to carry on the work of preaching, baptizing and teaching, if we may sum up the “great commission” in that fashion (**Matthew 28:19-20**). The specific command being given to a specific entity (His church) automatically excludes any and all other entities having authority to carry on that specific work.

Bear in mind that these early missionaries to Canada held to sound Baptist practice in this matter. Notice also that these events took place PRIOR to the coinage of the term “Landmarkism.” It is also important to note that these men represented churches in the northeastern part of the young United States at a time shortly after the American Revolution. These were churches that had recent ties with Britain and other European countries. The two foregoing incidents illustrate that such practices were usual and approved procedures among mainline Baptists of that era.

If the reader will bear in mind the distinctions set forth in this present chapter, Baptist claims will be clearly understood as stated in Chapter Two: The Testimony of the Baptists.

[1] J.G. Bow, WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE AND WHY THEY BELIEVE IT, (Nashville, The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, n.d.), pp. 4, 5. Information furnished by The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee indicates that agencies of the S.B.C. published this book by J. G. Bow from about the turn of the century until 1925.

[2] News Item from “CVN” quoted in the PLAINS BAPTIST CHALLENGER, E. L. Bynum, ed., (Lubbock, TX, Tabernacle Baptist Church, April, 1990), p. 4.

[3] “Evangelicals, Catholics Edging Closer”, Rene DeCair, Associated Press Writer, (Tulsa World, April 9, 1994), p. 16.

[4] DeCair, *ibid.*

[5] W.A. Jarrell, BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY, (Dallas, 1894), p. 6

[6] C.D. Cole, DEFINITIONS OF DOCTRINE: THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH, Vol. III, (Lexington, KY, Bryan Station Baptist Church, n.d.), p. 12.

[7] Cole, *ibid.*, p. 16.

[8] Robert Robinson, ECCLESIASTICAL RESEARCHES, (Cambridge, Francis Hodson, 1790), [reprinted by Church History Research & Archives], pp. 134, 135.

[9] That various Protestant powers actively persecuted Baptists and others who dissented from whatever group was the “established church” is a fact of history though often denied. Michael Servetus (1511-1553) “died in Calvin’s Geneva, condemned as a heretic.” (William P. Barker, WHO’S WHO IN CHURCH HISTORY, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1977, p. 251.) He was “burned in 1553 with the apparent tacit approval of Calvin” (*ibid.* p. 252). The oft praised Philip Melancthon (1497-1560), ranks with Luther and Calvin as one of the ‘greatest of the Reformers.’ Baptists should be aware that, “He applauded...the execution of Servetus” and “recommended that the rejection of infant baptism, or of original sin, or of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, should be punished as capital crimes,” (Schaff, quoted by Will Durant, THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION, Vol. VI, NY, Simon & Schuster, 1957, pp. 423-424). He was appointed over the secular inquisition that persecuted the Anabaptists of Germany and asked, “Why should we pity such men more than God does?” as he was sure that God had destined all Anabaptists to Hell (Smith, quoted by Will Durant, *ibid.* p. 423).

[10] J.H. Grime, WHY AM I A BAPTIST, (Lebanon, TN, self publ., n.d.), p. 11.

[11] W. E. Anderson, THE FIRST BAPTIST, (Little Rock, AR., The Challenge Press, 1972), pp. 120, 121.

[12] C.D. Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[13] Bill Lee, Publisher's Foreword to A COMPLETE BODY OF DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL DIVINITY, (John Gill, London, Matthew and Leigh, 1809), [reprinted by The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., Paris, AR., 1987], pp. vii, viii.

[14] J.R. Graves, TRILEMMA, (Texarkana, Bogard Press, 1969), pp. 13, 14.

[15] J.F. Bliss, POPYRY AND PROTESTANTISM COMPARED, quoted by Graves, *ibid.*, p. 16.

[16] Graves, *ibid.*, pp. 119-121.

[17] Stuart Ivison and Fred Rosser, THE BAPTISTS IN UPPER AND LOWER CANADA BEFORE 1820, (Toronto, Toronto University Press, 1956), p. 36.

[18] Ivison and Rosser, *ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FIRST WITNESS: THE TESTIMONY OF THE BAPTISTS

It is altogether necessary that the claims of Baptists be voiced because many, even of our own people, have not been grounded in Baptist history. Being unfamiliar with their own past, they are often adrift among the flotsam and jetsam of popular notions regarding “church history.”

You may be amazed to read in this second chapter what Baptists have historically asserted as pertaining to themselves and their beginning. You may be disturbed as the truth concerning other “churches” becomes apparent. This may especially be so if you are not a Baptist. It will be demonstrated that mainline Baptists have consistently believed in the high antiquity of the Baptist churches. It will further be demonstrated that these Baptists affirmed that the Lord’s true New Testament churches were to be found exclusively among those people known as Baptists. We are not saying that every “Baptist church” is a New Testament church, but we are saying that every authentic Baptist church is a New Testament church.

Many well-known Baptist preachers, living and asleep in Christ, could be subpoenaed to testify here. Prominent ministers of years gone by such as **J.B. Moody**, pastor and a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; **B.H. Carroll**, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco, Texas and founder of Southwestern Baptist Seminary; **Jesse Mercer**, leader among Georgia Baptists for whom Mercer University was named; **J.R. Graves**, pastor and publisher; **J. Newton Brown**, pastor, author and professor in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York and Virginia; **John A. Broadus**, pastor, and leader in the Southern Baptist Convention; **William Williams**, pastor in New York; **R.B.C. Howell**, pastor in Nashville and for many years president of the Southern Baptist Convention; **George C. Lorrimer** who served Churches in Kentucky, New York, Boston and Chicago; **A.C. Dayton**

of New Jersey, editor, author and corresponding secretary for an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention; **T.T. Eaton**, author and pastor of churches in Tennessee and Virginia; and a host of others could be cited. Many Baptist authorities as well-known and respected as these few mentioned could also be heard to testify to the apostolic origin of the Baptists.

While not all who held to the apostolic origin of the Baptists maintained strict Baptist practice, we insist that consistency demands our following these Biblical, historic Baptist practices. Those whom we shall call upon to testify were prominent in their day and highly esteemed among their peers. Their honesty was without question and their knowledge cannot be discounted.

While we are not given to the use of titles honoring men, we include some of the educational achievements of the following witnesses lest any claim that these were uneducated men. Letters following a man's name do not necessarily make him right, but do indicate he has completed a certain level in his studies.

The Testimony of John T. Christian, A.M., D.D., L.L.D.

Pastor and historian John T. Christian served as professor of history and librarian from 1919 to 1925 at the Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist Bible Institute of New Orleans (now New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary). He speaks as our first Baptist witness, representing Baptists of the early part of the present century. He wrote the following endorsement:

“I have no question in my own mind that there has been a historical succession of Baptists from the days of Christ to the present.” [\[1\]](#)

This apt and concise statement is the historic Baptist position regarding Baptist churches. Many so-called Baptists of our own day are either untaught concerning these things or have apostatized from this ancient position. Their departure in no way proves the old to be error, but rather speaks volumes concerning the sad spiritual state of our times.

The Southern Baptist Convention published Dr. Christian's two-volume history from its first edition in 1922 until they permitted it to go out of print after the non-Landmark or Protestant view took over their seminaries. The founders and many early leaders of the S.B.C. were sound Baptists - by that we mean "Landmarkers" - and men of good intention whose writings are a great help to Bible-loving Christians. Current leaders within the S.B.C. have almost unanimously repudiated its historic doctrinal position and historic "Landmark" Baptist practices. By dropping the publication of Dr. Christian's two-volume history, powers within the S.B.C. testify to their own departure from the Biblical faith and practice of their "Landmark" fathers.

The Testimony of T. G. Jones, D.D.

Let us step back several years into the nineteenth century and hear the testimony of another eminent member of the Southern Baptist Convention. Tiberius Gracchus Jones, as a teenager, was brought to repentance and faith in Christ and subsequently baptized by James B. Taylor, pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia. When about eighteen years old, Jones entered the Virginia Baptist Seminary and was soon licensed to preach by the same church which authorized his baptism. After graduating as valedictorian at the University of Virginia and later graduating with the same honor from William and Mary College, he became pastor of the Freemason Street Baptist Church of Norfolk. Later he served as pastor of the Franklin Square Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland. After the American civil war, Jones was recalled to pastor the Norfolk church where he remained until elected president of Richmond College (the new name for the Virginia Baptist Seminary). After several years, he was called a third time to the Freemason Street Baptist Church in Norfolk. Later he was elected pastor of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee where he remained for many years.

Consider some of T.G. Jones' achievements. While pastor of the church at Norfolk he was elected president of Wake Forest College, North Carolina, and a few years later, he was chosen to become president of Mercer University, Georgia. Both these appointments, however, he refused as he felt he must remain faithful to his pastoral responsibilities. Besides published

addresses and articles in various periodicals, T.G. Jones wrote three small books. [2]

Consider the following words of commendation by a man of his own time.

“Dr. Jones is regarded as one of the finest pulpit orators of the nation, and highly esteemed by his charge in Nashville.

“He has been for several sessions one of the vice-presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, and is now first vice-president of the board of trustees of the Southern Baptist Seminary. He is possessed of a rare dignity of manners, fine scholarship, and a blessed record.” [3]

Hear what this eminent Southern Baptist pastor and scholar had to say about the origin of the Baptist Churches.

“...They [the Baptists] have always maintained that their churches are as ancient as Christianity itself. That their foundations were laid by no less honorable hands than those of Christ and his apostles. In all ages since the first, the Baptists have believed their denomination more ancient than themselves. The American Baptists deny that they owe their origin to Roger Williams. The English Baptists will not grant that John Smyth or Thomas Helwysse was their founder. The Welsh Baptists strenuously contend that they received their creed in the first century, from those who had obtained it, direct, from the apostles themselves. The Dutch Baptists trace their spiritual pedigree up to the same source. The German Baptists maintained that they were older than the Reformation, older than the corrupt hierarchy which it sought to reform. The Waldensian Baptists boasted an ancestry far older than Waldo, older than the most ancient of their predecessors in the vales of Piedmont. So, too, may we say of the Lollards, Henricians, Paterines, Paulicians, Donatists, and other ancient Baptists, that they claim an origin more ancient than that of the men or the circumstances from which they derived their peculiar appellations. If in any instance the stream of descent is lost to human eye, in ‘the remote depths of antiquity,’ they maintain that it ultimately reappears, and reveals its source in Christ and his apostles.

“Now we think that this singular unanimity of opinion among the Baptists of all countries and of all ages, respecting their common origin in apostolic and primitive times - a unanimity the existence of which might easily be established by numerous quotations from historians and other writers among them, is of itself a fact of no little value, as furnishing a presumptive argument of much force in support of the Baptist claim. In England and in the United States especially, the Baptists are now numerous, intelligent, and in every way as respectable as any denomination of Christian people. Among them are men, not only of unimpeachable moral and Christian character, but of profound learning and extensive historical research. And all these, as well as the humblest and most unlearned among them, believe that Baptists, (whether with or without the name, is a matter of indifference,) have existed ‘from the days of John the Baptist until now.’ [4] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Such plain words by so eminent a Southern Baptist cannot be lightly discounted. This writer could only wish that the successors of T.G. Jones might be as solid in their stand for the truth of the Lord’s Churches. It is an incontestable fact of history that at one time the ministers as well as the rank and file in the Southern Baptist Convention were, almost to a man, sound in their church views. By that we mean that they held to the view that the true churches of Christ were to be found among those people known as Baptists and that Baptist churches of their day originated during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

It is noteworthy that this particular volume was published by the American Baptist Publication Society of Philadelphia as this indicates that these views were those held by Baptists in the North as well as in the southern United States. Indeed, such strong church views were once universally held among mainline Baptists, but lately have been cast aside by many.

The Testimony of Joseph Belcher, D.D.

Going back farther in time and across the Atlantic we consider Joseph Belcher who was born in Birmingham, England in 1794 and converted in 1814. In 1819 he was ordained as pastor in Somersham and later served other churches. He became pastor of a Baptist church in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1844 and after serving there for three years relocated to Philadelphia and the Mount Tabor Church.

Initially, we shall hear from Belcher's enormous work of more than a thousand pages which was praised by the secular and religious press of its day and by representatives of the Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, Lutheran and Presbyterian denominations for its honesty, fairness and comprehensiveness. Several of these testimonials are to be found toward the forepart of the volume, placed there as a matter of advertisement. Joseph Belcher wrote:

“In proceeding to sketch the History of the Baptist body at large, their writers rejoice that early historical documents are in existence which very materially aid them. They cannot, they say, but be thankful to Mosheim [see glossary] when he tells them that their origin is hidden in the depths of antiquity, because such a testimony, like that of Cardinal Hosius [see glossary], when he says that the Baptists have furnished martyrs for twelve hundred years, goes to show that they are not so modern in their origin as some recent writers would pretend.” [5] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.].

Again Dr. Belcher speaks of Baptist claims to exclusive perpetuity when he wrote:

“But as the Baptists lay claim to the highest antiquity, even to be the lineal descendants of the primitive church...” [6]

We quote Belcher in a later work of a similar nature, where he testifies in the clearest of language.

“It will be seen that the Baptists claim the high antiquity of the commencement of the Christian church. They can trace a succession of those who have believed the same doctrine, and administered the same ordinances, directly up to the apostolic age.” [7]

Surely no clarification of this testimony is required!

The Testimony of William Cathcart, D.D.

Long time pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. Cathcart was born of Scotch-Irish stock in the north of Ireland in 1826. Brought up a Presbyterian, he was converted early in life and received Baptist baptism in 1846. His higher education was in the University of Glasgow, Scotland and in Rawdon College, Yorkshire, England. He arrived in North America in November of 1853 and in December that year became pastor of the Third Baptist Church of Groton in Mystic River, Connecticut. He was called to take the oversight of the Philadelphia church in 1857.

Cathcart wrote several books and was active in Baptist affairs. He edited an encyclopedia (a sizeable volume of more than 1300 pages). In this large work he obtained assistance from nearly seventy principal Baptist ministers in both Canada and the United States. Consequently his testimony can also be said to be the testimony of many other Baptist ministers as well. His article entitled, "Baptists, General Sketch of the" commences thus:

"The Baptist denomination was founded by Jesus during his earthly ministry. Next to the Teacher of Nazareth, our great leaders were the apostles, and the elders, bishops, and evangelists, who preached Christ in their times. The instructions of our Founder are contained in the four Gospels, the heaven-given teachings of our earliest ministers are in the inspired Epistles. The first Baptist missionary journal was the Acts of the Apostles." [\[8\]](#)

Surely no person can read the foregoing and doubt that Cathcart believed that Baptist churches were the true churches of Christ! Those nearly seventy ministers in both Canada and the United States evidently held similar views to have contributed to such a work and to have their names connected with it.

The Testimony of Charles Spurgeon

Charles Haddon Spurgeon is said to be the most extensively read preacher since the apostles. His books and sermons have been reprinted numerous times both as collections and as individual pieces. Spurgeon (1834-1892) was converted during his teenage years and shortly thereafter began to preach. He was privileged to preach to multitudes both in rented auditoriums and in the meeting houses of his own church in London, England. Under Spurgeon's leadership this congregation built a meeting house known as the Metropolitan Tabernacle which would seat six thousand people. Whereas Mr. Spurgeon was not nearly as conscientious in church polity as we think consistent with Bible principles, he evidences a clear understanding of the origin of Baptist churches.

Before the congregation moved into the Metropolitan Tabernacle, while still meeting at the New Park Street location in 1860, Spurgeon preached these words:

“I am not ashamed of the denomination to which I belong, sprung as we are, direct from the loins of Christ, having never passed through the turbid stream of Romanism, and having an origin apart from all dissent or Protestantism, because we have existed before all other sects...” [\[9\]](#)

During the next year, 1861, after moving to the new Tabernacle, Spurgeon proclaimed:

“We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the reformation, we were reformers before Luther or Calvin were born; we never came from the church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves. We have always existed from the very days of Christ, and our principles, sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel underground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents.” [\[10\]](#)

Later, that same year Spurgeon boldly proclaimed for all the world to hear:

“And now it seems to me, at this day, when any say to us, ‘You, as a denomination, what great names can you mention? What fathers can you speak of?’ We may reply, ‘More than any other under heaven, for we are the old apostolic Church that have never bowed to the yoke of princes yet; we, known among men, in all ages, by various names, such as Donatists, Novatians, [sic] Paulicians, Petrobrussians, Cathari, Arnoldists, Hussites, Waldenses, Lollards, and Anabaptists, have always contended for the purity of the Church, and her distinctness and separation from human government. Our fathers were men inured to hardships, and unused to ease. They present to us, their children, an unbroken line which comes legitimately from the apostles, not through the filth of Rome, not by the manipulations of prelates, but by the Divine life, the Spirit’s anointing, the fellowship of the Son in suffering and of the Father in truth.” [\[11\]](#)

Such evidence shows that Mr. Spurgeon was not backward about openly and frequently speaking out concerning the history of the people now called Baptists! This writer wishes all Baptist ministers were so forward in this matter!

In 1881, some TWENTY YEARS LATER, Spurgeon was still preaching the same things regarding the origin of Baptists. It is most significant that after twenty years of further study, ministry, and association with both Baptists and others, Mr. Spurgeon still believed in the apostolic origin and perpetuity of Baptist churches. He declared:

“History has hitherto been written by our enemies, who never would have kept a single fact about us upon the record if they could have helped it, and yet it leaks out every now and then that certain poor people called Anabaptists were brought up for condemnation. From the days of Henry II [A.D. 1154-1189] to those of Elizabeth [1558-1603] we hear of certain unhappy heretics who were hated of all men for the truth’s sake which was in them. We read of poor men and women, with their garments cut short, turned out into the fields to perish in the cold, and anon of others who were burnt at Newington for the crime of Anabaptism. Long before your Protestants were known of, these horrible Anabaptists, as they were unjustly called, were

protesting for the ‘one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.’” [12] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.].

Strangely, there are a good many so-called “reformed Baptists” (a creature we think to be an impossibility and a contradiction in terms) who glory in Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons and writings regarding soteriology (the doctrine of salvation), but who utterly disregard these statements regarding ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church). It is certainly worthy of note that Mr. Spurgeon did not date the Baptist origin as having occurred during, or subsequent to, the Protestant Reformation. In the last quote he specifically mentions Henry II whose reign was some four hundred years prior to the Protestant Reformation which was, of course, the date of the origin of Protestant churches.

The Testimony of John Ashworth

John W. Ashworth was pastor to the Baptist Church which met in George Street Chapel, Plymouth, England in A.D. 1879. In that year he preached both before his own church and before the Western Association of Baptist Churches two sermons on “Baptist Principles and History.” These sermons with notes and appendix were “published by request” running at least to a third edition and twenty-five thousand printed copies. Elder Ashworth said,

“No such thing as Infant Baptism was known in England for the first six centuries.”

“Going back to the time of William the Conqueror, [A.D. 1066-1087] we find that the Baptists had spread so rapidly that the Archbishop of Canterbury, [Lanfranc] seeing that many of the nobles as well as of the poor had adopted their sentiments wrote a book against them, in which he complained, as Archbishop Egbert did of the Cathari (Puritans) about the same time, that they were ‘very pernicious to the Catholic faith; FOR THEY MAINTAINED THEIR OPINIONS BY AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE:’ a great crime in those days, and still a great inconvenience, oft-times, to those

who prefer the traditions and customs of men to the commandments of God! But the Baptists flourished, spite of the Archbishop's book; and therefore the King was induced to issue an edict, that 'those who denied the Pope should not trade with his subjects.'" [13] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Ashworth identifies the Paulicians as Baptists when he cites Evan's *Early English Baptists*, vol. i, in his footnote and says in the text,

"In the twelfth century thirty Baptists, probably Paulicians, were put to death at Oxford." [14]

By identifying the Paulicians as Baptists Ashworth is saying that the Baptists had a continual existence although known at times by other nicknames. Incidentally, he mentions that during the reign of Charles II, Baptists suffered more than other groups because of their open stand for religious and civil liberty. He goes on to say,

"It was during that shameful reign that Bunyan [John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*] was imprisoned, and Keach was pilloried; and Abraham Cheare, the beloved Pastor of this Church, was 'done to death' on Drake's Island." [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

With regard to religious groups other than Baptists Ashworth sums up with,

"And most of the 'other churches' are 'but of yesterday' compared with us. Neither the English Episcopal Church nor the Presbyterians can go back more than about three hundred years; the Independents trace their origin to the Brownists of the latter part of the sixteenth century; the Wesleyans began with John Wesley, about one hundred and forty years ago; and the Plymouthists, of every shade of opinion, are only of this generation." [15]

What more can be demanded? Here is clear testimony from associational Baptists in England as to the origin and continued existence of Baptists from the days of the apostles!

The Testimony of J.M Cramp, D.D.

John M. Cramp, was born in England, July 25, 1796. He served as pastor in London, the Isle of Thanet and Hastings, Sussex. He “took charge in 1844 of the Baptist college, Montreal, Canada; became president of Acadia College, Nova Scotia, in 1851, and retired in 1869 from that position.”” [16]

Published in Canada, the following statements by J.M. Cramp are to the point. While we may not agree with all Dr. Cramp’s other conclusions, he declared,

“Christian history, in the first century, was strictly and properly Baptist history, although the word “Baptist,” as a distinctive appellation, was not then known. How could it be? How was it possible to call any Christians Baptist Christians, when all were Baptists?”

And with regard to that group of Baptists referred to as Donatists, Dr. Cramp wrote the following clear testimony,

“In the fourth century the DONATISTS raised the reform standard. They constituted about one-half of the Christian population of Northern Africa. Purity was their main object; they also, as well as the Novatians, called themselves CATHARI - the PURE - PURITANS. Other men called them DONATISTS, after Donatus, whose leadership they followed. Robert Robinson, a learned writer of ecclesiastical history, in the last century, says they were ‘Trinitarian Baptists.’ The Rev. Thomas Long, Prebendary of Exeter, [a Church of England clergyman] whose ‘History of the Donatists’ was published in 1677, asserts that they ‘were generally anabaptistical; for they did not only rebaptize the adults that came over to them, but refused to baptize children, contrary to the practice of the Church, as appears by several discourses of St. Augustine, (Page 103).’” [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Dr. Cramp points out that Augustine opposed Anabaptists in his day. Augustine lived from A.D. 354 to 430. Here we find Augustine serving as another witness, albeit an unwitting one, to the antiquity of the Baptists!

Speaking of his own times, Cramp likens Baptists of his day to those in the Baptist succession known by other names. He wrote,

“Every age brought to view champions for the true and right: and we Baptists are the Novatians, the Donatists, the Paulicians, the Petrobrussians of the nineteenth century.”

In answer to those who allege that the aforementioned groups were all heretics of the worst sort, Dr. Cramp responds with,

“Some one starts up in dismay; - ‘Sir! all those people were heretics and schismatics!’ Hard words, these! But we have been used to them. They called our Lord himself a ‘Samaritan,’ and said that ‘he had a devil.’ The fact is, that the dominant part always assumed to be the orthodox, and bade the people believe that those who differed from them were heretics. Trinitarians were orthodox in the days of Constantine, and the Arians were banished. The Arians were the orthodox in the next reign, that of Constantius, and then the Trinitarians were banished. These alternations were continually taking place. And so it comes to this, that if you want to trace the true church of God, you must follow her down the line of those who have been stigmatized, and their names cast out as evil. Patriotism has been oftener found at the headsman’s block than in kings’ palaces.” [17]

Clear words, indeed, from this Canadian Baptist who knew the origin of sound Baptist churches! Oh, that today’s Canadian Baptists knew and stood with Brother Cramp.

The Testimony of Thomas Crosby

Going farther back in time we call upon another outstanding Baptist to give his testimony in this affair. While those previously quoted lived during or after the middle 1800’s when “church truth” became a much disputed issue in some places, Crosby predates that period of debate by more than a hundred years! Let the words of another speak of the work of this man Thomas Crosby, who:

“... was a London Baptist of great influence in our denomination. He was married to a daughter of the celebrated Benjamin Keach and taught an advanced school for young gentlemen. Being a Baptist deacon for many years, he was selected to make the usual statement on behalf of the church when Dr. Gill was ordained the pastor of the church of which Mr. Crosby was a member.

“Mr. Stinton, the brother-in-law of Thomas Crosby, and the predecessor of Dr. Gill, had collected materials for a work on Baptist history, which was never published. These materials were given to Crosby ...” [\[18\]](#)

It is worthy of note, as quoted above, that Crosby was a respected leader in his own church: a church of considerable distinction and whose leaders exercised much influence on Baptist life. Notice should also be taken that much material was gathered by Mr. Stinton and passed on to Mr. Crosby who published his FIRST volume of the *History Of The English Baptists* in 1738. Being criticized for using “secondary sources,” Crosby then made original investigations and published other volumes. He wrote the following in his second volume after personal research and study.

“This great prophet John, had immediate commission from heaven, **Luke iii 2**, before he entered upon the actual administration of his office. And as the English Baptists adhere closely to this principle, that John the Baptist was by divine command, the first commissioned to preach the gospel, and baptize by immersion, those that receive it; and that this practice has ever since been maintained and continued in the world to this present day; so it may not be improper to consider the state of religion in this kingdom; it being agreed on all hands that the plantation of the gospel here was very early, even in the Apostles days.” [\[19\]](#)

Crosby candidly observes the beginning of Scriptural baptism and the perpetual existence of this ordinance since its beginning. Understanding that Baptists have historically held the ordinances to be church-ordinances, that is, that they are to be observed in and by a (local) church only, it follows that the perpetuation of the ordinances necessitates the perpetual existence of Baptist churches. Further, Brother Crosby testifies to the gospel being

brought to Britain during the days of the apostles! This is an important consideration in the history of the Lord's churches.

The Testimony of Joseph Hooke

The next testimony from the Baptists themselves will be from the Englishman Joseph Hooke. Again it should be noted that these words were penned long before the dispute over church succession came along. Hooke's work, published in A.D. 1701, states:

“Thus having shewed negatively, when this sect called Anabaptists did not begin; we shall shew in the next place affirmatively, when it did begin; for a beginning it had, and it concerns us to enquire for the fountain head of this sect; for if it was sure that it were no older than the Munster fight... I would resolve to forsake it, and would persuade others to do so too. That religion that is not as old as Christ and his Apostles, is too new for me.

“But secondly, Affirmatively, we are fully persuaded, and therefore do boldly though humbly, assert, that this sect is the very same sort of people that were first called Christians in Antioch, **Acts 11:26**. But sometimes called Nazarenes, **Acts 24:5**. And as they are everywhere spoke against now, even as they were in the Primitive Times.

“And sometimes anciently they were called Anabaptists, as they have been of late times, and for the same cause, for when others innovated in the worship of God and changed the subject in baptism, they kept on their way, and men grew angry, and for mending an error, they called them Anabaptists, and so they came by the name, which is very ancient...” [\[20\]](#)

The undeniable fact is that Joseph Hooke and other English Baptists held to the view now known as historic “Landmarkism.” The fact that Hooke lived more than 150 years before that nickname was coined proves that while the nickname “Landmarker” originated then, the historic “Landmark” view was not invented in the mid-1800's as some liberals contend. Historic

“Landmarkism” holds the old view held by Baptists down through the centuries.

The Testimony of John Gill, D.D.

Augustus Toplady, author of the well-known hymn “Rock Of Ages,” among others, gave this testimony to our present witness: “If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning it was Gill.” [21] This comment on the scholarship of John Gill takes on a whole new light when it is remembered that Toplady was a well-known and pious Church of England priest who thought so much of Gill’s learning to attend “frequently at a week-night lecture of Dr. Gill’s!” [22] When a Church of England clergyman goes often to hear a Baptist preach, that’s news!

John Gill produced a voluminous commentary on the whole Bible and *A Body Of Doctrinal And Practical Divinity*, as theological works were then known, as well as other writings. He served as pastor to the London church which was earlier served by Benjamin Keach and later by C.H. Spurgeon. He wrote the following concerning his understanding of the churches of Christ hidden away in some European mountains.

“...I should think the valleys of Piedmont, which lie between France and Italy, are intended, where God has preserved, and continued a set of witnesses to the truth, in a succession, from the beginning of the apostacy [sic] to the present time, living in obscurity, and in safety, so far as not to be utterly destroyed...” [23]

No one who is even *slightly* aware of the history of that branch of our Baptist forefathers kept hidden away in the valleys of the Piedmont, can doubt that Gill here speaks of Baptist succession as being continual from the days of the apostles. No other inference can be drawn from his statement! Had “church truth” been a problem and an issue in Gill’s day, he would have doubtless had more to say.

The testimony of these Canadian, American and English Baptists prove that historic “Landmarkism” was not a view restricted to some minor segment of Baptists. These views did not originate with - nor were they limited to - an insignificant number of Baptists located primarily “down south” in the United States as has sometimes been charged.

The “Landmark” view - by that we mean the historic Baptist view - asserts that Christ founded His church during His earthly ministry from persons prepared by John the Baptist. The historic view is that churches issuing out from that first church and of the same sort as that church have existed in succession ever since the first one. Sadly, some of these men whom we have called upon to testify were not always consistent in all their practice with this historic view, but the fact remains that they held to such a view! (This fact should spur modern Baptists toward being consistent!)

Of course the reason quasi-Baptists and Protestants reject this view is that to admit its veracity would “un-baptize” and “un-church” them. It would require them to submit to “the baptism of John,” the only baptism authorized by God and therefore recognized in the Scriptures as valid. Many are too proud to admit error and abandon man-made churches because of the social stigma attached to strict Baptist practice. Thus many are unwilling to submit to the “**baptism of John.**” There were some religionists in Jesus’ day, like those of our own, who would not submit to John’s baptism *at the hands of Christ’s apostles*. It was said of these that they “rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him” (**Luke 7:30**).

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM BAPTIST CLAIMS

The conclusions at which all must arrive, if our witnesses are correct, are these:

(1) among the people now called Baptists are to be found the *true* churches of Christ:

(2) all other religious groups have too recent a beginning, were founded by some man and consequently are not churches of Christ at all:

(3) all other religious groups lack Divine authority to perpetuate the ordinances or to carry out the commission. Therefore the baptisms of all other religious groups are null and void of any Heavenly recognition though they may carry much weight with religiously inclined people of this present time.

A narrow and bigoted view, you say? Indeed, in our day of looseness, liberalism and religious inclusiveness, it may seem so. This historic Baptist view is the very view so hated by the religionists of days gone by. It is just as detested by many in today's man-made churches. The unwillingness of Baptists to concede that man-made churches are just as good as the church that Christ built brings down the wrath of those who think their organization as good as Christ's. Surely every true Christian will admit that a church which follows the Bible is better than one which does not. (By that we do *not* mean that the people are "better," but that it is better to obey God's Word than to discard it.) This "narrow and bigoted" view is the view held by our "anabaptist" fathers of bygone days and is the view held consistently by significant numbers of Baptists of all generations.

Example 1: Abraham Booth

Long before healthy Baptists were nicknamed "Landmarkers" we find Baptists writing and speaking in defense of the old historic view which is now so hated. In A.D. 1778 Abraham Booth, an English Baptist, wrote a volume entitled, *A Defense for the Baptists in Which They Are Vindicated from the Imputation of Laying an Unwarrantable Stress on the Ordinance of Baptism and Against the Charge of Bigotry in Refusing Communion at the Lord's Table to Pedobaptists*. While such lengthy titles are no longer in vogue, this one speaks volumes to our point. Baptists in 1778 thought Scriptural baptism to be essential to church fellowship. They would not admit that baby baptizers were baptized. Therefore they would not admit them to membership in Baptist churches based on their infant "baptisms" and

consequently would not allow them to partake of the Lord's Table in Baptist churches.

Example 2: John Spittlehouse and John More

In A.D. 1652, more than 125 years previous to Abraham Booth's writing, two English Baptists, John Spittlehouse and John More published a volume entitled *A Vindication of the Continued Succession of the Primitive Church of Jesus Christ (Now Scandalously Termed Anabaptists) from the Apostles Unto this Present Time.*" [24] Here we have another lengthy title according to the style of the day, but which witnesses clearly concerning historic Baptist belief about themselves and their churches.

While modern Baptists would not agree, perhaps, with some interpretations of prophecy held by Spittlehouse and More, ten important points were clearly maintained by them in this little volume. They vigorously held:

1. That the true or Primitive Church of Jesus Christ was extant in their day (A.D. 1652) in England and was then slanderously nicknamed "anabaptist."

2. That Christ's Churches have never been a part of nor in communion with the false churches.

3. That Christ's Church has had a continual succession and therefore a continual existence since He founded it.

4. That true Churches are visible societies of saints following the practices, patterns and teachings of the apostles.

5. That these true Churches have preserved the ordinances (baptism and the supper) of Jesus Christ since He gave them.

6. That Catholicism and Protestantism originated from the same source.

7. That Roman Catholicism is the Harlot and Protestant Churches are the Daughters of the Harlot, neither being Churches of Christ.

8. That Catholic priests and Protestant ministers have no valid ordinations and are not ministers of Christ.

9. That the “Protestant Reformation” was not of God, but resulted in false churches being formed and that these false churches were compromised in doctrine and practice with Rome.

10. That there was no need for a “Reformation” inasmuch as Christ’s Churches never all went into apostasy.

Surely no one can be aware of such writings as this and honestly maintain that mainline Baptists have thought themselves to be a Protestant sect originating during the so-called Reformation. Sound Baptists have continually maintained that it is among themselves that the true churches established by Christ are to be found! Baptists in every generation since the apostles have consistently maintained that their origin was older than themselves!

The evidence is clear: Baptists of earlier times recognized that individuals in other churches might be saved, safe and going to Heaven, but they refused to recognize these other religious groups as churches of Christ. They would not accept their immersions as Scriptural. It is important that the reader realize that Baptists of days past took issue with other groups not over the mode of baptism but over the matter of which church had authority from God to baptize.

The historic leaders of all major religious groups agreed that immersion was the original mode of baptism.” [25] Even John Wesley (1703-1791) refused to sprinkle babies unless they were “weak or sickly,” but rather insisted on immersing them according to the Church of England rule of his day! Obviously, then, the contention with Baptists was not over mode, but authority! This cannot be stated too strongly. The facts are these. All mainline Protestant and Catholic groups historically immersed except in instances of sickness, etc., hence they called sprinkling “clinic baptism” (on

those few occasions when allowed). The old Baptists took issue with Catholics and Protestants alike, not because they sprinkled - for they seldom did - but rather because, they viewed the Catholics as apostates and the Protestants as man-made organizations. Old Baptists held that neither could be a true church of Christ and therefore refused to recognize their “administrations,” i.e. ordinances, as valid, regardless of mode.

The Baptists of days gone by counted the members of both Protestant and Catholic groups as unbaptized! This is the view and practice of a multitude of Baptist churches of our own day and, we believe, the Scriptural view.

Baptists maintain that a view, be it ever so narrow, is not bigotry IF that view is true according to Scripture. Thus *sound* Baptists have always held to the Scripture as the ONLY rule of faith and practice. May it ever be so!

Let no one say that this “narrow” view was a minority view held only by a few Baptists. Baptists maintain, and have ever maintained, that they have Christ as their Founder. They maintain they have perpetually existed since He built the first church. They insist that they have remained separate and pure from all man-made “churches.” This uniqueness can be the only foundation for their continued existence.

To teach that Baptists are merely a sect within Protestantism is to sow the seeds of Baptist annihilation. Indeed, if Baptist churches are merely man-made organizations, let them cease their separate existence and join with the Protestant “evangelical” churches. If Baptist churches are merely a sect within Protestantism there is no valid reason for Baptist separateness. If, however, their existence is apostolical and their faith and practice Biblical, let them continue to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

[1] John T. Christian, A HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS (Texarkana, Bogard Press, 1922), Vol. 1, p. 5, 6.

[2] T. G. Jones wrote the following books: THE DUTIES OF PASTORS TO CHURCHES, (Charleston, Southern Baptist Publication Society); THE BAPTISTS: THEIR ORIGIN, CONTINUITY, PRINCIPLES, SPIRIT, POLITY, POSITION, AND INFLUENCE. A VINDICATION, (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society); THE GREAT MISNOMER, OR THE LORD'S SUPPER RESCUED FROM THE PERVERSION OF ITS ORIGINAL DESIGN, (Philadelphia, Griffith & Rowland Press).

[3] William Cathcart, THE BAPTIST ENCYCLOPEDIA, (Philadelphia, Louis H. Everts, 1881), [reprinted by The Baptist Standard Bearer, Paris, AR., 1988] pp. 620, 621.

[4] T. G. Jones, THE BAPTISTS: THEIR ORIGIN, CONTINUITY, PRINCIPLES, SPIRIT, POLITY, POSITION, AND INFLUENCE. A VINDICATION. (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, n.d.), pp. 23, 24, 25.

[5] Joseph Belcher, THE RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, New and Revised Ed., (Philadelphia, John E. Potter, 1861), p. 120.

[6] Belcher, *ibid.*, p. 124.

[7] Joseph Belcher, RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA, p. 53, [quoted by J.R. Graves, OLD LANDMARKISM, Second Edition, Texarkana, Bogard Press, 1881], p. 86.

[8] William Cathcart, *op cit*, p. 74.

[9] C.H. Spurgeon, NEW PARK STREET PULPIT, Vol. 16, 1860, (Pasadena, Texas, Pilgrim Publications, 1973 reprint), p. 66.

[10] C.H. Spurgeon, METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE PULPIT, Vol. 7, 1861 (Pasadena, Texas, Pilgrim Publications, 1973 reprint), p. 225

[11] Spurgeon, *ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 613.

[12] Spurgeon, *ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 249.

[13] John W. Ashworth, *BAPTIST PRINCIPLES AND HISTORY* (London, Yates & Alexander, 1880), pp. 6, 7, 8.

[14] Ashworth, *ibid.*

[15] Ashworth, *ibid.*

[16] Cathcart, *op cit*, p. 286.

[17] J.M. Cramp, D.D. *THE CASE OF THE BAPTISTS, STATED AND EXPLAINED, ADDRESSED TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN*, (Halifax, N.S., “Christian Messenger” Office, 1873), pp. 3-5, 10.

[18] Cathcart, *op. cit.*, pp. 296, 297.

[19] Thomas Crosby, *A HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS*, Vol. II, p. ii.

[20] Joseph Hooke, *A NECESSARY APOLOGY FOR THE BAPTIZED BELIEVERS*, (London, 1701), p. 66.

[21] *THE BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL FAITH OF BAPTISTS ON GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY*, (Ashland, KY., Calvary Baptist Church, n.d.), p. 24.

[22] Cathcart, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

[23] John Gill, *GILL’S EXPOSITOR*, (London, Matthews & Leigh, 1809), Vol. VIII, p. 691: [quoted in the *Berea Baptist Banner*, Mantachie, Mississippi, November & December issues, 1987.]

[24] Spittlehouse and More, *A VINDICATION OF THE CONTINUED SUCCESSION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST (NOW SCANDALOUSLY TERMED ANABAPTISTS) FROM THE APOSTLES UNTO THIS PRESENT TIME*, (London, Gartrude Dawson, 1652). The only original copy of this volume known to exist is located in the Samuel Colgate Memorial Library, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New

York. "A VINDICATION OF THE CONTINUED SUCCESSION..." in modernized spelling and format, is included in the back of this present volume as APPENDIX II.

[25] Bow, op cit, p. 27, furnishes the following information.

"John Calvin, the founder of the Presbyterian church, in its present form, said: 'The very word baptize, itself, signifies to immerse; and it is certain that immersion was observed by the ancient church.' "Commenting on the baptism of the eunuch, he [Calvin] says: 'Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients, for they immersed the whole body in water.' "John Wesley, founder of Methodism, on Romans 6:4, says, 'We are buried with him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.' "Martin Luther says: 'For to baptize in Greek is to dip, and baptizing is dipping. Being moved by this reason, I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped into the water, as the word doth express, and as the mystery doth signify.' (Works. Wittemb. Ed., vol. 2, p. 79.) [For political reasons, no doubt, Luther changed his mind and went along with Rome.] "Cardinal Gibbons, Roman Catholic, says: 'For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion, but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than baptism by immersion.' - Faith of Our Fathers, p. 275. "The Encyclopedia Britannica, in the article 'Baptism,' vol.3, p. 351, says: 'The usual mode of performing the ceremony was by immersion... The council of Ravenna, in 1311, was the first council of the [Roman Catholic] church to legalize sprinkling by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister.' [Brackets mine: C.A.P].

CHAPTER THREE
THE SECOND WITNESS
THE TESTIMONY OF NON-BAPTISTS

In opposing the old Baptists and their Biblical doctrines and practices, both Catholics and Protestants have unwittingly given witness to the perpetual existence of the very people they wished to extinguish. They have mentioned in their writings that there existed churches that would not conform to the wishes of the party in power. Churches outside the “established church” are mentioned: churches whose members refused to submit to non-Biblical teaching and polity.

The Catholics and Protestants (depending on which group was in power at the time) called themselves “orthodox” and all others “heretics,” especially the Baptists. They falsely accused our Baptist forefathers of the grossest sins: things too disgusting and mean to be believed. These powerful religious interests categorized our Baptist forefathers with the worst of heretics because they refused to compromise the truth of God.

We do not intend that the reader should think that all whom the Catholics or Protestants termed heretics were necessarily sound Baptists. However, we do understand that from among those groups thus stigmatized are to be found our Baptist forefathers and that they are a scarlet cord of witness for Christ. Our second witness, then, shall be the unsolicited and sometimes antagonistic testimony of those outside Baptist ranks.

The Testimony of Heinrich Bullinger

Heinrich (sometimes Henry) Bullinger (1504-1575), Protestant Swiss reformer, first aided then succeeded Zwingli in the work of the Protestant

Reformation. Bullinger hated the Anabaptists. He opposed them in every way possible, even unto persecution. He wrote:

“...anabaptism is... as contrary as can be to the doctrine of Christ and His Apostles: truly it is no marvel that the obstinate Anabaptists are kept under and punished by common laws. For otherwise these things are damnable, and not to be dissembled or suffered of a christian magistrate.” [1]

Here he calls upon every “christian magistrate” to punish the anabaptists of his day! In other comments about these anabaptists he unwittingly gave testimony as to their ancient origin by citing the opposition to “re-baptizers” on the part of the Caesars as follows:

“Now, I think it not labour lost to speak somewhat of anabaptism. In the time that Decius and Gallus Caesar were Emperors, there arose a question in the parts of Africa of rebaptising heretics; and St. Cyprian, and the rest of the Bishops, being assembled together in the council of Carthage, liked well of anabaptism.. Against the Donatists St. Augustine, with other learned men, disputed. There is also an Imperial Law made by Honorius and Theodosius, that holy Baptism should not be iterated [repeated]. Justinian Caesar hath published the same, in Cod. lib. I. Tit. 6, in these words. ‘If any Minister of the Catholic Church be detected to have rebaptised any, let both him which committed the unappeasable offence, (if at least by age he be punishable) and he, also, that is won and persuaded thereunto, suffer punishment of death.’” [2] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Decius lived from about A.D. 201-251 and was “The first [Roman Emperor] to launch organized persecution against the Christians.” [3] **Bullinger testifies that as early as the third century A.D. the apostate church opposed the anabaptists!** What a testimony to the ancient age of persons holding Baptist views!

Gallus Caesar (Gallerius) lived from about A.D. 201-311 and “was probably responsible for initiating the persecution against Christians in 303.” [4] Persecution by the preceding emperor, Decius, failed to destroy

Anabaptism! It was still present according to Bullinger's testimony, in Africa at least, into the fourth century.

Justinian Caesar (A.D. 483-565) was "Roman emperor from 527... He established many churches and monasteries..." [5] Implicit in Bullinger's testimony is this: by the 6th century after Christ, apostate churches had joined with imperial Rome in outlawing anabaptism as a capital offense. Bullinger furnishes unwitting testimony to the pre-Reformation existence of persons holding Baptist views outside of the state church!

Bullinger is quoted as having stated early on in the Reformation:

"The Anabaptists think themselves to be the only true church of Christ and acceptable unto God and teach that they who by baptism are received into their churches ought not to have any communion [fellowship] with [those called] evangelical or any other, whatsoever, for that our [i.e. evangelical Protestant, or reformed] churches are not true churches any more than the Papists." [6] [Brackets mine:C.A.P.]

We believe this to be an accurate statement of Baptist views. Baptists are not about to admit that a church which does not follow the Bible is as good as a church which does! Similarly, Baptists maintain that a church started by Christ and faithful to Him must of necessity be approved of God rather than any man-made society even though it may call itself a church.

The Testimony of Peter Allix, D.D.

Between A.D. 800 and 1000, some European Anabaptists were ridiculed with the name "Waldenses" from their geographic location in the valleys of the Alps. Some were also nicknamed "Cathari" which means "pure ones" - this because they insisted on a regenerate church membership evidenced by holy living. Peter Allix (A.D. 1641-1717) was a learned scholar and historian of the Church of England. He furnishes us a list of thirty-three errors charged against this people by the Jacobite priest Raynerius. While some of the charges are doubtless false and others "twisted

truth,” the following excerpts indicate the doctrine and practice of these Baptists:

“...**THEY AFFIRM THAT THEY ALONE ARE THE CHURCH OF CHRIST** and his disciples. They declare themselves... to have apostolic authority and the keys of binding and loosing. They hold the Church of Rome to be the Great Whore of Babylon [mentioned in **Revelation** chapters **17, 18**] and all that obey her are damned... They hold that none of the ordinances of the [Roman Catholic] Church, that have been introduced since Christ’s ascension ought to be observed, as being of no worth: the feasts, fasts, orders, blessings, offices of the [Roman Catholic] Church, and the like, they utterly reject... **THEY SAY, THAT THEN FIRST A MAN IS BAPTIZED, WHEN HE IS RECEIVED INTO THEIR SECT...** They do not believe the body and blood of Christ to be the true sacrament, but only blessed bread, which by a figure only is called the body of Christ, in like manner as it is said, “and the rock was Christ,” and such like... According to them there is no purgatory; and all that die do immediately pass either into heaven or hell. That therefore the prayers of the [Roman Catholic] Church for the dead are of no use... They hold, that the saints in heaven do not hear the prayers of the faithful, or regard the honours which are done to them... They add, that the saints do not pray for us... Wherefore also they deride all the festivals which we celebrate in honour of the saints, and all other instances of our veneration for them... They do not observe Lent or other fasts of the [Roman Catholic] Church... They do not receive the Old Testament; but the Gospel only, that they may not be overthrown by it, but rather be able to defend themselves therewith; pretending, that upon the coming of the Gospel, all old things are to be laid aside.” [7] [Brackets & emphasis mine: C.A.P.]

These Baptists lived hundreds of years [8] before the Protestant Reformation. They remained separate from the Romish church and maintained the same church doctrine and practice for which modern Baptists stand even to this very day. We, like them, do not regard a person as baptized or a member of Christ’s church until and unless he or she is baptized on the authority of Christ as delegated to His New Testament Baptist churches.

The Testimony of Ulrich Zwingli

Ulrich (or Huldrych) Zwingli, Swiss Reformer, (1484-1531) was contemporary with Luther and Calvin. The Council of the city of Zurich, Switzerland (doubtless acting under Zwingli's leadership for there was then a union of church and civil government) "...took the drastic step of decreeing death by drowning as the penalty for all those who persisted in the heresy" of anabaptism. [9]

He gives testimony to the Anabaptists who caused both the Protestants and the Catholics great consternation because of their refusal to compromise with either "established" church. Hear this:

"The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for thirteen hundred years has caused great disturbance in the church, and has acquired such a strength that the attempt in this age to contend with it appears futile for a time." [10]

This statement takes Baptists back to the *third* century! The third century is NOT the time of the beginning of the Baptists. The third century is near about the time when some *apostate* congregations began mixing Old Testament priesthood ideas with paganism under Christian names to form what is now known as the Catholic church. **Zwingli testifies to the faithfulness of our Baptist forefathers in opposing the wicked innovations of apostate Rome from her beginning.** Baptist doctrine and practice, founded as it is on the Scriptures alone, could not be destroyed. Neither unscriptural teachings of man's manufacture nor the sword could destroy the truth. The frustrated fury of those who had no support from the Bible for their pernicious doctrines and traditions resulted in the persecution of those who held the truth.

The Testimony of Cardinal Hosius

Roman Catholic Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius (see glossary) (1504-1579) was one of the most significant figures of the Roman Catholic "Counter

Reformation.” He was official representative of the pope and presiding officer of the Council of Trent (see glossary). Of the Anabaptists he said:

“If the truth of religion were to be judged by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, the opinions and persuasions of no sect can be truer or surer than those of the Anabaptists, whence there have been none for these twelve hundred years past that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone and even offered themselves to the most cruel sorts of punishment than these people.” [\[11\]](#)

Again the Cardinal gives his unsolicited and clear testimony to the perpetuity of the Lord’s churches when he says of our Baptist forefathers:

“Were it not that the Baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years they would swarm in greater numbers than all the reformers.” [\[12\]](#)

The Cardinal takes Baptists back to at least A.D. 350 - just after Constantine united the secular government with apostate churches. **Hosius is really saying that as long as the Romish church has existed there have been Baptist churches which opposed her heresies in spite of vigorous and violent attempts to exterminate them.** We heartily agree with the Cardinal. Baptists were already in existence when Romanism came into being!

The Testimony of An Educated Host

J. Cardinal Gibbons, Primate of the Roman Catholic Church in America; **Patrick J. Healy, D.D.**, Catholic University of America; **Theodore Roosevelt, LL.D.**, Associate Editor, “The Outlook” and former President of the United States of America; and some eleven other eminent scholars served as contributors to the volume entitled *Crossing the Centuries*.

This popular history was edited by William C. King and copyrighted in 1912. Mr. King advertised to bring forward, among other things, “The Development of Literature, Religions, Philosophies...” and stated that he was “Assisted by the Editorial Counsel and Special Contributions of College Presidents, Leading Educators, Distinguished Divines, Eminent Authors, Literary Specialists, Historians, Archaeologists, Sociologists, Scientists, State and National Officials, State Librarians and Bibliographers.”

This educated host of men and women gave the histories of various religious denominations then known in North America. Regarding the Baptists this volume states:

“Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek churches, have had an unbroken continuity of existence from Apostolic days down through the centuries. Throughout this long period they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands, yet they swerved not from their New Testament Faith, Doctrine and Adherence.

“The extreme conditions of the Reformation served to develop an organized denominational unity among the Baptists in Switzerland in 1523, which extended into Germany, then spread to Holland and other countries of Europe, also to England and Wales. The Baptist church of modern times may properly claim its “organized” denominational activities as beginning with the Switzerland movement.” [\[13\]](#)

What a testimony! We make no claim other than this: true New Testament churches holding and following basic, Biblical, Baptist principles have existed from the days of Christ’s earthly ministry down to the present time. Those principles caused them to require baptism at the hands of a baptized man with connection to a New Testament kind of church.

The Testimony of Robert Barclay

Robert Barclay, a Scottish apologist for the Society of Friends (Quakers), lived from 1648-1690. Barclay, along with eleven others, was granted a patent for the province of East New Jersey by the Duke of York. This notable man was then appointed governor. Barclay's collected works were published posthumously in 1692 under the title *Truth Triumphant Through the Spiritual Warfare*. The preface to this work was written by William Penn, for whom Pennsylvania was named. Barclay reports the following concerning the Baptists:

“We shall afterwards show that the rise of the Anabaptists took place prior to the reformation of the Church of England, and there are also reasons for believing that on the continent of Europe small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the times of the apostles. In the sense of the direct transmission of divine truth, and the true nature of spiritual religion, it seems probable that these churches have a lineage or succession more ancient than that of the Roman Church.”

[\[14\]](#)

Barclay's testimony certainly supports the old Baptist claim to their direct connection with the first church! The testimony of this respected individual carries much weight not only because of his position, but also because, as a Quaker, he was not connected with the Baptists. Thus he had no interest in promoting them or their cause.

The Testimony of John Lawrence von Mosheim, D.D.

More properly spelled Johann Laurenz von Mosheim (see glossary), this candid and noteworthy Lutheran wrote:

“The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of the *Anabaptists*, by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of *Mennonites* from that famous man, to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is

hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained.” [15]

Modern Baptists and Mennonites share a kindred ancestry, although the Mennonites have swerved, in many instances, from the truth. Thus von Mosheim’s testimony bears directly on the origin of those people called in our day “Baptists.”

The Testimony of David Masson

Masson was professor at the University of Edinburgh and lived from 1822-1907. This Scottish literary critic and biographer wrote the six-volume *Life of John Milton* as well as other biographies. Concerning the Baptists he wrote:

“The Baptists were by far the most numerous of the sectaries. Their enemies... were fond of tracing them to the anarchial German Anabaptists of the Reformation; but they themselves claimed a higher origin. They maintained, as Baptists still do, that in the primitive or apostolic church the only baptism practised or heard of was an immersion in water; and they maintained further that the baptism of infants was one of the corruptions of Christianity against which there had been a continued protest by pure and forward spirits in different countries, in ages prior to Luther’s Reformation, including some of the English Wyclifites, although the protest may have been repeated in a louder manner, and with wild admixtures, by the German Anabaptists who gave Luther so much trouble.” [16]

True Baptists continue to maintain that the **ONLY** baptism according to Scripture is immersion in water - just as Paul wrote of the “**one baptism**” in **Ephesians 4:5**. Since Baptists refuse to accept as true the innovation of Luther - an invisible church -we have no need of an invisible “baptism” into it.

We understand **1 Corinthians 12:13** consistently with other Scriptures to refer to the one baptism inaugurated by John the Baptist. Those who

believe **1 Corinthians 12:13** to refer to some kind of “Spirit baptism” do so at the peril of forcing themselves into a corner in which they must believe in more than one baptism. Usually they try to link **1 Corinthians 12:13** with the prophecy of John (**John 1:33**), but John records that Christ would baptize IN THE SPIRIT on Pentecost, which He did. **1 Corinthians 12:13** does not state that Christ would baptize, BUT RATHER THAT THE HOLY GHOST WOULD BE THE ACTING AGENT - quite a different thing altogether. **1 Corinthians 12:13** teaches that the Holy Ghost leads believers to be baptized just as Simeon “came by the Spirit” into the temple in **Luke 2:27**. Compare “baptized by one Spirit” in 1 Corinthians with “came by the Spirit” in Luke. No student of the Bible understands that Simeon was somehow supernaturally carried through the air into the temple, nor is it sound exegesis to say that the Spirit supernaturally immerses anyone. We do understand that the Holy Spirit leads men to seek the truth and submit to Scriptural baptism just as the Spirit led Simeon to go into the temple at the right moment to see the infant Christ.

Protestants are forced to believe in two or three baptisms for this age. They believe in (1) water baptism as there are just too many clear Scriptures to deny it. They believe in (2) the baptism in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost - Charismatics and Pentecostals insist this event has often been repeated though they can furnish no data for such claimed recurrences. Protestants also usually believe in (3) believers being somehow baptized into the invisible church by the Holy Spirit. Shame on any who knowingly tries to defend such a forced interpretation as Protestants do with **1 Corinthians 12:13**! And to think they base their whole “spirit baptism” doctrine on only ONE VERSE in the whole Bible - and that of disputed meaning! Baptists believe in “**ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM**” as **Ephesians 4:5** says, and they believe it BECAUSE the Bible says it! Which will *you* believe, reader, the teachings of men or the simple Word of God?

The Testimony of Alexander Campbell

Alexander Campbell, founder of the various Campbellite groups now known as “The Churches of Christ,” “The Disciples,” “The Christian Churches,” etc., in his debate with MacCalla, a Presbyterian, had this word of testimony for the Baptists:

“...from the apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and the practice of baptism has had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced.” [\[17\]](#)

What need we add to Mr. Campbell’s statement?

The Testimony of John Clark Ridpath

John C. Ridpath was a well-respected American educator and historian. Born in 1840, he lived until 1900. He was for 16 years associated with what is now De Pauw University in Indiana. There he held the professorship of belles-letters, of history, and of political philosophy. He also served as vice-president of De Pauw, his alma mater. He resigned this office in 1885 to devote the remainder of his life to writing. He is known for his monumental work, *History of the World*, as well as numerous other works of various sorts. He was a Methodist in his denominational affiliation. He wrote:

“I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist Church as far back as A.D. 100, although without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists.” [\[18\]](#)

It seems logical that if all Christians were Baptists in A.D. 100, then their churches would have been Baptist churches. It is unthinkable that such a principled people as the Baptists would organize churches contrary to their principles! No doubt Mr. Ridpath, in saying there was not “a Baptist Church” in A.D. 100, referred to an organized group of Baptist churches as some have formed in recent times. Usually these organizations are understood by the public at large to be “The Baptist Church.” As Southern Baptist Convention preacher and author J.G. Bow wrote:

“Baptists, following the New Testament pattern, have no aggregate known as ‘The Baptist Church.’ Like the apostles and early Christians we have churches...

“Errors in the formation and government of churches lead to errors in doctrine and practice. Baptists believe the New Testament plan to be good enough, and hence we cling to the scriptural form and government. Jesus commanded (**Matthew 18:17**) to tell a certain kind of grievance to the church, after other divinely given measures had failed.

“Imagine an Episcopalian, a Methodist, Presbyterian, or Catholic attempting to obey the injunction, and telling his grievance to his church.” [\[19\]](#)

We are in hearty agreement that there was no such man-made organization of churches in A.D. 100 nor is there any Scriptural warrant for their existence now. We further agree with Mr. Ridpath concerning first-century Christians, that “all Christians were then Baptists.”

The Testimony of Sir Isaac Newton

Sir Isaac Newton, English scientist, mathematician, philosopher, student of the Scriptures and of history said:

“The modern Baptists formerly called Anabaptists are the only people that never symbolized with the Papacy.” [\[20\]](#)

“Symbolize” in its older usage meant to resemble, represent or make to agree. In this Newton is saying that the Baptists are unique in that they were *never* connected with the Roman Catholic Church. **Baptists maintain that they existed BEFORE the Catholic apostasy took place; that they existed ALONGSIDE Catholicism after her formation; and that they existed APART from Catholicism.** Sound Baptists who understand their history and their principles would *never* maintain that they originated during or after the Protestant “Reformation.”

The Testimony of Drs. Ypeij and Dermout

Dr. A. Ypeij was Professor of Theology at Groningen. Along with Dr. J.J. Dermout, Chaplain to the king of Holland, he received a royal commission to prepare a history of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1819. This history, prepared under royal sanction, and officially published, contains the following testimony to the antiquity and orthodoxy of the Baptists:

“We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times, Mennonites, were the original Waldenses... On this account, the Baptists may be considered as the only religious community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages. The perfectly correct external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth, disputed by the Romish Church, that the Reformation brought about in the sixteenth century was in the highest degree necessary, and at the same time goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics, that their denomination is the most ancient.” [\[21\]](#)

The words of these two Dutch scholars is certainly clear. No elucidation is required!

SUMMARY OF THE TESTIMONY OF NON BAPTISTS

Thus we conclude our brief look at a sampling of non-Baptist witnesses. We have heard the testimony of Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Quaker, Church of England, and Dutch Reformed Protestants, as well as the testimony of Roman Catholics. They all give witness to the continual existence of persons holding Baptist principles and observing Baptist practices in Baptist churches from ancient times until the present.

Their testimonies combine to provide what would be considered incontrovertible evidence in a court of law! They testify to the apostolic

origin of those churches practicing New Testament principles found among the people called Baptists today.

Doubtless, ignorance of the Bible is the reason some of these non-Baptists stood against John's baptism and Christ's church. (See **Matthew 22:29**.) However, history records that many non-Baptists of by-gone days remained in the churches of their own or some other man's manufacture because of vested interests! It would have cost them too much to follow Christ completely! They followed the Bible until they saw their prospects were painful and then left off following it in order to follow the path of expediency. What an awful thing to have knowingly rejected the truth of God concerning His church - that church which Christ loved and gave Himself for - regardless of the reason!

While these "great Reformers" are held in the highest regard by some, it is feared that when they give account of themselves to God, it will be quite a different matter. You and I, reader, will also give account to God for our actions and religious loyalties. Do we think to commend ourselves to God and His will by rejecting His church, His baptism and His truth? May God give grace to all, both writer and reader, to learn of Him and follow His Word in pattern and principle as well as precept.

[1] Henry Bullinger, *SERMONS ON THE SACRAMENTS*, (Cambridge, University Press for T. Stevenson, London, 1811), p. 189.

[2] Bullinger, *ibid.*, pp. 186, 187.

[3] J. D. Douglas, Walter A. Elwell, & Peter Toon, *THE CONCISE DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1989), p. 119.

[4] Douglas, Elwell, & Toon, *ibid.*, p. 162.

[5] Douglas, Elwell, & Toon, *ibid.*, p. 213.

[6] Heinrich Bullinger, (Graves, OLD LANDMARKISM, Texarkana, Bogard Press, 1881 ed.), p. 115.

[7] Pierre Allix, D.D., THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT CHURCHES OF PIEDMONT originally published in 1690, (reprinted at Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1821), [reprinted by Church History Research & Archives, Gallatin, TN, 1989], pp. 209-212.

[8] James Murdock, translator of Mosheim, though opposing the view of Rainerius Saccho, a 13th century enemy of the Cathari, nevertheless quotes him as follows regarding the Waldensian Baptists:

“Their sect has been the most injurious of all to the church of God on account of their antiquity; for they, according to some, originated in the times of the Roman bishop Silvester in the fourth century; and according to others, existed as early as the days of the apostles.” [Rainerius Saccho, LIEBER ADV. WALDENSES, c. iv [in the Biblioth. Patrum, tom. xxv., p. 262, &c.] quoted by James Murdock, footnote in his translation of John Lawrence von Mosheim, INSTITUTES OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, (Boston, Scriptural Tract Repository, 1892), Vol. II, p. 27.]

Murdock opposed the apostolic origin of the Baptists, but was forced to admit the Waldensians were of ancient origin as follows:

“...it has long been admitted that for centuries there had existed in the valleys of Piedmont various sorts of people, who were not in communion with the Romish church.” *ibid.* p. 27.

Surely no honest and informed person can doubt the apostolic origin of the Baptists and their continued existence under differing local names.

[9] G.W. Bromley, THE LIBRARY OF CHRISTIAN CLASSICS, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press), Vol. XXIV, p. 120.

[10] Christian, *op cit*, p. 86.

[11] Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, Letters, APUD OPERA, pp. 112, 113. [Baptist Magazine, CVII, p. 278 (May 1826)], quoted by Christian, op. cit. pp. 85, 86.

Quoted also by C. B. and Sylvester Hassell, HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, (Middletown, NY, Gilbert Beebe's Sons, 1886), [reprinted by Old School Hymnal Co, Inc., Conley, GA., 1973], p. 504.

[12] Hosius, *ibid.*

[13] William C. King, Ed., CROSSING THE CENTURIES, (London, Stationer Hall, 1912), p. 174.

[14] Robert Barclay, THE INNER LIFE OF THE SOCIETIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH, (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1876), pp. 11, 12.

[15] Johann Laurenz von Mosheim, AN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1860), [Reprinted by Old Paths Book Club, Box V, Rosemead, CA., Second ed.], Vol. II. pp.119, 120.

[16] David Masson, LIFE OF JOHN MILTON, NARRATED IN CONNECTION WITH THE POLITICAL, ECCLESIASTICAL, AND LITERARY HISTORY OF HIS TIME, (London, 1876), Vol. I, p. 146.

[17] Alexander Campbell, A DEBATE ON CHRISTIAN BAPTISM, BETWEEN THE REV. W. L. MACCALLA, A PRESBYTERIAN TEACHER, AND ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, ("Buffaloe," NY., Campbell and Sala, 1824), pp. 378, 379.

Campbell goes on in the same place to say, "Even the greatest enemy, among ecclesiastic historians, Dr. Mosheim, [see Glossary] is constrained to say, vol iv, p. 424, 'The TRUE ORIGIN of that sect which ACQUIRED the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism, to those that came over to their communion, and derived the name of Mennonists from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is HID in the REMOTE DEPTHS of antiquity, and is of

consequence difficult to be ascertained.’“ [Capitals & Italic type belong to Campbell: brackets mine, C.A.P.]

[18] John Clark Ridpath, personal letter to W.A. Jarrell, quoted in W.A. Jarrell’s BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY, (Dallas, 1894), [reprinted by the Calvary Baptist Church Book Store, Ashland, KY.], p. 59.

[19] Bow, op cit., pp. 21, 22.

[20] William Whiston, MEMOIRS OF WHISTON (Jarrell, op cit), p. 313.

Whiston was at first deputy to Isaac Newton in the mathematics professorship at Cambridge, then successor to him. He lived from 1667 to 1752 and was a well-known preacher in the Church of England until he left it because of his “Arian” views to become a General Baptist.

[21] Ypeij en Dermout, GESCHIEDENIS DER NEDERLANDSCHE HERVORMDE KERK, (Breda, 1819), Christian, op. cit. pp. 95, 96.

A slightly different, but materially identical translation by Thomas W. Tobey, D.D., college professor, editor, and pastor, is quoted by J.R. Graves, op cit, p. 87

CHAPTER FOUR

THE THIRD WITNESS

THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES

Christ's Church Revealed In The Scriptures

Writing concerning the Lord's Churches, Jarrell Huffman, pastor to the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Duncan, OK, wrote:

“This subject [church truth] must be reckoned with; it cannot be dismissed by subtle attacks on “Landmarkism,” examining the works of the Puritans, or checking all of the lexicographers to see what they say or think. History is fine, but it gives only a secondary source of proof on any doctrine. First and foremost is the Word of God, the standard of faith and practice for the churches of the living God (**2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21**). [\[1\]](#)

“**To the law and to the testimony,**” then. If what Baptists and their enemies have said about them be not warranted by Holy Writ, cast aside the opinions of men and cling to the truth of the Bible. If, however, the Bible does indeed teach the perpetuity of the Lord's churches, let us look around for churches which are (1) like unto the ones described in the New Testament and which have (2) a continual existence from that time. When we find churches meeting these two qualifications, then we shall have found the true churches of Christ!

Since all the Protestants, cults, interdenominationalist groups, etc., etc., are but of yesterday as to their origin, the only possible contenders for meeting the two aforementioned criteria are (1) the Catholics and (2) the Baptists. While the Catholics are seen to be almost as old as the Baptists,

they have deviated from the principles of Bible Christianity so far as to be unrecognizable as New Testament churches. Catholicism fails in longevity and in kind: they are, in fact, apostate Baptists whose beginning is hundreds of years this side the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

There are, however, among the people called Baptists, churches whose ordinances, officers, doctrines and practices are patterned after the teaching and example of the New Testament. Thus one of the criteria for qualifying as Christ's church is met. The basic doctrine of these churches requires that they were organized as churches by men having previous church connection, i.e. Scriptural baptism, as well as ordination and good standing with a previously existing church of like faith and practice.

Baptist churches which have consistently held strictly to these principles can be assured that they are successors to the first church by virtue of the very nature of the polity they espouse. The proof is this: no sound Baptists would approve of unbaptized persons forming themselves into a church and "baptizing" each other. Neither would they think to organize a new church without previous church connection. This church connection between previously existing churches and newly constituted ones is seen clearly throughout the book of Acts and is often referred to as "church authority" among sound Baptists. This is historic Baptist polity derived from the New Testament and has characterized sound churches down through the centuries whatever they may have been nicknamed. It is this historic polity that produces churches with a valid succession back to the Jerusalem church that Jesus founded.

Upon the solid rock of Scripture do we rest our case. While we have called as witnesses the voices of several outstanding Baptists and have presented the testimony of non-Baptists, neither our faith or practice rest upon the testimony of men. **Regardless of the testimony of history, we would not dare ground our doctrine and polity upon it.** If, however, the Scriptures teach a thing to be true and right we propose to believe it, advocate it and practice it though it cost us our very lives. We have no choice but to obey the Word of God and thus **"earnestly contend for the faith once delivered..." (Jude verse 3).**

Some questions for your reflection as you read this chapter are these: Did Christ organize His church or did someone else effect what He could not? Did Christ assign authority to conduct His work to anyone in particular? Was He specific in giving this authority? Did He give specific commands? Did He give such commands to specific persons? If so, in what capacity were these persons commissioned? Did Christ make any promises that require the perpetual succession of His churches? Did the teaching of Christ indicate or require that there be a succession of New Testament churches? Was church succession taught and/or assumed by the apostles? Was the practice of the apostles consistent with or contrary to the historic Baptist view? If the New Testament kind of churches did cease to exist, could they be “restarted” by some kind of “reformation?” Can baptism, if lost, be instituted again? If so, by whom? What qualifications, according to the pattern of Scripture, would be required of the one re-establishing the Lord’s church and valid baptism? While it is not our plan to specifically answer every one of these questions, after reading this book you should be well on the way to resolving these questions for yourself.

That the Scriptures are meant to be the rule and guide of our faith (doctrine) and practice (conduct) is evident. While some may be satisfied to give lip service to this idea, it is our firm conviction that we must actually and really follow the Bible! **Isaiah 8:20** says, “**To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because *there is no light in them.*”**”

As in all matters of both faith (what we believe) AND practice (what we do), faithful Baptists require a “**Thus saith the Lord!**” This is one principle which sets genuine Baptists apart from others. Protestants may claim to base their doctrine on the New Testament, but obviously their practice has been derived from Romish traditions, paganism or the teachings of some man.

Consider this concrete example of Protestant profession contradicted by Protestant practice. Most Protestant groups claim to believe in salvation by grace alone through faith, but by their practice they deny what they say they

believe. They put water on an unbelieving baby and teach that such a “baptism” makes the babe a child of God.

Baptists believe the New Testament contains both the instructions and the patterns necessary to know the truth and to practice it in a manner well-pleasing to God. Sound Baptists demand that their church practice be consistent with Bible truth.

The church of Christ in Thessalonica was commended for their faithfulness in following both the apostolic party AND the churches in Judea. The word “followers” is a translation of the Greek “mimetes” from whence comes our word ‘mimic.’ Notice the words as follows:

“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord..” (1 Thessalonians 1:6).

“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus...” (1 Thessalonians 2:14).

New Testament Baptist churches “mimic” the first church and others like it. They insist on not only believing the same doctrines but also following the godly pattern set before us by those churches. This belief that the New Testament is not only the guide for our faith, but also the pattern for our practice is a second principle which sets genuine Baptists apart from others.

We have no right to interject our own ideas, beliefs, practices or traditions into the worship and service of God. To do so nullifies God’s Word, for after all, He has revealed in the Bible everything He wants us to know about spiritual things. The following verses clearly instruct us as to our obligation to be subject to the Bible in all things. Consider these warnings:

(Mark 7:13) “Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.”

(Deuteronomy 4:2) “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”

(Deuteronomy 12:32) “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.”

(Revelation 22:18) “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.”

It is devastatingly serious to tamper with the Word of God either in theological matters or in the matter of observance, practice and celebration.

That many in the days of the apostles (and ours) have perverted God’s truth is the cause of the divisions within “Christendom.” Because of their strict views, Baptists are often charged with causing divisions among Christians. Mature consideration shows that in reality others are the guilty parties. Those who have separated from Baptist churches and founded new ones are in reality guilty of schism and sowing discord among brethren. It is those churches which left off being Baptist churches and merged into the Catholic system that are in actuality the schismatics. Protestants, unable to stomach Romish corruption, either left or were ejected from Catholicism. Their “reformation” was only partial. They failed to return to the Lord’s churches and went about to establish their own. Thus they, and not Baptists, are guilty of divisiveness and schism.

Multitudes have not followed the plain teachings of the Bible and have left the Lord’s churches to follow some human leader. Others either lacking knowledge or unconcerned with truth, have started their own “churches” without considering or understanding the New Testament doctrine and pattern

of church truth. This was the case even in the days of Christ's apostles. Consider these verses:

(2 Corinthians 2:17) "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. "

(2 Corinthians 4:2) "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. "

(1 John 2:19) "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went* out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. "

Many churches of our own time have been started by persons unwilling to follow historic Biblical doctrine and practice. Some openly "**corrupt the word of God**" and are guilty of "**handling the word of God deceitfully.**" Others "**were not all of us**" and therefore "***they went out from us.***" This has been done for so long and by so many that few in today's religious world even consider that they have no right to found their own churches.

The Catholic churches, both Eastern and Latin, and all their Protestant "offspring" are the results of people apostatizing from Bible truth and leaving the Lord's churches. Without a doubt many in these societies are sincere, but sincerity is no measure of the truth! Some "churches" were formed or "deformed" by persons leaving off New Testament practices. Others were formed by those who came partially out from the errors of Rome. Whichever is the case, all the various non-Baptist societies now known as "churches" have their origin apart from the founding work of Christ.

Many of these churches have their own “popes” - either dead or living - who rule as lords over them. If you doubt that Protestants set up their own infallible “popes,” consider the following information concerning one of the larger and more socially acceptable Protestant bodies, the Methodists.

“In the application of human wisdom to the organization of a religious society, John Wesley was, as commonly remarked, more like Ignatius Loyola [the founder of the Jesuits] than any other man; he conformed the organization of Methodism more to that of Romanism than that of any other Protestant body.. By his famous “Deed of Declaration to the Legal Hundred,” “the Magna Charta of Methodism” (made in 1784, when he was eighty-one years of age), bequeathing the property and government of all his chapels in the United Kingdom to a hundred of his travelling preachers and their successors, on condition that they should accept as their basis of doctrine his Notes on the New Testament and the four volumes of his sermons published in or before A.D. 1771, he surpassed even the worldly wisdom of Catholicism, and made himself not only the infallible, but the eternal pope of his society. So his Twenty-five Articles of Religion are declared, in the Methodist Book of Discipline, to be unalterable. This makes Wesley the last and greatest authoritative teacher of the human race, and places him above Christ and His Apostles, as we are required to look through the medium of Wesley at all the Divine teaching, and to accept forever his interpretation of the doctrine and precepts of the Bible. How can any of the dear children of God be willing thus to substitute the headship of a sinful and fallible mortal for the headship of Christ?” [2] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Wesley was neither the first nor the last Protestant to be set up as the final authority on spiritual truth. This writer, before becoming a Baptist, was once a follower of “Dr.” C.I. Scofield, a long dead “pope” to many. Scofield’s Bible notes and writings are often good and helpful but are sometimes dangerous in their error as well! Often great and helpful Bible teachers have been nearly idolized by those who follow their teachings.

Hurtful error as well as soul-damning heresies arise in the depraved hearts and minds of men and women who do not know the Scriptures.

Therefore our only safe guide is the Word of God. This is clearly seen in the following words of Christ.

(Matthew 22:29) “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. ”

It is the Word of God, the Bible, that tells of God’s provision of salvation and that same Word is to teach us correct doctrine and guide our lives.

(2 Timothy 3:15, 16) “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. ”

Let the Roman Catholic Church claim infallibility for her popes! Let the Protestants set themselves up infallible guides! Such a practice has no foundation in the teachings of the Bible!

Roman Catholic scholars do not view the Scriptures in the same light as Baptists. They believe the Bible, not because they see and understand it to be the revealed truth of God, but because the Roman Catholic Church tells them to believe it. If you doubt this, hear the words of the venerated “Saint” Augustine.

“I would not believe the New Testament if the [Roman Catholic] Church doctrine did not command me to.” [\[3\]](#) [Brackets mine: C.A.P.].

This is the reason “Saint” Augustine could pick and choose among the teachings of the Bible. He could select what he wanted to believe and practice from the Old Testament as well as from the New. He claimed to believe that all men were sinners,

“...except the Holy Virgin Mary, whom I desire, for the sake of the honour of the Lord, to leave entirely out of the question when the talk is of sin.” [\[4\]](#)

And yet some speak of Mary-worshipping Augustine as if he were next to Paul in preaching the truth of God. In my opinion, Spurgeon fell into this error. Augustine's authority was not the Bible, but was rather the Romish church which told him to believe the Bible along with her traditions and papal pronouncements. What a sober warning this ought to be to those who profess to believe the Bible! Let us believe it all! Let us be in submission to its authority, for it is the Word of God. How dare we select from among its teachings that which we like and deny that which may go contrary to our preconceived ideas. How sad that many in our own day will not believe the truth about the Lord's churches because it runs contrary to their own ideas!

Let the Protestants glorify some great theologian or teacher and follow after him or her if they insist. When the blind lead the blind "**both fall into the ditch**" (**Matthew 15:14**). But let those folk who profess to believe the Bible prove their belief in it by their obedience to it!

Among those churches called Baptist are to be found people who have been brought by God Himself to stand upon the New Testament as their only rule of faith and practice. They see in it both precept and pattern for acceptable worship and service. We believe this is the only course well-pleasing to God, the Divine Author of the Bible. If we have no Bible for either our doctrine or our practice, abandon such things as innovations of depraved mankind. On the other hand, if the Bible teaches it, we who "**tremble at His word**" can do nothing more or less than believe and obey it!

Three questions, in the main, should be set forth at this juncture. They are as follows:

(1) Do the Scriptures teach that Christ built His church during His earthly ministry, or do they teach that the Holy Ghost built it on the Jewish festival of Pentecost?

(2) Do the Scriptures assume that this kind of church would persevere until the Lord returns for her, or are there Scriptures which say she would totally apostatize?

(3) Do the Scriptures teach adequately about this kind of church so as to enable us to identify these churches today?

Keep these questions in mind as you consider the following pertinent points.

Christ Founded His Church:

That Christ's church was built (established) by Him during His earthly ministry is evident from the Scriptures. He asserted that He would build it: **“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).**

Without going into great length, it should be observed here that Christ did not say He would build His church on Peter. The word for “Peter” is, according to Strong, “Petros (pet'-ros); apparently a primary word; a (piece of) rock as a name, Petrus, an apostle,” [5] but the word for “rock” upon which the church is built is “petra (pet'-ra); feminine a (mass of) rock (literally or figuratively).” [6] This second word, “petra” signifies a massive bedrock as illustrated in the following verses:

Matthew 7:24-25: “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” (petra). “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (petra).

Matthew 27:60: “And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: (petra) and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. ”

Mark 15:46: “And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was

hewn out of a rock, (petra) and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. ”

Luke 6:48: “He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: (petra) and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock” (petra).

Romans 9:33: “As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock (petra) of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. ”

1 Corinthians 10:4: “And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock (petra) that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. ”

1 Peter 2:8: “And a stone of stumbling, and a rock (petra) of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. ”

These verses demonstrate that Christ contrasted Peter (petros), a small stone, with a massive rock (petra). Doubtless our Lord pointed to Himself as the Rock on which He established His church. (Compare with Jesus’ use of “temple” in **John 2:19**.) He is “**a foundation stone,**” “**the foundation,**” and “**the apostles’ and prophets’ “foundation”**” as indicated in the following verses:

Isaiah 28:16: “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. ”

1 Corinthians 3:10-12: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble”

Ephesians 2:20: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*.”

Jesus Christ did NOT build His church on Peter, in spite of the Romish claims that Peter was her first pope. In this connection there is absolutely no Scriptural confirmation that Peter was ever in Rome, let alone was the first pope as the Roman Catholic Church claims! In fact, from the Scriptures we garner much that would cause us to be assured he never was in Rome. Consider:

(1) Paul wrote the great doctrinal Book of **Romans** to the church in Rome. It seems strange that he would need to do so if another apostle was already there with the church in Rome as the Papists affirm. What would be the necessity of such a letter?

(2) Even more conclusive is the fact that Paul, while greeting the church there in the beginning of his Roman letter, says nothing by way of greeting to Peter. Surely, if Peter was then present in Rome, Paul would have greeted him. If Peter was the Pope in Rome, Paul most certainly would have greeted him in his letter!

(3) Later Paul was confined in Rome, perhaps as many as three different times. From Rome during his imprisonments Paul wrote the Bible books of **Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians** and **2 Timothy**. In **2 Timothy** alone Paul mentions 23 friends and foes, but never once in any of these books does he mention Peter! Surely if Peter had been in Rome, Paul would have mentioned him. Some individuals sent greetings to other brethren by the hand of Paul in

these letters. Others are mentioned by name, but no mention is made of Peter. He obviously was not in Rome!

There just is no Bible confirmation that Peter was ever at Rome. Biblical evidence being to the contrary, Rome's claim to Peter being the first pope is seen to be another of her bogus assertions! It is just an empty, man-made tradition of no consequence or worth whatsoever.

What is significant for us to observe here is that while Christ did not say He would build His church on Peter, He DID say He would build His church! There is no hint in the words, "**I will build my church**" that anyone other than Christ was to be the agent in building it. Jesus did not say that the Father would build His church. Neither did He say that the Holy Spirit would build His church!

Neither is there a single Scripture verse that says or even hints that the Holy Ghost would build, begin or birth Christ's church on the Jewish feast of Pentecost. The idea that the church was founded on Pentecost has been taught so routinely that many presume it to be the "birthday of the church." Such an assumption has no basis in the Word of God! We believe Christ did what He said He would do: He built His church during His earthly ministry.

Christ Founded A Real Church

By the word "church" the Bible does not mean a regional, national or worldwide organization as some might think. Such a meaning for the word "church" is as foreign to the Bible as is the idea of a "universal, invisible church." These and other definitions have been given to the word "church," but a careful study of the word shows its local, visible nature. We quote James Strong again:

"ecclesia (ek-klay-see'-ah); a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation..." [\[7\]](#)

Although Strong goes on to try to make "ecclesia" some-thing more than a "local church," he and others fail under both biblical evidence and the

evidence of original language. He offers no Biblical or linguistic reason for his attempt to make “ecclesia” refer to a “universal church.” Indeed, he could not, for there is neither Biblical nor linguistic basis for such an attempted definition! New Testament usage, secular usage and the Septuagint usage of the word “ecclesia” indicate it was only and always used of an organized, congregating body of people in a given locality.

One of the biggest hindrances to a proper understanding of New Testament church truth is the notion that the word church means more than one thing. For years this author followed the wisdom of the Protestants, notably “Dr.” C.I. Scofield and his Dallas Seminary disciples who, without Scriptural warrant, teach several “kinds” of churches. To bolster their interdenominational views, they blithely assure us that there is an “invisible church.”

B.H. Carroll (1843-1914) was the founder and first president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and for thirty years served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco, Texas. He produced the following works, *The Holy Spirit; Christ and His Church; Evangelistic Sermons: Baptists and Their Doctrine; Inspiration of the Bible: Jesus the Christ; Revival Messages;* and the seventeen volume *An Interpretation of the English Bible;* as well as other works. Elder Carroll wrote the following:

“Our Lord and the New Testament writers neither coined this word [Greek “ecclesia”] nor employed it in any unusual sense. Before their time it was in common use, of well-understood signification, and subject like any other word to varied employment, according to the established laws of language. That is, it might be used abstractly, or generically, or particularly, or prospectively, without losing its essential meaning...

“What, then, etymologically, is the meaning of this word? Its primary meaning is: An organized assembly, whose members have been properly called out from private homes or business to attend to public affairs. This definition necessarily implies prescribed conditions of membership...

“When, in this lesson, our Lord says: “On this rock I will build my “ecclesia” while the “my” distinguished His “ecclesia” from the Greek state “ecclesia” and the Old Testament “ecclesia,” the word itself naturally retains its ordinary meaning...

“Commonly, that is, in nearly all the uses, it means: The particular assembly of Christ’s baptized disciples on earth, as ‘The church of God which is at Corinth.’

“To this class necessarily belong all abstract or generic uses of the word, for whenever the abstract or generic finds concrete expression, or takes operative shape, it is always a particular assembly.” [8] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.].

Carroll goes on to point out that generic uses do not prove the existence of some “universal, invisible church” as imagined by Luther. Just as the Scriptures say, “**The husband is the head of the wife**” (Ephesians 5:23), and yet no one is foolish enough to believe in one gigantic “husband” or one “universal, invisible wife.” So when the Scriptures speak of the “church” in an abstract sense, we only find the church existent in assemblies of Scripturally baptized believers organized according to the New Testament. Carroll makes this point, writing as follows:

“For example, if an English statesman, referring to the right of each individual citizen to be tried by his peers, should say: ‘On this rock England will build her jury and all power of tyrants shall not prevail against it,’ he uses the term jury in an abstract sense, i.e., in the sense of an institution. But when this institution finds concrete expression, or becomes operative, it is always a particular jury of twelve men and never an aggregation of all juries into one big jury.

“Or if a law writer should say: ‘In trials of fact, by oral testimony, the court shall be the judge of the law, and the jury shall be the judge of the facts,’ and if he should add: ‘In giving evidence, the witness shall tell what he knows to the jury, and not to the court,’ he evidently uses the term ‘court,’ ‘jury,’ and ‘witness’ in a generic sense. But in the application the generic

always becomes particular - i.e., a particular judge, a particular jury, or a particular witness, and never an aggregate of all judges into one big judge, nor of all juries into one big jury, nor of all witnesses into one big witness. Hence we say that the laws of language require that all abstract and generic uses of the word “ecclesia” should be classified with the particular assembly and not with the general assembly.” [\[9\]](#)

Further testimony to the New Testament usage of the word “ecclesia” is found in the standard work of W.E. Vine, not a Baptist, but a noted Greek scholar. He states:

“Ekklesia... was used among the Greeks of a body of citizens gathered to discuss the affairs of State... In the Sept. [Septuagint - Greek translation of the Old Testament] it is used to designate the gathering of Israel summoned for any definite purpose, or a gathering regarded as representative of the whole nation...” [\[10\]](#) [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

Honesty demanded that Vine place his definition in his dictionary, not under the letter “C” for church, but rather under “A” for assembly and that is where you will find his comments. Sadly, due no doubt to preconceived notions, Vine asserts with absolutely no etymological or Scriptural basis that the word can also refer to all the saved. Such inconsistency cannot rightly be called scholarship. Shame on Mr. Vine. We trust he knows better now!

Similarly, honesty forces Vincent, Robertson and others to admit that the etymology of the word demands a (local) assembly founded by Christ in contrast to the (local) Jewish assembly which was called a synagogue. There is no instance of Christ ever using the word in any but a local sense. Neither is it sensible to suppose that the apostles changed the meaning of the word to mean something universal and invisible. To have done so without making such a distinction clear would have been misleading, to say the least!

If common sense and the normal usage of language prevails, there is absolutely no reason to think that “church” means anything other than an assembly of Scripturally-baptized believers in Christ who are organized according to the New Testament. Only those who oppose the church or have

an axe to grind in support of Protestantism find it necessary to make such a simple matter into a very complex one by insisting that there is an additional kind of church other than a “local” one. We are reminded of Paul’s words to the church at Corinth whom he had “espoused” as a “chaste virgin” or bride to Jesus Christ. He wrote, **“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:3)**. Simplicity lies in believing in the regular, usual, logical and linguistically authentic definition of the word church as a local congregation. Complexity and confusion arise when men manufacture additional definitions for the word “church” and then try to distinguish between them.

That these lexicographers who insist on blatantly inserting their own ideas into their definition of “church” are neither infallible nor free from preconceived notions, the Reformed scholar Berkhof tells us quite frankly:

“It is necessary to bear in mind that the Lexicons are not absolutely reliable, and that they are least so, when they descend to particulars. They merely embody those results of the exegetical labours of various interpreters that commended themselves to the discriminating judgment of the lexicographer, and often reveal a difference of opinion. It is quite possible, and in some cases perfectly evident, that the choice of a meaning was determined by dogmatical bias... If the interpreter has any reason to doubt the meaning of a word, as given by the Lexicon, he will have to investigate for himself.” [\[11\]](#)

Some have tried to argue that the word “ecclesia” - since it comes from two Greek words which basically mean “to call” and “out” must mean “the called out ones.” Scofield and others pursue this unscientific and unreal route. By doing so they try to say that the “ecclesia” or “church” is therefore all the “called out” or elect of any one or even all ages.

We readily admit that the word “ecclesia” springs from the two words as mentioned, but would also point out that words often come to mean something other than a combination of their roots. Baptist elder Edward Overby points out:

“A few words should be said about the etymology of ekklesia before going on... A distinction should be maintained between the etymology of a word and its meaning at some particular time in history. Sometimes the two are the same: many times they are quite different. ‘Hussy’ came from ‘huswife’ which means housewife; today it means worthless women, or girl, or a pert girl. ‘Con-stable’ came from ‘comes stabuli’ which means attendant of the stables; today it means a peace officer. Ekklesia came from ekkletos which means called out but in the times prior to the New Testament it meant assembly or called out assembly. To say it means the called out is not correct. Broadus writes, ‘The Greek word ecclesia signified primarily the assembly of citizens in a self-governed state, being derived from ekkaleo to call out; i.e., out of their homes or places of business, to summon, as we speak of calling out the militia. The popular notion that it meant to call out in the sense of separation from others, is a mistake...’ Hort also confirms this when he writes, ‘There is no foundation for the widely spread notion that ekklesia means a people or a number of individual men called out of the world or mankind.’ [\[12\]](#)

The word ecclesia always referred to an assembly gathered and organized to conduct business. This was the common usage before and during the days of the Lord Jesus on earth. S.E. Anderson points out:

“Some of the greatest Greek scholars say that no case has been found in classic Greek where ecclesia is used of unassembled or unassembling persons.” [\[13\]](#)

Further to the point, Roy Mason writes:

“Prof. Royal, of Wake Forest College, North Carolina, who taught Prof. A.T. Robertson, of the Louisville Seminary, and Prof. C.B. Williams, Greek, when asked if he knew of an instance in classic Greek where ecclesia was ever used of a class of ‘unassembled or unassembling persons’ said: ‘I do not know of any such passage in classic Greek.’ With this statement agree Professors Burton of Chicago University, Stifler of Crozer, Strong of Rochester and many other scholars.” [\[14\]](#)

Since neither Jesus nor His apostles ever indicated that they were using the word ecclesia in any but the well-known and commonly accepted usage of the day, it is a grievous violation of all the common sense rules of interpretation to substitute a different definition for the one they meant and the one their hearers understood. By such loose interpretative procedures as these, the Bible can be made to teach almost anything.

Pointing out that the church is always “local” and that we need not use that adjective before the word, J.B. Moody, in addressing the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention hosted by his church said:

“I never read of a local assembly, building, body, bride, city, congregation, candlestick, flock, fold, family, field, house, household, temple, vine, vineyard, woman, or wife. They may be local, but it is tautological tomfoolery to say so, except to distinguish them from some other kind. But there is no other. The kingdom is not local, but the church is necessarily so. When a church dies IN a place, it dies only TO the place, and scatters itself to others. Christ says, “I will REMOVE the candlestick OUT OF ITS PLACE...” [\[15\]](#)

Again we quote the well-known and respected Elder Moody, this time from an address delivered at the Baptist Young Peoples Union Encampment at Estill Springs, Tennessee, on June 25, 1907:

“A universal church, visible or invisible, must have organization and officers and doctrine and government, or it can do nothing. Such a church could not be a steward of anything. It never meets to consult about anything and has no officers to execute anything. This senseless error about a universal church has deceived more people and wasted more energy and begot more bigotry than perhaps any other deceitful device of the devil... ‘The Church of God’ is a congregation. The expression ‘Church of God’ occurs twelve times, and any man, though blind in one eye and purblind in the other, can see it so in every case. The lion is a ferocious beast; every lion is a ferocious beast; but all lions are not a ferocious beast. That is an inconceivable conception; an un-supposable [sic] supposition and an unspeakable superstition. The executive ability is in the real beast and not in

the unreal, buster. So of the horse, man, jury, church, etc... The universal church has been assumed, asserted and insisted on to the irrevocable damage of the faith for which we should contend. I don't believe in it. If there could be such a thing it could not do anything. It never has met, it has no doctrines, no officers, no government, no commission. You can't tell who is in it or how they got there. It is an invisible, impracticable, impeachable, impossible, impecunious imp, spread out into shallowness, enlarged into littleness and increased into nothingness. It makes a man feel too large for a contemptible little congregation that Christ organized for work. They think they are in the big church by reason of saving faith, and they don't see the need of being added to another church - a little, local, limited church, too small for their little finger. Let me magnify this "minified" and crucified church, which is the church of the living God." [\[16\]](#)

To say that Christ did not build His church is to make Him out to be a liar at worst, or to be a failure at best. Neither is acceptable to the true Christian for we know our Lord to be both truthful and well able to accomplish all He wills to do.

While some attempt to hold to the position that while the church is limited to only Scripturally baptized believers in organized assemblies here on earth, it will include all the saved in Heaven, this position is to be rejected for at least four good reasons. The late Roy Mason, author and for many years pastor of the Buffalo Avenue Baptist Church (now Central Avenue Baptist Church) of Tampa, Florida, states our position clearly:

"To hold that the church is local and visible, and is a continuation of the institution that Christ started and promised to perpetuate, then to shift from this, the true church, and to teach that the church that finally assembles over yonder will be composed of all of these redeemed regardless of whether they ever belonged to any church or not, is an inexcusable contradiction. If that were true, then several other things would have to be true:

"1 - As already argued, the Bride would turn out to be different from the one betrothed to Christ.

“2 - Christ’s promise that nothing would prevail against His church, would be proven false, for the institution started by Him would completely flop, for the church in Glory would prove to be a different thing entirely.

“3 - In such case, there would be no reward for the church that endured endless persecution for Christ, and that furnished fifty million martyrs for the defense of His truth.

“4 - Why should so much be made of the church that Jesus started? Why should its truth be defended so arduously? Why should members of this church have been willing to die for their beliefs, if in the final windup, the ultimate triumph is to be given to those who - some of them - persecuted those of the true church, or else ignored or disdained the true church? If all believers are to constitute the church in Glory - the Bride - then in the climax the church turns out to be something different than Christ’s church here on this earth.” [\[17\]](#)

The teaching that two (or more) meanings of the word “church” are correct is of great harm to the cause of Christ. To have two “churches” with differing requirements for membership and different methods of entrance is to foment confusion in the minds of believers. We quote B.H. Carroll again regarding those who hold to a “universal, invisible church.”

“...I honestly and strongly hold that even on this point his theory is erroneous and tends practically to great harm. Yes, I do most emphatically hold that this [universal, invisible church] theory is responsible for incalculable dishonor put upon the church of God on earth. I repeat that the theory of the co-existence, side by side, on earth of two churches of Christ, one formal and visible, the other real, invisible and spiritual, with different terms of membership, is exceedingly mischievous and is so confusing that every believer of it becomes muddled in running the lines of separation. Do let it sink deep in your minds that the tabernacle of Moses had the exclusive right of way in its allotted time and the temple of Solomon had the exclusive right of way in its allotted time - so the church of Christ on earth, the particular assembly, now has the exclusive right of way, and is without a rival on earth or in heaven...” [\[18\]](#) [Brackets mine:C.A.P.]

Christ Commissioned His Church

When anything is commissioned it receives delegated authority to act in behalf of another. That person or entity commissioned, when acting in official capacity, no longer acts on its own authority, but functions in the name of and on behalf of and by the express command of the superior granting the commission. The second mention of “church” in the New Testament is in **Matthew 18:15-18** and clearly demonstrates the authority of Christ as entrusted to His church:

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ”

Notice that neither the pastor nor some imagined board has authority to act in this matter. The matter must be brought before the church (the membership) and they are to seek the mind of the Lord in the matter. The decision (vote) of the church in obedience to Christ is binding in Heaven as well as within the confines of the church.

Here the church is explicitly authorized and instructed to exclude from her fellowship those whose behavior brings reproach upon the Head of each true church. Are we to believe that Christ did not mean for His disciples to obey these words? Why did He not tell them they would be obligated to obey these instructions at some future undisclosed time? There is nothing here to indicate these instructions were not for them then and there. The idea that these are instructions for the “future church” find a basis only in the writings of “Dr.” C.I. Scofield and his anti-Baptist followers.

Additionally, just prior to His ascension, Christ gave definite authority to act and specific directives for His church to heed on the following occasion:

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:16-20).

This authorization by Christ of His church to act is often called “The Great Commission.” It is actually the FINAL commission, for there was an earlier one, just as specific and explicit, but of a somewhat different nature. It is found in **Matthew 10:1-15**. To understand the nature of a commission, the reader is urged to note that in that passage Christ’s church was sent forth to a specific people, Israel, and Israel only. They were given definite directives as to what they were to do and not do. No one other than the Lord’s church was given this commission; thus, no one other than His church was acting under His authority.

If the church did not originate until the festival of Pentecost as our Protestant neighbors affirm, then Christ is found to be in the rather preposterous position of giving guidance, authority and a commission to something which did not exist! Not only was the first commission given before Pentecost, but so also was the “Great” one. A candid reading of Matthew evidences that these words (i.e. the Commission) were spoken to actual men then in existence that were expected to obey. While they were instructed to wait for the power of the Holy Ghost which indeed came on the following Pentecost, no new or additional authority was given on that Jewish feast day.

Some would attempt to maintain that Christ, in **Matthew 28:18-20**, gave His authority and instructions to the eleven as ordinary men. Others

inform us that He addressed them as apostles. Neither of these can conceivably be an accurate perception of the Commission, for if either of these be correct, His words, “**and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**” are insignificant rhetoric. According to this interpretation Christ was either mistaken or perhaps He was an outright fraud. It is obvious that neither as individuals nor as apostles have these men continued even to our day, and the “end of the world” has not come yet. Jesus has not continued with them either as individuals or apostles in the sense of which He spoke.

However, if we understand that Christ gave authority and instructions (the “Great Commission”) to the eleven as His church, then we begin to understand His promise to be with them. This view is consistent with **Revelation** chapters 1-3 where He is revealed to be in the midst of the “**seven candlesticks**” which **are the seven churches**. Only if we understand that Christ gave authority to act in evangelism, baptism and teaching to His church, and promised perpetual existence to her, do we begin to realize that He really meant what He said in promising to be with them “**alway.**”

Allow me to illustrate the matter of authority in this way. A man may possess the financial and physical ability to mine vast deposits of gold from the earth. He may busy himself about this work and enjoy great success in his labor. He CAN mine the gold. However, because society has enacted laws to attempt to ensure equity among her citizens, this man may lose not only all he has gained by mining, but also all he has previously owned. You see, IF a man does not have the authority to mine gold - if he has no legal claim to the ground he works - all his labor may be in vain. While he CAN mine the gold, he MAY not do so without proper authorization. He may even be subject to a fine levied against him because he violated the laws respecting mining.

So it is with Christ. He has delegated His authority to His church. She is not only the “**pillar and ground of the truth,**” but also to her was committed the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper as well as the authority to send forth teaching servants in the work of the Lord as the Holy Ghost calls and leads. While a man CAN (is able to) preach, immerse, and administer bread and wine, he MAY NOT (does not have permission to do so) unless

the Holy Ghost sends him forth out of and by a New Testament church. This is the teaching and pattern of the New Testament!

This “church authority” delegated by Christ to His churches is seen in action in the New Testament. Consider the sending out of Paul (Saul) and Barnabas in **Acts 13:1-4**.

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. ”

Note these several things:

(1) The men to be sent out were active teaching members **“in the church that was at Antioch”** which was a real, functioning “local” church.

(2) **“The Holy Ghost said,”** speaks of the Divine call to service. Without the working of the Holy Ghost in both the individual called AND in his church there can be no Scriptural sending-out of men to do the work of “church planting”.

(3) After more fasting and prayer the spiritual leaders in the church of which they were members **“laid *their* hands on *them*”** (that is, ordained them to the work).

(4) In this way they were **“sent forth by the Holy Ghost.”** Both the sovereign working of the Spirit AND the obedience of the members of a New Testament church are required for an individual to be “sent forth by the Holy Ghost.”

It is quite clear that the church at Antioch was involved in sending these Brethren out as evangelists. Baptists maintain that a church must be involved in separating (by ordination - which is appointment to service) and sending out evangelists (often called missionaries today) just as in the New Testament. It was to this church at Antioch that these Brethren were accountable. It was this church at Antioch to which they later returned. It was this church at Antioch to which they gave reports of their work. This “church connection” is consistently found in the New Testament. The New Testament knows nothing of “free-lance” individuals being somehow “called of God” apart from a New Testament church. None were approved of God who went about preaching, baptizing and teaching apart from church authority having been given to them. Anyone who acts in such a “free-lance” fashion does so without New Testament instruction or example and therefore without Divine authority.

Surely honest and sensible Christians who will lay aside preconceived notions and vested interests can see the truth here . The simple, clear meaning of these passages is that Christ built His church and invested her with the work of evangelism, baptism, and the teaching and observing of “**all things whatsoever I have commanded you.**” Quite simply stated, Christ’s church, through successive organizations, must necessarily continue to exist in perpetuity if these things are to be rightly carried out. If these are responsibilities given to the Lord’s church, then she must continue to exist for these responsibilities to be continued.

Christ Guaranteed Perpetuity To His Church

Nothing can be more assuring to the true Christian than the words of Jesus Christ. If He gave a guarantee that His church would never cease to exist, then that church still exists! You may not have found it yet, but IF Christ promised its perpetuity, IT EXISTS! He said, in **Matthew 16:18**: “...**I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** ”

“Hell,” according to Strong is: “haides (hah’-dace); properly, unseen, i.e. “Hades” or the place (state) of departed souls.” [\[19\]](#)

The idea conveyed by the term “gates” seems related to the fact that the rulers of Israel sat in the gate. The gate was the location of government for a city; thus, the “gate” was spoken of as the government. This is evidenced by the following verses:

Deuteronomy 25:7: “And if the man like not to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband’s brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband’s brother.”

Ruth 4:10, 11: “Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witnesses this day. “And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.”

Daniel 2:49: “Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king.”

In using the term “gates,” the Lord Jesus was saying that the government of hell (the unseen evil spirit world) shall not prevail against His church! The word translated “prevail” is “katischuo (kat-is-khoo’-o); to overpower.” [\[20\]](#) Can any Christian ask for a better guarantee than the word of Christ? Surely not! For this reason we believe that Christ’s church has existed in succession and that there are churches of the same sort on the earth today.

The only alternative is to say that the church went off into apostasy sometime prior to or during the “Dark Ages.” This popular Protestant view

of history (that the church apostatized and required a “reformation”) is to say that the church Christ founded ceased to exist. It is to say that Christ’s church perished off the face of the earth, for apostate churches are spiritual harlots and not Christ’s pure bride at all. Such churches cannot be Christ’s! If Christ’s churches ceased to exist, then it must follow that baptism was lost. Corrupt churches can only administer a false and corrupt baptism. Once lost, only by direct Divine intervention and authority could baptism ever be reinstated. This because no unbaptized man ever baptized anyone in the New Testament except John the Baptist, and he had direct Divine authority.

The historic Baptist position is that the Lord’s churches did not cease to exist during the apostasy of the Dark Ages. Rather she continued and still continues to make disciples, mark them with John’s baptism (which is Scriptural, Christian baptism) and mature them so as to fit them for the work of the ministry.

Christ Instituted A Perpetual Supper In His Church

Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul wrote these words to the Scripturally-baptized church of Christ in Corinth: **“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Corinthians 11:26).**

This statement means nothing unless it means that the Lord’s churches are to perpetually exist until He comes for them. Remember, the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, like baptism, was given to the Lord’s churches to be observed by them as a church of Christ **“TILL HE COME!”** Paul, in instructing the Corinthian Church regarding abuses at the Lord’s Table, said, **“...when ye come together in the church...” (1 Corinthians 11:18).** The problem was obviously **“in the church.”** Paul did not refer to being in a building, but rather the members meeting in “church capacity.” It is therefore seen that the apostolic churches kept the ordinances **“in the church,”** and so do the Lord’s churches unto this day.

As quoted above, the promise to the Lord's church was that they were to continue observing the Supper "**till he come.**" If the Protestants are right and the churches went off into apostasy, error and corruption in the Dark Ages, then the Lord's intent that the Supper be observed "**TILL HE COME**" has failed. If ALL the churches went off into apostasy, they ceased to exist as true churches of Christ. Scriptural baptism and the Lord's Supper ceased with them.

There is, however, no indication whatsoever that ALL churches apostatized. During the "Dark Ages" and at all other times since the earthly ministry of Christ, there have been churches, hidden away perhaps, but nonetheless faithfully standing for the truth of God regarding salvation and proper service. These are the churches of Christ!

Churches which are damnably corrupted either in practice or doctrine cease to be the Lord's churches. This is doubtless the meaning of the warnings to the seven churches of Revelation. Hear the message Christ sent to the "angels" (pastors) of these churches.

Revelation 2:4-5: "Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. "

Revelation 2:13-16 "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or

else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. ”

Revelation 2:20-23 “Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. ”

Revelation 3:1-3 “And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. ”

Revelation 3:15-16 “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ”

The fact that individual churches have their “candlestick” removed does not imply that all churches have perished from off the earth, but only that a congregation has ceased being Christ’s church in that place. That many churches have thus lost their “saltiness” (**Mark 9:50**) is apparent. That a

remnant of churches have remained faithful by the sovereign grace of God is also true.

It was to His church that Christ entrusted His ordinances to be kept as He instituted them. (Clearly the New Testament pattern, historic Baptist polity and sensible practice is that the Lord's supper be observed by the members of a church meeting together in church capacity. [\[21\]](#) See **1 Corinthians 11:18 & 20**). Christ's words indicate that the Lord's supper was to be a perpetual memorial. It was to be observed until He comes. Therefore, in order for it to enjoy continual existence, His church must enjoy continual existence through successive congregations. So we say that the Lord's supper proves church succession or perpetuity.

Christ Designed His Church To Continue

SHE IS A BRIDE

That each church is a “**chaste virgin**” “**espoused**” to Christ (**2 Corinthians 11:2**), in other words a “bride” of Christ, is evident to all who will study the Scriptures honestly (**John 3:29; Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17**). It is worthy of note that John the Baptist said he was neither Christ nor a part of the bride, but rather was the “**friend of the bridegroom.**” In contrast to this pure “bride,” the false religious system is likened to a “**great whore**” in **Revelation** chapters **17** and **18**. This “**Harlot**” is clearly the Roman Catholic organization. She is also the mother of certain offspring, for she is called the “**Mother of harlots.**” These harlot daughters are no doubt the Protestant “churches.” We know of no others who could be said to be the offspring of Rome other than the Protestant churches, for they came out of her. Like natural children often do, these Protestant churches bear striking resemblance to their mother. So, then, we have two completely different kinds of churches: one pictured as a virtuous woman and the other a loose woman.

If the corrupt Roman church was ever the bride of Christ, then He is married to an harlot! (Espousal is marriage, not just engagement!) If

Protestant churches are the bride of Christ, then Christ is married to a partially reformed harlot! If all churches are mere branches of corrupt Romanism, and we are all “unconscious Catholics” as she falsely claims, Christ has no pure bride, but is married to a trollop.

Neither can we believe that Christ is a widower! We raise the question then, can you really believe that Christ is presently without a bride on the earth - a bride who is anticipating His return for her? Surely not! Christ will return and find His bride hidden away out of sight, a godly remnant looking for His return! If that bride is not the Harlot or her daughters, then she must be sound New Testament Baptist churches. Nothing on the earth, other than a sound Baptist church, acts and looks like a New Testament church AND can offer proof of her continued existence since her founding by her Bridegroom in the days of His earthly sojourn.

SHE IS AN HOUSE

Each church is said to be “...**the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth**” (1 Timothy 3:15). In architectural language, then, a church is responsible to support the truth as both footings and pillars support the upper structure of a building. It is in churches that the truth is taught, and it is the churches that are responsible to evangelize. If the church (institutionally speaking) ceased to exist because of apostasy, then the truth would crash to the ground and be lost. Can you really believe that Christ’s church ceased to exist and required a re-formation under such men as Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, etc., etc?

Church members are exhorted to “**earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**” (Jude 3). To some who might object, claiming that a specific church is not mentioned in Jude we would enquire just what it was into which “certain men crept” in verse 4. Who but a church held agape-feasts as mentioned in verse 12? Obviously these people to whom Jude wrote existed in church capacity and they were responsible to God for the truth “**once delivered to the saints.**”

God preserves His truth, and He does so by perpetually sustaining His churches which are made up of those who have received a love of the truth. Christ knew what He was doing when He designed and built His church. A church that has an hierarchy, once corrupt at the top, corrupts itself entirely. It matters not whether it is a Roman or Eastern Catholic hierarchy, Protestant denomination, Cult, “Baptist convention,” “Baptist association,” “Baptist mission board,” or “Baptist fellowship.” Anything beyond the “local” church, once corrupt at the top, corrupts itself entirely. This is the testimony of history! Each sound Baptist church has Christ “at the top” as her Head. Being autonomous entities, if one church should fall away into apostasy, the remaining churches are unaffected. If one ceases, others in other places continue. The pillar and ground of the truth will stand until Christ returns for her!

SHE IS KEPT BY HER SOVEREIGN FOUNDER

The plain fact of the matter is that Christ did build His church, and genuine believers in New Testament days were members of His churches. In fact, the book of Acts knows nothing of saved individuals who were not baptized into a church. Are we to believe that Christ’s work in establishing His church has come to naught? Has Satan thus overcome the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Has the usurper god of this world dethroned the rightful Sovereign? Such things are unthinkable to all who are familiar with the teachings of the Bible!

To any unprejudiced student of the Bible it surely must be evident that Christ established His church. He gave her the responsibility of evangelizing, baptizing and teaching. As well He left her the observance of the two ordinances, both of which relate to the redeeming death of Christ for His elect. He promised to be with her until the end of the age and that the powers of the unseen spirit world would not be able to “prevail” over her. That New Testament kind of church is yet with us today. It behooves every saint of God to locate such a church and join himself to it so that his service might be pleasing, orderly, acceptable to Christ and eternally rewarded.

[1] Jarrel E. Huffman, "The Elect Within the Elect," (The Berea Baptist Banner, South Point, Ohio/Mantachie, Miss., Milburn Cockrell, Ed., Vol. IX, Number 5, May, 1988), p. 7.

[2] Hassell and Hassell, *op. cit.*, pp. 334, 335.

[3] Augustine, quoted by W.W. Everts, Introduction, W. A. Jarrell, BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY, 1894), p. xi.

Everts wrote his introduction from Haverhill, Mass. in May of 1894. Formerly his was the Chair of Ecclesiastical History, Chicago Baptist Theological Seminary.

[4] Augustine, *De nat. Et grat.* 36,42, Wilhelm, CHRIST AMONG US, A MODERN PRESENTATION OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH, 2nd Ed., (NY/Paramus, Paulist Press), p. 91.

[5] James Strong, THE GREEK-HEBREW DICTIONARY AND ENGLISHMAN'S CONCORDANCE, (Seattle, Biblesoft, 1988), a software version of STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE OF THE BIBLE, James Strong, (Nashville, Abingdon).

[6] Strong, *ibid.*

[7] Strong, *ibid.*

[8] B.H. Carroll, ECCLESIA - THE CHURCH, (Little Rock, AR, Challenge Press, n.d.), pp. 8, 9.

[9] Carroll, *ibid.*, p. 9.

[10] W.E. Vine, AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS WITH THEIR PRECISE MEANINGS FOR ENGLISH READERS, (Westwood, NJ, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966), pp. 83, 84.

[11] Louis Berkhof, PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION, (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1950), pp. 68, 69.

[12] Edward Hugh Overby, THE MEANING OF ECCLESIA IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, (Little Rock, Challenge Press, 1974), p. 10.

[13] S.E. Anderson THE FIRST CHURCH, (Little Rock, Challenge Press, 1964), p. 88.

[14] Roy Mason, THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT, (Clarksville, TN, Bible Baptist Church Publications, 1977), p. 28.

[15] J.B. Moody, MY CHURCH, (Greenwood, SC, The Attic Press, Inc. 1974 reprint), p. 13.

[16] Moody, *ibid.*, pp. 30, 31, 36, 37.

[17] Roy Mason, Th.D., THE MYTH OF THE UNIVERSAL INVISIBLE CHURCH THEORY EXPLODED, (Ashland, KY, Economy Printers, 1978), pp. 62, 63.

[18] Carroll, *op cit.*, p. 24

[19] Strong, *ibid.*

[20] Strong, *ibid.*

[21] Only the “closed communion” position can harmonize with the instructions of the Bible regarding church discipline. A church which practices either “open communion” or “close communion” (sometimes called “denominational communion”) is disorderly because she cannot exclude a member from the Table as required by the New Testament.

For instance: a member of such a church may be excluded for a disorderly walk, heresy, etc. The Bible command is “**with such an one no, not to eat**” (1 Corinthians 5:11). Yet such an excluded member might very well have joined another church of similar order, as has often happened,

whose practice in receiving members is not so careful. That excluded member, under the terms of either “open” or “close communion” could with perfect liberty return to a meeting of the church which excluded him and partake of the Lord’s Table. The command “not to eat” would be disobeyed. Thus, Biblical church discipline is mocked and rendered useless by any other position than “local church members only” or “closed communion.”

CONCLUSION

Surely to any candid mind the facts are clear. Baptists of the historic sort have been shown to be the original Christians. The New Testament kind of Baptist churches have authority from Christ to carry out the work of the Great Commission. Sound Baptists and their churches have perpetual existence both promised and as a matter of historical fact. There is no hint or assumption anywhere in the New Testament that Christ's church would cease to exist before He comes. Neither is there any hint or suggestion that any other entity would succeed the church in doing Christ's work. Hence there is no room nor need for denominational organizations, associational machinery, mission boards or such like.

This Baptist perpetuity demands church succession. Churches do not mystically spring up of themselves. Baptist churches are gathered by men having previous Baptist baptism and church connection (authority). This is the consistent New Testament pattern as well as historic Baptist practice. No real Baptist believes that any unbaptized person, unless directly sent by God as John was, has a right to baptize others. No such practice can be found in the Scriptures or in the accepted practice of the Baptists. Such a practice must be viewed as an innovation of man.

In the mouth of three witnesses we have sought to establish the facts. We believe that these three witnesses - (1) historic Baptist testimony, (2) the testimony of non-Baptists, and (3) the testimony of the Scriptures positively settle these matters. If these three witnesses are true, then all churches other than the New Testament Baptist churches are man-made and without Divine authority. Their members are unbaptized. This seems to have been the view of Tertullian who was born about 50 years after the beloved apostle John died. Tertullian wrote, "Baptismum quum rite non habeant, fine dubio non habent," which translates, "Those who are not rightly baptized, are, doubtless, not baptized at all". [\[1\]](#)

We doubt not that many members in man-made churches are sincere and well-meaning people trying to serve God the best way they know how. We do not disagree with much of what some groups teach. However, if the Baptists are in reality the “original Christians,” then all other groups obtained what truth they may have from Baptists, for the New Testament was penned by Baptist hands.

Settle it then: salvation is in Christ and all who have savingly come to Him, having repented of their sins, are saved and safe! Not being a member of a Baptist church does not mean that a person is lost and, conversely, being immersed by a Baptist church does not mean that one is saved. The new birth, regeneration, is the absolute requirement for salvation.

There is, however, the matter of acceptable service to Christ - the matter of pleasing Him! There is the matter of properly carrying out His commission. Will you serve Him faithfully in the way He established? Do you dare, for whatever reason, think to serve Him according to your own desires and preferences? There were those in Jesus’ day who refused to submit to Scriptural baptism - the baptism of John - the only baptism the Bible endorses. We believe the baptism initiated by John is the only baptism God recognizes. Of the people who refused John’s baptism, Luke spoke when he said they “**rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him**” (Luke 7:30). Surely no child of God would willingly and knowingly reject the counsel of God. Did not Jesus say that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him? (John 10:27). Follow Christ!

FINIS

[1] Tertullian, de BAPTISMO, cap. XV, p. 230, quoted by Abraham Booth, A DEFENSE FOR THE BAPTISTS, (London, E. & C. Dilly, 1778), [reprinted by The Baptist Standard Bearer, Paris, AR., 1985,] p. 25.

GLOSSARY

Since both the faith and practice of the New Testament churches have been laid aside by so many, the “old paths” of Biblical practice often seem unusual and new despite their apostolic origin. The old apostolic doctrines of grace are slandered as “Calvinism” and the old practices of Baptists are smeared as “Landmarkism.” We believe both “tulip-ism” and strict Baptist polity are Scriptural although both have been largely abandoned. Because of this present situation, you may be unacquainted with Baptist terms. This glossary is provided to enable all to read with ease and understanding the terms used..

Anabaptist: literally a “re-baptizer” - a *collective* name given often in ancient times to many groups who insisted on immersing all who joined them despite previous “baptisms” at the hands of other societies. Among these groups the Lord’s truth-loving churches existed in former days. Baptists do not believe it is possible to “re-baptize” anyone though we are charged with doing so because we baptize aright those previously “baptized” by other groups lacking New Testament authority. Our old writers vigorously denied being “Anabaptists” because they knew it impossible to re-baptize anyone. A believer, previously immersed unscripturally, can be re-immersed and in actuality baptized for the first time upon this repeat immersion

Apostate: one who has willfully left the doctrines and practices of the Bible.

Church: a church of Christ is a congregation of Scripturally-baptized believers organized in harmony with New Testament precept and procedure. This definition is consistent with the New Testament Greek word “ecclesia” and its usage both in sacred and secular writings.

Council of Trent: (1545-63) convened to damn those who opposed “free will” and those who resisted the Roman Catholic Church. It set forth dogmatically the doctrines of Romanism. It “...among other things dogmatized

the medieval theology of the Scholastics. It made the Latin Vulgate, including 11 O.T. apocryphal books, the authorized Bible, and declared Scripture AND tradition as ultimate authority.” [1] Further, this council proclaimed “If any one affirms that the baptism of John had the same force as the baptism of Christ, let him be anathema” - a blow directed at the Anabaptists of the day as well as certain Protestants.

Donatists, Novatians, Petrobrussians, Cathari, Arnoldists, Hussites, Waldenses, Lollards: etc. are historic nicknames applied in various localities to those people known collectively as Anabaptists. That there was a connection between these groups is clear. [2] It is among these groups that New Testament churches are to be found although obviously not all within these groups were saved nor were all the congregations so labeled necessarily sound. Among these are the spiritual forefathers of modern New Testament Baptists.

Hosius, Cardinal Stanislaus: Born May 5, 1504 in Krakow, Poland, Hosius died August 5, 1579, at Capranica, the Papal Estates, Italy. Appointed Cardinal in 1561, Hosius was later appointed presiding Papal legate to the Council of Trent. He is described as “the most brilliant writer, the most eminent theologian, and the best bishop of his time.” [3] Because he carried on such a relentless campaign against all dissenters from the Roman church, he was dubbed “hammer of the heretics.” [4]

“**Landmarkers**” or “**Landmark Baptists:**” Baptists who maintain the historic Baptist (and we believe, Biblical) position regarding the nature, origin and succession of true churches of Christ are often called and sometimes call themselves “Landmarkers.” The nickname originated from an essay published in 1854 entitled “An Old Landmark Reset” written by J.M. Pendleton, a Baptist minister in the United States. The principles and practices of historic Landmarkism can be proved to be as old as the New Testament. **This is not to say that everything believed by some who call themselves “Landmarkers” is Scriptural.** Some “Landmarkers” have gone off to extreme views, such as “new-lightism.” *Historic Landmarkism is church practice consistent with Bible principles.*

Mosheim, Johann Laurenz von: (1694? - 1755). Known as the father of modern church history, this Lutheran was no friend of Baptists, but gets high marks for his attempt at honest reporting of the facts. He has been praised as follows: "...von Mosheim, a German preacher, university professor at Goetingen, and noted scholar, was the first to attempt to write Church history objectively. Instead of publishing history to produce propaganda, von Mosheim tried to examine the development of the Church without bias or party line." [5]

Munster: City in Westphalia (region of western Germany bordering on the Netherlands). Scene of tumultuous riots during the Peasant Wars. The Anabaptists were falsely blamed for the riots which were led by Thomas Munzer, radical reformer and former comrade of Martin Luther. Some have tried to trace the Baptists back to these fanatical "madmen of Munster." One of the ablest of historians wrote:

"The most searching investigation has failed to prove that Munzer, the leader of the riots in the Peasant Wars, was a Baptist, or that the Baptists were in anyway responsible for the uprisings." [6]

Ordinances: Baptists hold only two ordinances as Scriptural, namely water baptism of believers and the Lord's supper, both of which they view as being church ordinances as opposed to mere "Christian ordinances." By that it is meant that Baptists view the ordinances as properly observed only by a (local) New Testament kind of (Baptist) church. Ordinances differ from sacraments in that an ordinance is merely a memorial, while it is claimed by ritualists that a sacrament is a work which actually conveys grace to the recipient. Those who hold the sacramental view believe grace is obtained by religious works and ceremonies - a thing contrary to the very definition of grace which is unearned favor or unmerited love.

Pedobaptist: one who "baptizes" infants whether by sprinkling, pouring or immersion. There is no mention of this practice in the New Testament; thus, Baptists view it as an unscriptural and evil innovation. Its promoters practice it because they believe the rite washes away the guilt of sin and makes the unconscious babe a child of God.

Perpetuity: the concept that churches of the New Testament sort have had continual existence since the first one was established by Christ and that they shall continually exist until He comes again. Closely related to “succession.” (see “Succession” below).

Protestant: used of those individuals and religious societies which separated from or arose in protest against the Roman Catholic Church during the period of history known as the “Reformation.” The term is also used of groups later splitting off those earlier splits. Baptists, originating with Christ, are not Protestants in this sense though they have consistently opposed the errors of Romanism.

Quasi-Baptists: churches or individuals who are designated Baptist, but who only slightly resemble historic Baptists in doctrine and practice. Used of liberal, loose, irregular and apostate Baptists.

Succession: the concept of churches being founded by the authority of previously existing churches. J.R. Graves, erroneously called the father of Landmarkism, wrote:

“The sense in which any existing Baptist Church is the successor of the First Church of Judea - the model and pattern of all - is the same as that existing between any regular organization and the first such organization that was ever instituted. Ten thousand local organizations of like nature may have existed and passed away, but this fact in no wise affects the continuity of the organization. From the day that organization was started, it has stood; and though it may have decayed in some places, it has flourished in others, and never had but one beginning...” [7]

Transubstantiation: the Catholic teaching that in the Mass the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ in a non-bloody sacrifice. Hear from one of Rome’s own authorized statements:

“This is the word the [Roman Catholic] Church has adopted as most accurately expressing what happens at the Consecration at Mass. At this moment, by divine power, what was bread and wine now becomes the Body and Blood of Christ. The Catholic, therefore, subscribes to the traditional

doctrine of the [Roman Catholic] Church which, in the words of the Council of Trent, speaks of ‘the change of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood (of Christ), only the appearances of bread and wine remaining; which change the Catholic Church most fitly calls transubstantiation.’ [8] [Brackets mine: C.A.P.]

[1] Merrill F. Unger, Th.D., Ph.D., UNGER’S BIBLE HANDBOOK, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1966), p. 913.

[2] Of the Cathari (one group of Anabaptists) it is said, “They derived their teachings from Paulicians: their chief ramifications were the Albigenses and the Bogomils.” Clarke F. Ansley, Ed., THE COLUMBIA ENCYCLOPEDIA IN ONE VOLUME, NY, Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 313.

[3] Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th Edition, Vol. 6, article “Hosius”, p. 77

[4] Douglas, Elwell, and Toon, op cit., p. 189.

[5] William P. Barker, WHO’S WHO IN CHURCH HISTORY, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1977), p. 198.

[6] Christian, op cit., p. 153.

[7] J.R. Graves, OLD LANDMARKISM (Texarkana, Bogard Press reprint of the second edition, 1881), p. 84.

[8] Mabel Quin, Ed., THE CATHOLIC PEOPLES ENCYCLOPEDIA, Vol. 3 (Chicago, The Catholic Press, Inc., 1966), p. 1019.

“The Nihil obstat and Imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free from doctrinal or moral error...”

APPENDIX I

THE FIRST LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

A.D. 1644

Note to the Reader

By Curtis Pugh

Composed and published some two years PRIOR to the now famous Protestant Westminster Confession, this Baptist Confession of 1644 sets forth the historic Baptist view regarding both the doctrines relating to salvation and those now called “church truth.” There is little evidence here of Protestant influence. This old confession is highly valuable not only because of its doctrinal soundness, but because of its adherence to Biblical phrases and terminology. It is Christ-centered and Christ-honoring.

The text presented here has been changed only in the matter of updating the spelling, except for the title page where the old spellings have been retained. While some punctuation changes have been made, older usage of words is kept so as to avoid editorializing the text. Capitalization has been left as found.

[Facsimile Title Page]

**The
CONFESSION
OF FAITH,**

**Of those CHURCHES which are
commonly (though falsly)
called ANABAPTISTS;**

Presented to the view of all that feare God, to examine by the touchstone of the Word of Truth: As likewise for the taking off those aspersiones which are frequently both in Pulpit and Print, (although unjustly) cast upon them.

Acts 4.20 We can not but speake the things which wee have seene and heard.

Isaiah 8.20 To the Law and to the testimony, if they speake not according to this Rule, it is because there is no light in them.

2 Corinthians 1.9, 10 But wee had the sentence of death in our selves, that wee should not trust in our selves, but in the living God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom wee trust that he will yet deliver.

LONDON

Printed by *Matthew Simmons* in *Aldersgate-street*.

1644

To

ALL THAT DESIRE

The lifting up of the Name of the LORD Jesus in sincerity, the poor despised Churches of God in *London* send greeting, with prayers for their

farther increase in the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS.

*We question not but that it will seem strange to many men, that such as we are frequently termed to be, lying under that calumny and black brand of Heretics, and sowers of division as we do, should presume to appear so publicly as now we have done: But yet notwithstanding we may well say, to give answer to such, what David said to his brother, when the Lord's battle was a fighting, **1 Samuel 29:30. Is there not a cause?***

*Surely, if ever people had cause to speak for the vindication of the truth of Christ in their hands, we have, that being indeed the main wheel at this time that sets us awork; for had anything by men been transacted against our persons only, we could quietly have sitten still, and committed our Cause to him who is a righteous Judge, who will in the great day judge the secrets of all men's hearts by Jesus Christ: But being it is not only us, but the truth professed by us, we cannot, we dare not but speak; it is no strange thing to any observing man, what sad charges are laid, not only by the world, that know not God, but also by those that think themselves much wronged, if they be not looked upon as the chief Worthies of the Church of God, and Watchmen of the City: But it hath fared with us from them, as from the poor Spouse seeking her Beloved, **Canticles 5:6, 7.** They finding us out of that common roadway themselves walk, have smote us and taken away our vail, that so we may by them be recommended odious in the eyes of all that behold us, and in the hearts of all that think upon us, which they have done both in Pulpit and Print, charging us with holding Free-will, Falling away from grace, denying Original sin, disclaiming of Magistracy, denying to assist them either in persons or purse in any of their lawful Commands, doing acts unseemly in the dispensing the Ordinance of Baptism, not to be named amongst Christians: All which Charges we disclaim as notoriously untrue, though by reason of these calumnies cast upon us, many that fear God are discouraged and forestalled in harboring a good thought, either of us or what we profess; and many that know not God encouraged, if they can find the place of our meeting, to get together in Clusters to stone us, as looking upon us as a people holding such things, as that we are not worthy to live: We have therefore for the clearing of the truth we profess, that it may be at liberty, though we be in bonds, briefly*

published a Confession of our Faith, as desiring all that fear God, seriously to consider whether (if they compare what we here say and confess in the presence of the Lord Jesus and his Saints) men have not with their tongues in Pulpit, and pens in Print, both spoken and written things that are contrary to truth; but we know our God in his own time will clear our Cause, and lift up his Son to make him the chief cornerstone, though he has been (or now should be) rejected of Master Builders. And because it may be conceived, that what is here published, may be but the Judgement of some one particular Congregation, more refined than the rest; We do therefore here subscribe it, some of each body in the name, and by the appointment of seven Congregations, who though we be distinct in respect of our particular bodies, for convenience sake, being as many as can well meet together in one place, yet are all one in Communion, holding Jesus Christ to be our head and Lord; under whose government we desire alone to walk, in following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth; and we believe the Lord will daily cause truth more to appear in the hearts of his Saints, and make them ashamed of their folly in the Land of their Nativity, that so they may with one shoulder, more study to lift up the Name of the Lord Jesus, and stand for his appointments and Laws; which is the desires and prayers of the condemned Churches of Christ in London for all saints.

Subscribed in the Names of seven Churches in London.

William Kiffin.

Thomas Patience.

John Spilsbery.

George Tipping.

Samuel Richardson.

Thomas Skippard.

Thomas Munday.

Thomas Gunne.

John Mabbatt.

John Webb

Thomas Killcop.

Paul Hobson.

Thomas Goare.

John Mabbatt.

Joseph Phelpes.

Edward Heath.

The

CONFESSION

Of Faith, of those Churches

which are commonly (though falsely)

called ANABAPTISTS.

I.

That God as he is in himself, cannot be comprehended of any but himself, [1]dwelling in that inaccessible light, that no eye can attain unto, whom never man saw, nor can see; that there is but [2]one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Faith, one Baptism; [3]one Rule of holiness and obedience for all Saints, at all times, in all places to be observed.

II.

That God is [4]of himself, that is, neither from another, nor of another, nor by another, nor for another: [5]But is a Spirit, who as his being is of himself, so he gives [6]being, moving, and preservation to all other things, being in himself eternal, most holy, every way infinite in [7]greatness, wisdom, power, justice, goodness, truth, etc. In this God-head, there is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; being every one of them one and the same God; and therefore not divided, but distinguished one from another by their several properties; the [8]Father being from himself, the [9]Son of the Father from everlasting, the holy [10]Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son.

III.

That God hath [11]decreed in himself from everlasting touching all things, effectually to work and dispose them [12]according to the counsel of his own will, to the glory of his Name; in which decree appeareth his wisdom, constancy, truth, and faithfulness; [13]Wisdom is that whereby he contrives all things; [14]Constancy is that whereby the decree of God remains always immutable; [15]Truth is that whereby he declares that alone which he hath decreed, and though his sayings may seem to sound sometimes another thing, yet the sense of them doth always agree with the decree; [16]Faithfulness is that whereby he effects that he hath decreed, as he hath

decreed. And touching his creature man, [17]God had in Christ before the foundation of the world, according to the good pleasure of his will, foreordained some men to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of his grace, [18]leaving the rest in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his Justice.

IV.

[19]In the beginning God made all things very good, created man after his own [20]Image and likeness, filling him with all perfection of all natural excellency and uprightness, free from all sin. [21]But long he abode not in this honor, but by the [22]subtlety of the Serpent, which Satan used as his instrument, himself with his Angels having sinned before, and not [23]kept their first estate, but left their own habitation; first [24]*Eve*, then *Adam* being seduced did wittingly and willingly fall into disobedience and transgression of the Commandment of their great Creator, for the which death came upon all, and reigned over all, so that all since the Fall are conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, and so by nature children of wrath, and servants of sin, subjects of [25]death, and all other calamities due to sin in this world and forever, being considered in the state of nature, without relation to Christ.

V.

All mankind being thus fallen, and become altogether dead in sins and trespasses, and subject to the eternal wrath of the great God by transgression; yet the elect, which God hath [26]loved with an everlasting love, are [27]redeemed, quickened, and saved, not by themselves, neither by their own works, lest any man should boast himself, but wholly and only by God of [28]his free grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that as it is written, He that rejoiceth, let him rejoice in the Lord.

VI.

[29]This therefore is life eternal, to know the only true God, and whom he hath sent Jesus Christ. [30]And on the contrary, the Lord will render vengeance in flaming fire to them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[31]VII.

The Rule of this Knowledge, Faith, and Obedience, concerning the worship and service of God, and all other Christian duties, is not man's inventions, opinions, devices, laws, constitutions, or traditions unwritten whatsoever, but only the word of God contained in the Canonical Scriptures.

[32]VIII.

In this written Word God hath plainly revealed whatsoever he hath thought needful for us to know, believe, and acknowledge, touching the Nature and Office of Christ, in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen to the praise of God.

IX.

Touching the Lord Jesus, of whom [33]*Moses* and the Prophets wrote, and whom the Apostles preached, is the [34]Son of God the Father, the brightness of his glory, the engraven form of his being, God with him and with his holy Spirit, by whom he made the world, by whom he upholds and governs all the works he hath made, who also [35]when the fullness of time was come, was made man of a [36]woman, of the Tribe of *Judah*, of the seed of *Abraham* and *David*, to wit, of *Mary* that blessed Virgin, by the holy Spirit coming upon her, and the power of the most High overshadowing her, and was also in [37]all things like unto us, sin only excepted.

X.

Touching his Office, [38] Jesus Christ only is made the Mediator of the new Covenant, even the everlasting Covenant of grace between God and Man, to [39] be perfectly and fully the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church of God for evermore.

XI.

Unto this Office he was foreordained from everlasting, by the [40] authority of the Father and in respect of his Manhood, from the womb called and separated, and [41] anointed also most fully and abundantly with all gifts necessary, God having without measure poured the Spirit upon him.

XII.

In this Call the Scripture holds forth two special things considerable; first, the call to the Office; secondly, the Office itself. First, that [42] none takes this honor but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*, so also Christ, it being an action especially of God the Father, whereby a special covenant being made, he ordains his Son to this office: which Covenant is, that [43] Christ should be made a Sacrifice for sin, that he shall see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; which calling therefore contains in itself [44] choosing, [45] foreordaining, [46] sending. Choosing respects the end, foreordaining the means, sending the execution itself, [47] all of mere grace, without any condition foreseen either in men, or in Christ himself.

[48] XIII.

So that this Office to be Mediator, that is, to be Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God, is so proper to Christ, as neither in the whole, nor

in any part thereof, it can be transferred from him to any other.

XIV.

This Office itself to which Christ was called, is threefold, of [49]a Prophet, of [50]Priest, and of [51]a King: this number and order of Offices is showed; first, by men's necessities grievously laboring [52]under ignorance, by reason whereof they stand in infinite necessity of the Prophetical office of Christ to relieve them. Secondly, [53]alienation from God, wherein they stand in need of the Priestly Office to reconcile them: Thirdly, our [54]utter disability to return to him, by which they stand in need of the power of Christ in his Kingly Office to assist and govern them.

XV.

Touching the Prophecy of Christ, it is that whereby he hath [55]perfectly revealed the whole will of God out of the bosom of the Father, that is needful for his servants to know, believe, and obey; and therefore is called not only a Prophet and [56]a Doctor, and the [57]Apostle of our profession, and the [58]Angel of the Covenant; but also the very [59]wisdom of God, and [60]the treasures of wisdom and understanding.

XVI.

That he might be such a Prophet as thereby to be every way complete, it was necessary that he should be [61]God, and withal also that he should be man; for unless he had been God, he could never have perfectly understood the will of God, [62]neither had he been able to reveal it throughout all ages; and unless he had been man, he could not fitly have unfolded it in his [63]own person to man.

XVII.

Touching his Priesthood, Christ [64]being consecrated, hath appeared once to put away sin by the offering and sacrifice of himself, and to this end hath fully performed and suffered all those things by which God, through the blood of that his Cross in an acceptable sacrifice, might reconcile his elect only; [65]and having broken down the partition wall, and therewith finished and removed all those Rites, Shadows, and Ceremonies, is now entered within the Vail, into the Holy of Holiest, that is, to the very Heavens, and presence of God, where he forever liveth and sitteth at the right hand of Majesty, appearing before the face of his Father to make intercession for such as come to the Throne of Grace by that new and living way; and not that only, but [66]makes his people a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through him; neither doth the Father accept, or Christ offer to the Father any other worship or worshippers.

XVIII.

This Priesthood was not legal, or temporary, but according to the order [67]of *Melchizedek*; [68]not by a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life; [69]not by an order that is weak and lame, but stable and perfect, not for a [70]time, but forever, admitting no successor, but perpetual and proper to Christ, and of him that ever liveth. Christ himself was the Priest, Sacrifice and Altar: he was [71]Priest, according to both natures, he was a sacrifice most properly according to his human nature: [72]whence in the Scripture it is wont to be attributed to his body, to his blood; yet the chief force whereby this sacrifice was made effectual, did depend upon his [73]divine nature, namely, that the Son of God did offer himself for us: he was the [74]Altar properly according to his divine nature, it belonging to the Altar to sanctify that which is offered upon it, and so it ought to be of greater dignity than the Sacrifice itself.

XIX.

Touching his Kingdom, [75]Christ being risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, sat on the right hand of God the Father, having all power in

heaven and earth, given unto him, he doth spiritually govern his Church, exercising his power [76]over all Angels and Men, good and bad, to the preservation and salvation of the elect, to the overruling and destruction of his enemies, which are Reprobates, [77]communicating and applying the benefits, virtue, and fruit of his Prophecy and Priesthood to his elect, namely, to the subduing and taking away of their sins, to their justification and adoption of Sons, regeneration, sanctification, preservation and strengthening in all their conflicts against Satan, the World, the Flesh, and the temptations of them, continually dwelling in, governing and keeping their hearts in faith and filial fear by his Spirit, which having [78]given it, he never takes away from them, but by it still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all heavenly light in the soul unto immortality, notwithstanding through our own unbelief, and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of this light and love be clouded and overwhelmed for the time. [79]And on the contrary, ruling in the world over his enemies, Satan, and all the vessels of wrath, limiting, using, restraining them by his mighty power, as seems good in his divine wisdom and justice to the execution of his determinate counsel, delivering them up to a reprobate mind, to be kept through their own deserts, in darkness and sensuality unto judgment.

[80]XX.

This Kingdom shall be then fully perfected when he shall the second time come in glory to reign amongst his Saints, and to be admired of all them which do believe, when he shall put down all rule and authority under his feet, that the glory of the Father may be full and perfectly manifested in his Son, and the glory of the Father and the Son in all his members.

XXI.

That Christ Jesus by his death did bring forth salvation and reconciliation only for the [81]elect, which were those which [82]God the Father gave him; and that the Gospel which is to be preached to all men as the ground of faith, is, that [83]Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the ever blessed

God, filled with the perfection of all heavenly and spiritual excellencies, and that salvation is only and alone to be had through the believing in his Name.

XXII.

That Faith is the [84]gift of God wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God, whereby they come to see, know, and believe the truth of [85]the Scriptures, and not only so, but the excellency of them above all other writings and things in the world, as they hold forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices, and the power of the fullness of the Spirit in its workings and operations; and thereupon are enabled to cast the weight of their souls upon this truth thus believed.

[86]XXIII.

Those that have this precious faith wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally nor totally fall away; and though many storms and floods do arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon, but shall be kept by the power of God to salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being formerly engraven upon the palms of God's hands.

XXIV.

That faith is ordinarily [87]begot by the preaching of the Gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to [88]any power or capacity in the creature, but it is wholly [89]passive, being dead in sins and trespasses, doth believe, and is converted by no less power, [90]than that which raised Christ from the dead.

XXV.

That the tenders of the Gospel to the conversion of sinners, [91]is absolutely free, no way requiring, as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, terrors of the Law, or preceding Ministry of the Law, but only and alone the naked soul, as a [92]sinner and ungodly to receive Christ, as crucified, dead, and buried, and risen again, being made [93]a Prince and a Saviour for such sinners.

XXVI.

That the same power that converts to faith in Christ, the same power carries on the [94]soul still through all duties, temptations, conflicts, sufferings, and continually whatever a Christian is, he is by [95]grace, and by a constant renewed [96]operation from God, without which he cannot perform any duty to God, or undergo any temptations from Satan, the world, or men.

XXVII.

That God the Father, and Son, and Spirit, is one with [97]all believers in their [98]fullness, in [99]relations, [100]as head and members, [101]as house and inhabitants, as [102]husband and wife, one with him, as [103]light and love, and one with him in his inheritance, and in all his [104]glory; and that all believers by virtue of this union and oneness with God, are the adopted sons of God, and heirs with Christ, co-heirs and joint heirs with him of the inheritance of all the promises of this life, and that which is to come.

XXVIII.

That those which have union with Christ, are justified from all their sins, past, [105]present, and to come, by the blood of Christ; which justification we conceive to be a gracious and free [106]acquittance of a guilty, sinful creature, from all sin by God, through the satisfaction that Christ

hath made by his death; and this applied in the manifestation of it through faith.

XXIX.

That all believers are a holy and [107]sanctified people, and that sanctification is a spiritual grace of the [108]new Covenant, and effect of the [109]love of God, manifested to the soul, whereby the believer is in [110]truth and reality separated, both in soul and body, from all sin and dead works, through the [111]blood of the everlasting Covenant, whereby he also presseth after a heavenly and Evangelical perfection, in obedience to all the Commands, [112]which Christ as head and King in his new Covenant has prescribed to him.

XXX.

All believers through the knowledge of [113]that Justification of life given by the Father, and brought forth by the blood of Christ, have this as their great privilege of that the new [114]Covenant, peace with God, and reconciliation, whereby they that were afar off, were brought nigh by [115]that blood, and have (as the Scripture speaks) peace [116]passing all understanding, yea, joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by [117]whom we have received the Atonement.

[118]XXXI.

That all believers in the time of this life, are in a continual warfare, combat, and opposition against sin, self, the world, and the Devil, and liable to all manner of afflictions, tribulations, and persecutions, and so shall continue until Christ comes in his Kingdom, being predestinated and appointed thereunto; and whatsoever the Saints, any of them do possess or enjoy of God in this life, is only by faith.

[119]XXXII.

That the only strength by which the Saints are enabled to encounter with all opposition, and to overcome all afflictions, temptations, persecutions, and trials, is only by Jesus Christ, who is the Captain of their salvation, being made perfect through sufferings, who hath engaged his strength to assist them in all their afflictions, and to uphold them under all their temptations, and to preserve them by his power to his everlasting Kingdom.

XXXIII.

That Christ hath here on earth a spiritual Kingdom, which is the Church, which he hath purchased and redeemed to himself, as a peculiar inheritance: which Church, as it is visible to us, is a company of visible [\[120\]](#)Saints, [\[121\]](#)called and separated from the world, by the word and [\[122\]](#)Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel, being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement, in the practical enjoyment of the [\[123\]](#)Ordinances, commanded by Christ their head and King.

XXXIV.

To this Church he hath [\[124\]](#)made his promises, and given the signs of his Covenant, presence, love, blessing, and protection: here are the fountains and springs of his heavenly grace continually flowing forth; [\[125\]](#)thither ought all men to come, of all estates, that acknowledge him to be their Prophet, Priest, and King, to be enrolled amongst his household servants, to be under his heavenly conduct and government, to lead their lives in his walled sheepfold, and watered garden, to have communion here with the Saints, that they may be made to be partakers of their inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

[126]XXXV.

And all his servants are called thither, to present their bodies and souls, and to bring their gifts God hath given them; so being come, they are here by himself bestowed in their several order, peculiar place, due use, being fitly compact and knit together, according to the effectual working of every part, to the edification of itself in love.

XXVI.

That being thus joined, every Church has [\[127\]](#)power given them from Christ for their better well-being, to choose to themselves meet persons into the office of [\[128\]](#)Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, being qualified according to the Word, as those which Christ has appointed in his Testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of his Church, and that none other have power to impose them, either these or any other.

[\[129\]](#)XXXVII.

That the Ministers aforesaid, lawfully called by the Church, where they are to administer, ought to continue in their calling, according to God's Ordinance, and carefully to feed the flock of Christ committed to them, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

[\[130\]](#)XXXVIII.

That the due maintenance of the Officers aforesaid, should be the free and voluntary communication of the Church, that according to Christ's Ordinance, they that preach the Gospel, should live on the Gospel and not by constraint to be compelled from the people by a forced Law.

[\[131\]](#)XXXIX.

That Baptism is an Ordinance of the new Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed only upon persons professing faith, or that are Disciples, or taught, who upon a profession of faith, ought to be baptized. [Later editions added, “and after to partake of the Lord’s Supper.” C.A.P.]

XL.

The way and manner of the [132]dispensing of this Ordinance the Scripture holds out to be dipping or plunging the whole body under water: it being a sign, must answer the thing signified, which are these: first, the [133]washing the whole soul in the blood of Christ: Secondly, that interest the Saints have in the [134]death, burial, and resurrection; thirdly, together with a [135]confirmation of our faith, that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and riseth again, so certainly shall the bodies of the Saints be raised by the power of Christ in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ. [The word *Baptizo*, signifying to dip under water, yet so as with convenient garments both upon the administrator and subject, with all modesty.]

XLI.

The persons designed by Christ, to dispense this Ordinance, the [136]Scriptures hold forth to be a preaching Disciple, it being no where tied to a particular Church, Officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the Commission enjoining the administration, being given to them under no other consideration, but as considered Disciples.

[137]XLII.

Christ has likewise given power to his whole Church to receive in and cast out, by way of Excommunication, any member; and this power is given to every particular Congregation, and not one particular person, either member or Officer, but the whole.

[138]XLIII

And every particular member of each Church, how excellent, great, or learned soever, ought to be subject to this censure and judgement of Christ; and the Church ought with great care and tenderness, with due advice to proceed against her members.

XLIV.

And as Christ for the [139]keeping of this Church in holy and orderly Communion, placeth some special men over the Church, who by their office are to govern, oversee, visit, watch; so likewise for the better keeping thereof in all places, by the members, he hath given [140]authority, and laid duty upon all, to watch over one another.

[141]XLV.

That also such to whom God hath given gifts, being tried in the Church, may and ought by the appointment of the Congregation, to prophesy, according to the proportion of faith, and so teach publicly the Word of God, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church.

[142]XLVI.

Thus being rightly gathered, established, and still proceeding in Christian communion, and obedience of the Gospel of Christ, none ought to separate for faults and corruptions, which may, and as long as the Church consists of men subject to failings, will fall out and arise amongst them, even in true constituted Churches, until they have in due order sought redress thereof.

[143]XLVII.

And although the particular Congregations be distinct and several Bodies, every one a compact and knit City in itself: yet are they all to walk by one and the same Rule, and by all means convenient to have the counsel and help one of another in all needful affairs of the Church, as members of one body in the common faith under Christ their only head.

[144]XLVIII.

That a civil Magistracy is an ordinance of God set up by God for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that in all lawful things commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord: and that we are to make supplication and prayer for Kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty.

XLIX.

The supreme Magistracy of this Kingdom we believe to be the King and Parliament freely chosen by the Kingdom, and that in all those civil Laws which have been acted by them, or for the present is or shall be ordained, we are bound to yield subjection and obedience unto in the Lord, as conceiving ourselves bound to defend both the persons of those thus chosen, and all civil Laws made by them, with our persons, liberties, and estates, with all that is called ours, although we should suffer never so much from them in not actively submitting to some Ecclesiastical Laws, which might be conceived by them to be their duties to establish which we for the present could not see, nor our consciences could submit unto; yet are we bound to yield our persons to their pleasures.

[145]L.

And if God should provide such a mercy for us, as to incline the Magistrates' hearts so far to tender our consciences, as that we might be protected by them from wrong, injury, oppression and molestation, which long we formerly have groaned under by the tyranny and oppression of the Prelatical Hierarchy, which God through mercy hath made this present King and Parliament wonderful honorable, as an instrument in his hand, to throw down; and we thereby have had some breathing time, we shall, we hope, look at it as a mercy beyond our expectation, and conceive ourselves further engaged forever to bless God for it.

LI.

But if God withhold the Magistrates' allowance and furtherance herein; [\[146\]](#) yet we must notwithstanding proceed together in Christian communion, not daring to give place to suspend our practice, but to walk in obedience to Christ in the profession and holding forth this faith before mentioned, even in the midst of all trials and afflictions, not accounting our goods, lands, wives, children, fathers, mothers, brethren, sisters, yea, and our own lives dear unto us, so we may finish our course with joy: remembering always we ought to [\[147\]](#) obey God rather than men, and grounding upon the commandment, commission and promise of our Lord and master Jesus Christ, who as he hath all power in heaven and earth, so also hath promised, if we keep his commandments which he hath given us, to be with us to the end of the world: and when we have finished our course, and kept the faith, to give us the crown of righteousness, which is laid up for all that love his appearing, and to whom we must give an account of all our actions, no man being able to discharge us of the same.

[\[148\]](#)LII.

And likewise unto all men is to be given whatsoever is their due; tributes, customs, and all such lawful duties, ought willingly to be by us paid and performed, our lands, goods, and bodies, to submit to the Magistrate in the Lord and the Magistrate every way to be acknowledged, revered, and

obeyed, according to godliness; not because of wrath only but for conscience sake. And finally, all men so to be esteemed and regarded, as is due and meet for their place, age, estate and condition.

[149]LII. [sic]

And thus we desire to give unto God that which is God's, and to Caesar that which is Caesar's, and to all men that which belongeth unto them, endeavoring ourselves to have always a clear conscience void of offence towards God, and towards man. And if any take this that we have said, to be heresy, then do we with the Apostle freely confess, that after the way which they call heresy, worship we the God of our Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets and Apostles, desiring from our souls to disclaim all heresies and opinions which are not after Christ, and to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:24. *Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith we stand.*

FINIS

[1] 1 Timothy 6:16

[2] 1 Timothy 2:5; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 13; John chap. 14.

[3] 1 Timothy 6:3, 13, 14; Galatians 1:8, 9; 2 Timothy 3:15.

[4] Isaiah 44:67; 43:11; 46:9.

[5] John 4:24.

[6] Exodus 3:14.

- [7] **Romans 11:36; Acts 17:28.**
- [8] **1 Corinthians 8:6.**
- [9] **Proverbs 8:22, 23; Hebrews 1:3; John 1:18.**
- [10] **John 15:16; Galatians 4:6.**
- [11] **Isaiah 46:10; Romans 11:34-36; Matthew 10:29, 30.**
- [12] **Ephesians 1:11.**
- [13] **Colossians 2:3.**
- [14] **Numbers 23:19, 20.**
- [15] **Jeremiah 10:10; Romans 3:4.**
- [16] **Esa. [sic] 44:10.**
- [17] **Ephesians 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 1:9; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29, 30.**
- [18] **Jude vs. 4, 6; Romans 9:11-13; Proverbs 16:4.**
- [19] **Genesis chap. 1; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3; Isaiah 45:12.**
- [20] **Genesis 1:26; 1 Corinthians 15:45, 46; Ecclesiastes 7:31.**
- [21] **Psalms 49:20.**
- [22] **Genesis 3:1, 4, 5; 2 Corinthians 11:3.**
- [23] **2 Peter 2:4; Jude v. 6; John 8:44.**
- [24] **Genesis 3:1, 2, 6; 1 Timothy 2:14; Ecclesiastes 7:31; Galatians 3:22.**
- [25] **Romans 5:12, 18, 19; 6:25; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 5:12 [sic].**

[26] **Jeremiah 31:2.**

[27] **Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 1:3, 7; 2:4, 9; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; Acts 13:38.**

[28] **1 Corinthians 1:30, 31; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Jeremiah 9:23, 24.**

[29] **John 17:3; Hebrews 5:9; Jeremiah 23:5, 6.**

[30] **2 Thessalonians 1:8; John 3:36.**

[31] **John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:15, 16, 17; Colossians 21:18, 23 [sic]; Matthew 15:9.**

[32] **Acts 3:22, 23; Hebrews 1:1, 2; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Corinthians 1:20.**

[33] **Genesis 3:15; 22:18; 49:10; Daniel 7:13; 9:24-26.**

[34] **Proverbs 8:23; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:1, 15-17.**

[35] **Galatians 4:4.**

[36] **Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5 with Genesis 49:9, 10; Romans 1:3; 9:5; Matthew 1:16 with Luke 3:23, 26; Hebrews 2:16.**

[37] **Isaiah 53:3-5; Philippians 2:8.**

[38] **2 Timothy 2:25; Hebrews 9:15; John 14:6.**

[39] **Hebrews 1:2; 3:1, 2; 7:24; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Acts 5:31.**

[40] **Proverbs 8:23; Isaiah 42:6; 49:1, 5.**

[41] **Isaiah 11:2-5; 61:1-3 with Luke 4:17, 22; John 1:14, 16; 3:34.**

[42] **Hebrews 5:4-6.**

- [43] **Isaiah 53:10.**
- [44] **Isaiah 42:13.**
- [45] **1 Peter 1:20.**
- [46] **John 3:17; 9:27; 10:36; Isaiah 61:1.**
- [47] **John 3:16; Romans 8:32.**
- [48] **1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:24; Daniel 5:14; Acts 4:12; Luke 1:33; John 14:6.**
- [49] **Deuteronomy 18:15 with Acts 3:22, 23.**
- [50] **Psalms 110:3; Hebrews 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:6.**
- [51] **Psalms 2:6.**
- [52] **Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:3.**
- [53] **Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:12.**
- [54] **Canticles 1:3; John 6:44.**
- [55] **John 1:18; 12:49, 50, 15[sic]; 17:8; Deuteronomy 18:15.**
- [56] **Matthew 23:10** [So reads the Geneva Bible].
- [57] **Hebrews 3:1.**
- [58] **Malachi 3:1.**
- [59] **1 Corinthians 1:24.**
- [60] **Colossians 2:3.**
- [61] **John 1:18; 3:13.**

- [62] **1 Corinthians 2:11, 16.**
- [63] **Acts 3:22 with Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 1:1.**
- [64] **John 17:19; Hebrews 5:7-9; 9:26; Romans 5:19; Ephesians 5:12; Colossians 1:20.**
- [65] **Ephesians 2:14-16; Romans 8:34.**
- [66] **1 Peter 2:5; John 4:23, 24.**
- [67] **Hebrews 7:17.**
- [68] **Hebrews 7:16.**
- [69] **Hebrews 7:18-21.**
- [70] **Hebrews 7:24, 25.**
- [71] **Hebrews 5:6.**
- [72] **Hebrews 10:10; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Colossians 1:20, 22; Isaiah 53:10; Matthew 20:28.**
- [73] **Acts 20:28; Romans 8:3.**
- [74] **Hebrews 9:14; 13:10, 12, 15; Matthew 23:17; John 17:29.**
- [75] **1 Corinthians 15:4; 1 Peter 3:21, 22; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:11; 5:30, 31; John 19:36; Romans 14:17.**
- [76] **Mark 1:27; Hebrews 1:14; John 16:7, 15.**
- [77] **John 5:26, 27; Romans 5:6-8; 14:17; Galatians 5:22, 23; John 1:4, 13.**
- [78] **John 13:1; 10:28, 29; 14:16, 17; Romans 11:29; Psalms 51:10, 11; Job 33:29, 30; 2 Corinthians 12:7, 9.**

[79] **Job** chaps 1 and 2; **Romans** 1:21; 2:4-6; 9:17, 18; **Ephesians** 4:17, 18; **2 Peter** chap. 2.

[80] **1 Corinthians** 15:24, 28; **Hebrews** 9:28; **2 Thessalonians** 1:9, 10; **1 Thessalonians** 4:15-17; **John** 17:21, 26.

[81] **John** 15:13; **Romans** 8:32-34; 5:11; 3:25.

[82] **Job** 17:2 with 6, 37.

[83] **Matthew** 16:16; **Luke** 2:26; **John** 6:9; 7:3; 20:31; **1 John** 5:11.

[84] **Ephesians** 2:8; **John** 6:29; 4:10; **Philippians** 1:29; **Galatians** 5:22.

[85] **John** 17:17; **Hebrews** 4:11, 12; **John** 6:63.

[86] **Matthew** 7:24, 25; **John** 13:1; **1 Peter** 1:4-6; **Isaiah** 49:13-16.

[87] **Romans** 10:17; **1 Corinthians** 1:21.

[88] **Romans** 9:16.

[89] **Romans** 2:1, 2; **Ezekiel** 16:6; **Romans** 3:12.

[90] **Romans** 1:16; **Ephesians** 1:19; **Colossians** 2:12.

[91] **John** 3:14, 15; 1:12; **Isaiah** 55:1; **John** 7:37.

[92] **1 Timothy** 1:15; **Romans** 4:5; 5:8.

[93] **Acts** 5:30, 31; 2:36; **1 Corinthians** 1:22-24.

[94] **1 Peter** 1:5; **2 Corinthians** 12:9.

[95] **1 Corinthians** 15:10.

[96] **Philippians** 2:12, 13; **John** 15:5; **Galatians** 19, 20 [sic].

- [97] **1 Thessalonians 1:1; John 14:10, 20; 17:21.**
- [98] **Colossians 2:9, 10; 1:19; John 1:17.**
- [99] **John 20:17; Hebrews 2:11.**
- [100] **Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:30.**
- [101] **Ephesians 2:22; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.**
- [102] **Isaiah 16:5; 2 Corinthians 11:3.**
- [103] **Galatians 3:26.**
- [104] **John 17:24.**
- [105] **John 1:7; Hebrews 10:14; 9:26; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Romans 3:23.**
- [106] **Acts 13:38, 39; Romans 5:1; 3:25, 30.**
- [107] **1 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Peter 2:9.**
- [108] **Ephesians 1:4.**
- [109] **1 John 4:16.**
- [110] **Ephesians 4:24.**
- [111] **Philippians 3:15.**
- [112] **Matthew 28:20.**
- [113] **2 Corinthians 5:19; Romans 5:9, 10.**
- [114] **Isaiah 54:10; 26:12.**
- [115] **Ephesians 2:13, 14.**

[116] **Philippians 4:7.**

[117] **Romans 5:10, 11.**

[118] **Ephesians 6:10-13; 2 Corinthians 10:3; Revelation 2:9, 10.**

[119] **John 6:33; Hebrews 2:9, 10; John 15:5.**

[120] **1 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1.**

[121] **Romans 1:7; Acts 26:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 18:18.**

[122] **Acts 2:37 with 10:37.**

[123] **Romans 10:10; Acts 20:21; Matthew 18:19, 20; Acts 2:42; 1 Peter 2:5.**

[124] **Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 6:18.**

[125] **Isaiah 8:16; 1 Timothy 3:15; 4:16; 6:3, 5; Acts 2:41, 47, Song 4:12; Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19.**

[126] **1 Corinthians 12:6, 7, 12, 18; Romans 12:4-6; 1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:5, 6, 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12 to the end.**

[127] **Acts 1:2; 6:3 with 15:22, 25; 1 Corinthians 16:3.**

[128] **Romans 12:7, 8; 16:1; 1 Corinthians 12:8, 28; 1 Timothy chap. 3; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 5:1-3.**

[129] **Hebrews 5:4; Acts 4:23; 1 Timothy 4:14; John 10:3, 4; Acts 20:28; Romans 12:7, 8; Hebrews 13:7, 17.**

[130] **1 Corinthians 9:7, 14; Galatians 6:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 1 Timothy 5:17, 18; Philippians 4:15, 16.**

[131] **Matthew 28:18, 19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37, 38; 8:36-38; 18:8.**

[132] **Matthew 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38.**

[133] **Revelation 1:5; 7:14 with Hebrews 10:22.**

[134] **Romans 6:3-5.**

[135] **1 Corinthians 15:28, 29.**

[136] **Isaiah 8:16; Matthew 28:16-19; John 4:1, 2; Acts 20:7; Matthew 26:26.**

[137] **Acts 2:47; Romans 16:2; Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.**

[138] **Matthew 18:16-18; Acts 11:2, 3; 1 Timothy 5:19-21.**

[139] **Acts 20:27, 28; Hebrews 13:17, 24; Matthew 24:25; 1 Thessalonians 5:14.**

[140] **Mark 13:34, 37; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Jude v. 3, 20; Hebrews 10:34, 35; 12:15.**

[141] **1 Corinthians chap. 14; Romans 12:6; 1 Peter 4:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19.**

[142] **Revelation chaps. 2 and 3; Acts 15:12; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 2:16; 3:15, 16; Hebrews 10:25; Jude v. 15; Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5.**

[143] **1 Corinthians 4:17; 14:33, 36; 16:1; Matthew 28:20; 1 Timothy 3:15; 6:13, 14; Revelation 22:18, 19; Colossians 2:6, 19; 4:16.**

[144] **Romans 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13, 14; 1 Timothy 2:2.**

[145] **1 Timothy 1:2-4; Psalms 126:1; Acts 9:31.**

[146] **Acts 2:40, 41; 4:19; 5:28, 29, 41; 20:23; 1 Thessalonians 3:3; Philipians 1:27-29; Daniel 3:16, 17; 6:7, 10, 22, 23.**

[147] Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Timothy 6:13-15; Romans 12:1, 8; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Timothy 4:7, 8; Revelation 2:10; Galatians 2:4, 5.

[148] Romans 13:5-7; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3. [sic]; 1 Peter 2:13; Ephesians 5:21, 22; 6:1, 9; 1 Peter 5:5.

[149] Matthew 22:21; Acts 24:14-16; John 5:28; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 15:58-59.

APPENDIX II

A VINDICATION OF THE CONTINUED SUCCESSION of the PRIMITIVE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST (now scandalously termed Anabaptists) from the Apostles unto this present time.

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

By Curtis Pugh

The “Baptist problem” will not go away! Baptist Churches maintain that they have continually existed since the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ (not “Baptist” in name, perhaps, but in *principle* and *connection*). Although it infuriates Catholics, Protestants and quasi-Baptists alike, sound Baptists maintain that both the Bible and the true facts of history prove that it is among them alone that the true Churches of Christ are to be found. These New Testament Baptists maintain that they have ever been and continue to be separate from Catholicism *and* Protestantism. They point out that while religious historians have ample proof as to the origins of Catholicism and the Protestant schisms, all honest scholars must agree that no founding date for Baptist churches can be found this side the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

This old volume with modernized spelling is evidence that Baptists have consistently maintained their separation from other religious bodies for good and valid reasons. Sound Baptist Churches are the *only* churches having a valid claim to a continual succession from the first Church. As such, New Testament Baptist Churches are the only churches which have preserved the ordinances (baptism and the Lord’s supper). John Spittlehouse and John More maintained, and sound Baptists continue to teach the following:

1. That the true or Primitive Church of Jesus Christ was extant in their day (A.D. 1652) in England and was then slanderously nicknamed “anabaptist.” Spittlehouse and More are careful to point out that the Lord’s churches were then “*scandalously* termed Anabaptists.” Anabaptist means “re-baptizer.” From our spiritual forefathers until this day, we have maintained and do maintain that there is but “**one baptism**” (**Ephesians 4:5**) and therefore baptism cannot be re-administered. Because our forefathers refused to recognize man-made churches, their ordinances, and ordinations, they baptized aright those who came over to them from the Catholic and Protestant sects *regardless* of previous *so-called* baptisms. Thus they were slandered as “re-baptizing” their converts while they insisted that they only baptized them (e.g. their previous “baptisms” were not valid).

2. That Christ’s Churches have never been a part of nor in communion with the false churches.

3. That Christ’s Church has had a continual succession and therefore a continual existence since He founded it.

4. That true Churches are visible societies of saints following the practices, patterns and teachings of the apostles.

5. That these true Churches have preserved the ordinances of Jesus Christ since He gave them.

6. That Catholicism and Protestantism are the same in origin.

7. That Roman Catholicism is the Harlot and Protestant Churches are the Daughters of the Harlot - neither being Churches of Christ.

8. That Catholic priests and Protestant ministers have no valid ordinations and are not ministers of Christ.

9. That the “Protestant Reformation” was not of God, but resulted in false churches compromised in doctrine and practice with Rome.

10. That there was no need for a “Reformation” inasmuch as Christ’s Churches never went into apostasy.

The reader will note that Spittlehouse and More used such terms as “true church,” “Primitive Church,” and even the presently unpopular word “succession” when referring to true churches.

Baptists hold that there is nothing in the *name* “Baptist” which confers authority. (The Lord’s true Churches have been slandered by many nicknames in the past.) There are many *so-called* “Baptist churches” whose *connection* (origin), *doctrine* and *practices* are evidently **NOT** of the New Testament. Baptists maintain these are as much Daughters of the Harlot as any other man-made Protestant sect.

Today sound Baptists follow the New Testament pattern (**Acts 19:1-5**) and reject the ordinances and ordinations of the Harlot (Catholicism), her Daughters (Protestantism), and the “**abominations of the earth**” (the sects and cults arising out of the Daughters) (**Revelation 17:5**). Thus we insist that for a person to have Scriptural baptism there must be a **Scriptural mode** (immersion), a **Scriptural motive** (baptism a profession of faith), a **Scriptural candidate** (a repentant sinner), and a **Scriptural administrator** (authority of a Church having a *valid* claim to the commission).

Sadly, four of the middle pages of Spittlehouse and More’s book (17, 18, 19, and 20) are missing. We have corresponded with more than 100 libraries and rare book dealers in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, with no success in locating a whole volume. While the value of the work may be somewhat lessened by their absence, this volume will be found to be of inestimable worth to lovers of Biblical (Baptist) truth and practice. Herein will be found ample evidence that our Baptist forefathers believed as we do regarding both Baptist Church perpetuity and succession. While our present enemies often accuse us of being mere followers of a movement that arose among American Baptists in the mid-1800’s, **this work, published in A.D. 1652**, proves that the historic Baptist view predates any such movement in America by some 200 years. (Indeed we believe that this historic

“Baptist” view of the church and the ordinances to be the view of the New Testament and go to *that Book* to prove the validity of our practice.)

Few readers, in all probability, will agree with Spittlehouse and More regarding their identification of the Woman who fled into the wilderness. It is doubtful that they will identify the Red Dragon, the Beast, etc. as these men did. In no way should their interpretation of prophecy diminish the value of this volume as proof of the early and consistent testimony to Christ’s true Churches.

Regeneration (the new birth) comes to the sinner by the free and sovereign grace of God apart from any works of man whatsoever. However, it will be admitted by all who know the Scriptures that God has always had an acceptable place and manner of service where He was glorified. The New Testament proves this proper place and manner of service to be in a church whose doctrine, origin and practice are like that first Church. **“Unto Him (God) be glory *in the church* by Christ Jesus...” (Ephesians 3:21).**

To those who have been truly born again the matter of proper obedience to Christ will surely be of paramount importance! Let it never be said of any who read these pages that they **“rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him” (Luke 7:30)**. May God give grace to enlighten the minds of His elect as to the proper place and manner of worship and service to Him!

It has not been my intention to edit this work in any way whatsoever. The spelling has been brought up to modern usage and marginal notes have been combined with footnotes under one numerical system. Except for the omission of quotation marks preceding each line of a direct quotation (an old practice which was followed in the original in some places) and the addition of a few apostrophes, the punctuation has been left as originally marked. Their free use of Capital Letters and *Italic typeface* has been maintained as well as the oft used “viz.” and “aforesaid.” Such were the customs of the times. Material in [brackets] is mine and has been added for clarity.

It is my hope that by making this volume available in updated spelling its usefulness and testimony will be increased among Baptists and among those not yet members of true Churches but who are sincerely seeking the Scriptural place of worship and service to God.

VINDICATION OF THE Continued Succession of the Primitive Church of Jesus Christ (now scandalously termed Anabaptists) from the Apostles unto this present time.

In Answer to three following Assertions, Extracted out of the Writings of Mr. John Brain and chiefly out of his Book entitled -

The Churches going in, and Coming out of the Wilderness, Viz,

1. That the Gospel-frame of the Primitive Church hath been devolved into the Antichristian Estate and condition since from about the year 406 unto this present time.

2. That during the aforesaid time, there hath not been a true Church-frame of Gospel-government.

3. That the Gospel-frame of the Gospel-government is to be restored again by some one Man, who shall have Authority given him from above, to restore Baptism, and all other lost Ordinances of the Church.

And may also serve as a further Caveat, to the present deluded People of this Nation, that are yet seduced by the crazy *Demetriousses* [sic] of the Times, who for love of Gain, still endeavour to cry up their *Diana* of Rome whom *England*, and all they call Christendom yet Worship.

Matthew 28:19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations baptizing them, etc. Teaching them to observe all things, etc. And lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the World, Amen. John 10:1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16.

Published by John Spittlehouse, and John More.

London, Printed by Gartrude Dawson, 1652

A Vindication of the continued Succession of the Primitive Church of Jesus Christ, (Now scandalously termed Anabaptists) from the Apostles unto this present time.

Sir

Having several times conferred with you about your judgement in the aforesaid Particulars, and perceiving your resolution to persevere in them [those] your opinions. I have now undertaken by the power of Jesus Christ, to vindicate a continued Succession of his Church and Ordinances (as aforesaid) against your Assertions.

In the first place, I shall declare your meaning by the Gospel-frame of Gospel-government, (*Viz. The true public Worship of God, consisting in external Ordinances, as of Baptism, etc.*) which you say hath ceased in the Nations this 1200 years, doth yet cease, and shall so cease, until the Sanctuary be cleansed.

Having thus explained your Meaning, as in relation to the aforesaid frame of *Gospel-Government*, I shall in the next place answer to your first Assertion, (*Viz.*)

That the Gospel-frame of the Primitive Church hath been devolved into the Antichristian estate, since from about the year 406 to this present time.

In answer to which, I shall oppose your own expressions, in your aforementioned Book, hoping such a confutation will be most prevalent with you.

1. I shall begin with that in page 14. where you say,

That Christ and Antichrist cannot agree.

But if the aforesaid Gospel-frame, etc. had been devolved or mixed with the Antichristian frame of worship since the year aforesaid, then they must of necessity have had such a communion and fellowship together, as to become one and the same with each other, (during the aforesaid time) which the aforesaid words do plainly contradict.

Therefore it may be concluded from the aforesaid words, That the aforesaid Gospel-frame, etc. was never so devolved or mixed together, as in that your Assertion.

2. Again page 2. you acknowledge the aforesaid Gospel-frame etc. was to be hid, *and so hid from the face of the Dragon, as that the Dragon could not find it, or make discovery of it.*

Now all rational Men know, that that which was hid from the Dragon, was neither hid by the Dragon, nor in the Dragon, nor can it be imagined that anyone will fly into the bosom of him that seeketh his destruction for sanctuary, which the aforesaid Gospel-frame must have done according to your Assertion.

3. Again page 2. You also say that the *twelve hundred and sixty days, prophetically years, do clearly show the time of the Churches hiding, in its obscure condition, in which time it should not be known unto Antichrist, what her estate was.*

But Antichrist could not be ignorant of the aforesaid Gospel-frame, etc. if it had (during the aforesaid time) been devolved, or made one and the same with the aforesaid Antichristian frame, etc. For certainly, if so, either must Antichrist be ignorant of his own frame, etc. Or he must of necessity know the Churches: But you have there positively affirmed, That Antichrist was not to be acquainted with the Primitive Church condition during the aforesaid time.

Therefore the Gospel frame of the Primitive Church during the aforesaid time, had a secret and obscure condition which Antichrist, or the men of the world became ignorant of.

4. Again in page 2. you likewise acknowledge the aforesaid Gospel-frame to be carried away from the World and Antichrist, *as it were into another World, during the aforesaid time, alluding it (in its then condition) to the absence of the Sun from us, when it is departed our of our Horizon.*

But as it is most certain that the Sun doth neither cease to shine, or be a Sun, while it remains so obscure, as aforesaid, or by any other interposition, whatsoever which for a time may cause a seeming appearance to the contrary.

So likewise albeit the aforesaid Gospel-frame, etc. hath for so long a time been interposed by Papacy, [Catholicism] Prelacy, [Ch. of England; Anglican Ch.; Episcopal Ch.] Presbytery, [Presbyterianism] etc. by reason whereof it hath been totally Eclipsed to the World, etc.

Yet certainly as the Israelites could have told the *Egyptians* that the gross darkness in *Egypt*, was no prejudice to them in Goshen, so likewise hath not the overshadowings of truth by the aforesaid Errors, been any prejudice to the true Israel of God while they were in that wilderness, or hidden condition as aforesaid, which in effect you yourself have confessed, page 9. where you acknowledge (by way of Simile to what I have said) *That the Israelites in time of their Persecution, had light in their dwellings when their Persecutors were under darkness: As also that God would ever keep, and teach us to keep a difference betwixt the godly and ungodly in this, (Viz. of Christ from Antichrist, truth from error, light from darkness) as in other divisions made of God. As Israel had the bright side, and the Egyptians the dark side of the cloud towards them; All which doth clearly contradict your aforesaid Assertion, for by it you would have all the aforesaid Gospel-frame, etc. so confounded together with that of Antichrist's, as to become one with each other, making an absolute concord and harmony betwixt truth and error, light and darkness, Christ and Antichrist.*

Again, It is as plain from Scripture, where it is said, *That the Manchild, who was to rule all Nations with a rod of Iron, was caught up unto God, and to his Throne; as also that the Woman fled into the Wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, wherein she should be fed a thousand two hundred and threescore days, Revelation 12:5, 6.*

But Antichrist, or the Papacy of *Rome*, etc. was neither the place where the aforesaid Woman, and her Manchild (viz. the Primitive Church and her frame of Government) was either to be caught up or fed, unless you will make the seat of the Papacy the Throne of God, and Antichrist, and his Consort (the Mother of Harlots) their foster-Father and Mother, during the aforesaid time, which cannot be.

First, In that the aforesaid Manchild is said to be caught up *unto God*, and to his Throne, as in point of safety and preservation, from the fury and rage of the Dragon, etc.

But Antichrist did not any ways preserve the Primitive Church, or its frame of Government, but contrariwise hath endeavored to subvert it.

Therefore the aforesaid Antichrist, and his Consort, did not any ways preserve the aforesaid Manchild from their own fury against it, neither is it rational to imagine they would, in that its ruin was to become the other's rise.

Secondly, Because the Woman, etc. is said to flee into the Wilderness, etc. where she would be fed, etc.

But that Antichrist, and his aforesaid Consort, would preserve the Primitive Church in its purity (for otherwise how is it preserved) is contrary to common sense, for the reasons aforesaid. Or that they should feed it with primitive truths in relation to its essentials, substantials, and circumstantials, (for otherwise how could it be truly fed) which is every whit as contrary to common sense that they would. And that for the aforesaid reason. Therefore it is also as impossible that the aforesaid Antichrist, etc. did either preserve, or feed the aforesaid Primitive Church, etc. in its aforesaid Wilderness-condition.

Yea, you yourself have acknowledged, *That Jerusalem and Babel, have their Ordinances and worship so distinct one from the other, that what is of and in the one, is not of, nor cannot be in the other.* And if so, then how is it that you should so confound them together? etc.

Object[ion]. I know you will produce Dr. *Taylor* in his tract, etc. against this, where he says, *That the Churches' flight was not in respect of Motion, but of State and Condition, not a change of Place but Condition,* etc. For which expressions you seem very highly to applaud him.

But before you too highly exalt him for that saying, I desire to know by what logic either that Doctor, or yourself, can prove the flight of anything without Motion or change of place: As for his instance in point of condition I assent so far unto, as that the Primitive Church, etc. was brought unto an exceeding great outward hardship, through the tyranny of that Man of sin and his Adherents.

Again, if the Antichristian frame aforesaid, was intended by God to be the Wilderness, in which the aforesaid Primitive Church, etc. was to be hid, etc. then it must also of necessity come out of the said Antichristian Wilderness again, as the Title of your aforesaid Book attests.

And if so, then Prelacy, Presbytery, etc. have been Christian conversions, which elsewhere you utterly deny, where you say, the way of worship which proceeds from *Rome* must cease, and that it is not the way of propagating the Gospel, as also, that God will not be found in it, and if so, how shall the true Church-frame, etc. be found in it? and if it be not in it, it cannot be extracted out of it, for if so, than a clean thing may be brought out of an unclean [thing] contrary to that of ***Job 14:4*** and ***James 3:11, 12.*** you likewise term the reformings aforesaid, to be the reformings of *Rome*, or *Babel*, etc. (and not of Christ) as indeed they are.

By all which it doth clearly appear, that the primitive Church, etc. was not devolved, or mixed with the aforesaid Antichristian frame during the time aforesaid, and that from your own Expressions.

I shall now proceed to your second Argument, viz.

That during the aforesaid time, there has not been a true Church-frame, etc.

Object[ion]. In confirmation of which, you cite *Hillary of Poyctoyes* in *France*, who lived in the year 380 and says, *That in his days the Primitive Church was not to be found in Houses, in Temples, or Cities, but in Prisons, Mountains, Dens, Deserts, and Caves of the Earth.*

Answ[er]. Now I appeal to any rational man, whether that Historian has in so saying proved the aforesaid Primitive Church to have been without a being in that time, but rather to have had a being, albeit in the aforesaid *Prisons, Mountains, Dens, Deserts, and Caves of the Earth*, where he concludes it had then its residence.

Object[ion]. Again, albeit the same Author says, That in the 26[th]. year after, there was a more exceeding increase of darkness, then [than] in the time before.

Answ[er]. Yet that proves no more a darkness in reference to the aforesaid Primitive, or true Church, *then [than] the absence of the Sun from us in England, does prove the like to all the habitable Earth at the same time*, so that albeit the splendor of that Gospel-Mercy (as you term it) was then withdrawn *from the view of Antichrist*, etc. for the time aforesaid, yet certainly it did retain its lustre in itself, for it is every whit as possible *to separate the light from the body of the Sun*, as it was possible for Antichrist *to separate the Gospel-frame, etc. from the body of the true Church of Jesus Christ.*

Object[ion]. You will say, *Where was there any one visible Society of Saints, which did practise according to the Apostles' Rules and Precepts.*

Answ[er]. The not-appearance [nonappearance] of a visible body or Society of Saints to the public view of Antichrist, etc. does no more prove, that the true Church had no visible estate in itself, *then [than] the Sun ceases to be a Sun, during the absence of the light thereof*; neither is it more to be

imagined, that the true Church, during its hidden, or Wilderness condition, *did desist from practicing according to the Apostles' Rules, and Precepts, (so far as the well being of such small societies did require)* then [than] it is to imagine, that there was not *two or three Saints left living upon the face of the earth*, which I suppose you will not affirm.

Object[ion]. You will say, *Antichrist was to take his rise, by taking down the Gospel-frame of Gospel-government, making that to be hid, that he might only appear.*

Answ[er]. His rise was not by taking down the Gospel-frame, etc. *but by setting up another frame of his own, apart from it, and contrary unto it*, as is also confessed by you (as in page 10.) where you say, he took his rise *by setting up a counterfeit way of his own, carrying a false light with it by which he bewitched the Nations with the Cup of abominations, deceiving poor silly souls with the outward show of Religion and Piety*, etc. by which expressions you have proved for me, that Antichrist was not to take his rise *by taking down the Gospel-frame*, etc. according to your aforesaid Assertions.

Object[ion]. But I know you will further object, *That the Holy City was to be trodden under foot, (which, say you, is meant of the Gospel-frame, etc) and truth by him was to be cast down to the ground, and Antichrist was only to prosper. Daniel 8:12, 13; Revelation 11:2 and 13:1.*

Answ[er]. As it is possible for a man to be cast down to the ground, and also trodden under foot of his enemy, and yet retain *life and motion*, yea and in time so recover his strength *as to vanquish the Vanquisher*, as many times it has happened, and may happen.

So likewise was it as possible for the Church of Christ, after her hidden and wilderness-condition, to gather *such strength and vigor*, as to return a *double portion* of affliction and misery upon the head of her Persecutor, to what she had formerly received of him, and his adherents. As in **Revelation 18, verses 6, 7.**

Again, as it is impossible that Truth in itself should be destroyed by Error, so likewise was it also as impossible, that the Faith and Practice of the then Saints, should be destroyed in them, by the Antichristian power then predominant over their bodies. Or, that they should become Proselytes to his aforesaid delusions. For if the sons of *Jonadad*, etc. would not transgress the command of their Father in the Flesh, (*Jeremiah* chap. **35**) how much more is it to be thought that the other would obey the Father of their Spirits, in observing of all his precepts which was given them in charge to keep.

Yea the contrary cannot be imagined, unless you will maintain a falling away from Grace by the Elect, *which I know you abominate*. Yea the Scriptures do clearly manifest the contrary, by distinguishing of such as were so to be over-powered and deluded by Antichrist, by these phrases. (*viz.*) *Such as were to perish*. As in **2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10**. *Of such as were not written in the Lamb's book of life*. **Revelation 13:8**. Yea you acknowledge as much yourself, in your aforesaid expressions, where you term them *Silly souls*, etc. page 10, etc.

So that I may safely conclude, both from the aforesaid Scriptures, and yourself, that Antichrist was to prevail over none but such as aforementioned, and if so, then he was not to conquer or subvert the Faith and Practice of the then Saints, and so consequently of none of their successors, who are concluded by the Apostle, *To be wise unto salvation*. **2 Timothy 3:15**. Yea Christ himself gives this Character of them, *That they will not follow strangers*. **John 10:5**, etc. as also, *That they know not the voice of strangers, but contrariwise, that they know his voice, and follow him only*, Verse 27. Yea he is said to take such care and cognizance of them, as that *he knoweth them by name*, Verse 3. Yea, God the Father is said so to protect them, *as that they shall never perish*. Yea, to have so fast hold of them, as that neither Man nor Devil can pluck them out of his hands, *For that he is more great and powerful than all their adversaries*. Verse 29.

It is therefore without all controversy, that Antichrist was not to beguile the aforesaid Saints of their Faith, or to gain them as Proselytes to his kingdom of darkness, and so consequently not from the fruits thereof, (*viz.*) in point of worship, or any precept or command of Jesus Christ whatsoever.

The uttermost extent of the power of Antichrist consisting only in *persecuting or killing their bodies*, but not to touch their *Faith, the life of their Souls*. And if not their Faith, then not their Obedience, which is ever individually annexed unto it as an inseparable consequence thereof.

So that the aforementioned texts in *Daniel* and the *Revelations*, [Revelation] must of necessity be understood of the despicable and contemptible estate and condition of the aforesaid Saints in the esteem of Antichrist, etc. during the time they were to Lord it over them, but so far were they *from extinguishing or rooting up their Faith and Obedience* to the commands of Christ and his Apostles, as that they increased the more in strength by such cruelties, their blood being the seed of the Church, as Historians do declare of them.

Object[ion]. You cite also Mr. Bernard on *Revelation 12:6* *who understands by the Churches flight into the Wilderness, that she lost her visibility before her Enemies*.

Answer. I do freely acknowledge as much, but that doth not prove the Primitive Church was to be unchurched by her enemies in her distressed or Wilderness-condition, or that she was invisible to such of whom she then consisted, but rather that she was preserved by that her flight from the fury and rage of Antichrist.

Object[ion]. You cite also Mr. Cooser, Bishop of Galloway, who compares the then hiding of the *Primitive church and frame of Gospel-government unto the hiding of the Popish Church or Synagogue in England, who are, (saith he) without public State or Regiment, or open free exercise of Holy Function*, etc. Then which expression you think nothing can more fitly and fully clear your aforesaid Assertion.

I do likewise freely acknowledge that his Expression to be very pertinent to the setting forth of the state of the Primitive Church under the *Persecution of Antichrist*, etc. but little to that purpose you drive at, *Viz. as to a cessation of the aforesaid Primitive Church, etc. in that her condition*. Yea so far was it from tending to such a construction, as that it does rather

argue the quite contrary, *Viz.* To prove a succession or continuance of the aforesaid Primitive Church, etc. in that her condition. In prosecution of which we may compare the present estate and condition of the aforesaid Romish Church or Regiment in this Nation with the other, which if without public State or Regiment etc. in that *Bishop's days*, certainly much more at this present time, as all rational men must needs acknowledge.

And yet notwithstanding the present restriction by virtue of the Acts now in force against *Popish Priests and Jesuits* etc. I presume all rational men will acknowledge, that they cannot but conceive and believe that the Popish Religion is yet put in practise in this Nation, albeit not to the public view of such as will call them in question for so doing.

And if so, then I appeal to any rational man, whether or no the like practice might not have been used by the Primitive Christians and their Successors, during their *Persecution by Antichrist*. Yea, that it was more probable may thus appear. For by how much the aforesaid Papists, etc. dare now be so bold as to support an *Error*; by so much or more may we justly conceive the other would be as valiant to maintain a *Truth*, by practicing what was their duties as Members of the true Primitive Church, yea, I would gladly know any one Ordinance of Jesus Christ, that was impossible to be practised by them (that was requisite to their then present condition) during their enemies' hottest rage, against them. Having thus clearly proved a continuation of the Primitive Church and frame of Gospel-government (*so far as was requisite for their then present condition*) I shall in the next place by the same assistance prove the first approach of its visibility into the world, after its aforesaid persecution under the Dragon and the Beast mentioned, **Revelation chap. 12 and 13.**

And first of its persecution under the aforesaid red Dragon, whose Original I take to be the Emperor *Nero*, and that for these ensuing Reasons, *Viz.*

In that it is reported of him by *Eusebius* (lib.2, ch. 24, 25, fol. 34) That when he had reigned for the space of 8 years, etc. and being settled in his Throne, he fell into abominable facts, and took armor against the service due

unto the universal and almighty God, etc. How detestable he was become, is not for this present time to declare, for there be many that have painted out his willful malice, which may easily appear if we consider the furious madness of that man, through the which after that beyond reason he had destroyed an innumerable company, he fell into such a sucking way of slaughter, that he abstained not from his most dear and familiar friends; Yea, he tormented with divers kinds of deaths his own mother, his brethren, his wife, and many of his dear kinfolks, as if they had been Enemies, and deadly foes unto him.

Again, It behoved us to take notice of this one thing of him above the rest, *Viz.* “That he was counted the *First*^[1] *Enemy* of all the Emperors unto the service of God, by which we may conclude, that *Nero* was the first that began the persecution in the Gentile Church of Christ.”

Again, *Tertullian*, the Roman writes thus of the said *Nero*, *Viz.* “Read your Authors there you shall find *Nero* chiefly to have persecuted this Doctrine at *Rome*,” etc. “he became cruel unto all,” etc.

Again he says, *This enemy of God set up himself to the destruction of the Apostles, wherein he was first discovered.*^[2] *For they write that: Paul was beheaded of him at Rome*, etc. all which being compared with ***Philippians 4:22*** does clearly demonstrate that they were *Paul's* followers that were so persecuted by *Nero* in *Rome*. Yea, it is very probable, that *Nero* himself for the first eight years of his reign, did favour *Paul's* Doctrine, or otherwise he would not have suffered so many of his family to have been his followers, as it plainly appears in the aforesaid chapter: as also by their aforesaid sufferings by *Nero*, as the aforesaid Histories do relate.

Having thus found out the Original of the aforesaid *Red Dragon*, and also the very year wherein he began his persecution, as also in all probability, the *first Martyr of the Gentile Church of Christ*, which I take to be the Apostle *Paul*, and that for these Reasons, *Viz.*

1. In that he was designed to be the *Apostle of the Gentiles*, (***Galatians 2:8, 9***) it was therefore most requisite, that he should be *the first Martyr* that

should suffer under that *heathen Dragon*, to the end he might as well be *their Captain in sufferings, as in the practice of the truth which he had taught them, and that according to the example of his Master Jesus Christ.*

2. In that the aforesaid Tyrant is said to be *first discovered* by his causing *Paul to be beheaded.*

3. In relation to *so gentle a death* as the aforesaid Apostle is said to *die by*, which doth argue a kind of *leniency, or mildness in that Tyrant*, as being but his *first entrance into that Tragedy*, being compared with the cruelties which he is said to use afterward, yea, and that even *to his own Mother*, whose very *Womb* he is said to have caused to be ripped open, to the end he might see *the place of his conception*, with many other cruelties which are reported of him, all which doth argue the *Apostle's death* (as aforesaid) to have been *the first entrance of that Tyrant into his butchery of the Saints.*

I shall in the next place discover the *original of the Beast* which was to act the *second part of that Christian Tragedy*, begun by the aforesaid Nero, and continued during the ten persecutions (*viz.*) from the aforesaid *Claudius Nero*, unto *Constantius Magnus*, in whose days the aforesaid *ten Persecutions had their period.*

Who seeing the aforesaid Emperors his Predecessors frustrated of their expectation (*viz.*) of a total Extirpation of the Primitive Church and frame of Gospel-government from off the earth, and that notwithstanding all their [“?”] bloody Massacres, and killing courses, whereby many “thousands were oft time slain in a day, resolved to take “a more subtle course,[“?”] and that by practicing another design to the same *effect*, which was by giving a seat and power, and great authority unto such silly souls as he could by that means delude and ensnare; “To the end “he might do that by craft and subtlety, which his “Predecessors could not do by force and violence.[“?”] To which purpose I say it does plainly appear that the said *Constantius* etc. called the great Council of *Nice*, in which Diet the aforesaid *Constantius*, and they decreed that like as the King of the *Romans* was then called *Emperor* above other *Kings*, so the *Bishop of the same City*, should be called *Pope*, above other *Bishops*. And to the more specious carrying on of the aforesaid design,

he likewise erected many sumptuous Temples or Churches, decking them with Jewels, and costly Ornaments; And to the end he might further procure his ends therein, he gave likewise to the Priests of them [those] times (whom he had so ensnared under pretence of advancing and promoting Religion) worldly power and great riches, that they might more freely manage his design. And to carry it on yet further, he likewise pretended to have seen the *Sign of the Cross in the air*, and thereby took occasion to set up Imagery and Idolatry of Crosses; [3] and Saints relics, yea, and what not, which might tend to an Aaronical glory, into which dress he was then determined to transform or reduce the then afflicted Church of Jesus Christ; supposing it the only *time* and *means* to bring that his purpose to pass. All which and much more, *Eusebius* and other Historians report of him in a plentiful manner; by all which means the *Cross of Christ began to be made of none effect, and the power of Christ's death either no more remembered, or no more understood by the deluded Professors of such false Worship*, Insomuch, as a Voice was then heard from Heaven saying, *This day is poison poured forth into the Church*, All which does clearly demonstrate the aforesaid *Constantius* to be the very *Man, or Dragon*, who gave *his power unto the Beast*, as **Revelation 13**.

Having thus discovered the place where, the time when, and the manner how the Dragon, and the Beast took their first rise, I shall in the next place compute the time of the aforesaid 1260 years, (*which was assigned to be the time of the hiding of the Primitive Church, etc. in its Wilderness condition*) from the rise of the *Beast or Papacy*, To which purpose, It is very remarkable, that betwixt the Birth of *Constantius*, and the death of *Luther*, is fully expired the aforesaid number of years, *Constantius* being born in the year 283 and *Luther's* death happening in the year, 1546 from which latter number if you deduct, the former, the remainder will be 1263 years as by comparing of *Eusebius* with Mr. Fox in his Book of Martyrs, upon the life and death of the aforesaid *Constantius* and *Luther* will appear: So that it is probable the aforesaid Primitive Church etc. came out of its wilderness condition, about three years before the death of *Luther*.

Now that it came forth as aforesaid, not by *the means of Luther*, but rather contrary to his desire, will clearly appear by this ensuing Story of

Sphanhemus, Professor of *Leiden* in his Historical Narrative of the Church of Christ in *Germany*, which that Enemy of the Truth there stills, by *the scandalous name of Anabaptists*, in which story contrary to his intended desire he testifies the *visibility of the aforesaid true Church in Luther's time*, as the aforesaid story will clearly manifest, [4] where speaking out of *ignorance*, by way of contempt against three famous Champions of the Primitive Church of Jesus Christ (which was at that very instant making its first approach out of its Wilderness-condition, in its morning dress) uses these following expressions, by way of narration, *viz.*

That when God raised up *Luther, Melancton* [Melanchthon], *Zwinglius* and divers [various] other Worthies, to be Reformers of his Church, at the same time the enemy of mankind raised up the *Anabaptists* to be the disturbers of his Church: That *Thomas Munzer* their great Antisignanus, [sic] etc. when he could not get *Luther* to join with him, etc. began to thunder against *Luther* himself, crying out, that *Luther* was as much in fault as the Pope of *Rome*, yea, and more, yea, that *Luther*, and those of his party, favoured nothing but of the flesh, vaunting indeed, that they had cut off some of the *leaves* of Antichrist, but the *tree and the root* remained still untouched, which (said *Munzer, Storch, and Becold*) must be cut down, and which cut down they would.

So that the Papacy, Prelacy, and Presbytery, may fitly be compared to three families under one roof, striving to supplant each other, witnesses the continual conflicts betwixt the old Strumpet and her aforesaid daughters, and that as it were in a battle Royal, *both by Word and Sword*, to subvert each others' Hierarchies, which they have already done in a great measure in this Nation, the full accomplishment whereof I hope in a short time to see effected both in this Nation and elsewhere, which the Lord in much mercy hasten, that the truth of his Promises may be fulfilled in these our days, which was written by his servant *John, Revelation 13:10*, *viz. That such as have and would lead the Primitive Church of Christ captive may be led themselves into captivity, and that such as have killed them with the Sword, etc. may be killed by the Sword, etc. Revelation 18:6, 7, 8; Psalm 149:6, 7, 8, 9*, and that the true Primitive Church may be restored to such a latitude, as to spread itself over the face of the whole earth, as in *Daniel 7:18, 27*.

But to return where I left (*viz.*) to the first approach of the aforesaid Primitive Church in its mornings dress, as you yourself have very elegantly described it, *page* 1, etc. where from ***Canticles 6:10*** you compare the degrees of the approach thereof out of its wilderness-condition. 1. To be like the looking forth of the morning. 2. To the fairness of the Moon. 3. To the clearness of the Sun. And lastly, To the terribleness of an Army with Banners. All which are indeed most excellent and lively Emblems of the degrees which have been, and are yet, to be taken by the aforesaid Primitive Church, since her wilderness-condition.

Which aforesaid Gradations, was doubtless the only reason why the aforesaid *Spanhemus, Luther, etc.* could not at that time discern the aforesaid Church to be the Primitive Church, which was then looking, or peeping out of its wilderness-condition; and that in as much also, because of the long hiding thereof (*viz.*) for the aforesaid space of 1260 years, during which time of its absence, it was departed from them, as it had been into another world (as yourself do also acknowledge) so that they were in the interim set down in darkness, and so knew not the aforesaid true Church at that time of the approach thereof, but continued rather wondering at it, and hating it, etc. (which is now your own present condition, which I humbly desire you would lay to heart, by a serious consideration of your present estate, and to redeem the time you have hitherto spent in deluding, and being deluded, *which phrase I am constrained to use, hoping it may be unto you, as such a reproof as the Prophet David desired to be reprov'd by, Psalm 14:5, which he there esteems, as a precious Balm upon his head.*)

**PAGES ORIGINALLY NUMBERED 17, 18, 19, & 20
ARE MISSING.**

cover their Ordination (unto you) by the Constitution of their Church.

Now they cannot avoid, but that the Constitution of their Church, is now the same with that party, or Church which did separate from the Papacy of that time, from which they derive their succession. So that if the Constitution (and so consequently the Ordination) of the now Presbyterian Churches and

Ministers be Constituted and Ordained contrary to the command of Jesus Christ, and the Practice of his Apostles: then it must unavoidably follow, that the aforesaid party which Mr. *Cranford* says, did so separate themselves from the Papacy, was also Constituted and ordained contrary to the commands of Jesus Christ, and the practice of his Apostles.

But that the present Church whereof Mr. *Cranford* is now termed the Minister, etc. is a Church constituted (and so consequently ordained) contrary to the command of Jesus Christ, and the practise of his Apostles I thus argue.

That Church which is constituted of such persons as have neither been taught, nor have Faith, Repentance, Baptism, is a Church constituted contrary to the commands of Jesus Christ, and the practice of his Apostles. *Mathew. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38, 41, and 8:12, 35, 36, etc. and 16:14, 15, 31, 32, 33.*

But the aforesaid Church, whereof Mr. *Cranford* is Minister, etc. has been so constituted as aforesaid, *viz.* of Infants sprinkled, etc.

Ergo, the aforesaid Church whereof Mr. *Cranford* is Minister, is constituted contrary to the command of Jesus Christ, and the practise of his Apostles.

2. That Church which is constituted contrary to the Commands of Jesus Christ, and the practise of his Apostles, is no constituted Church of Jesus Christ.

But the aforesaid Church of Mr. *Cranford's* has been so constituted. *Ergo* it is no constituted Church of Jesus Christ.

3. That Church which is not a constituted Church of Jesus Christ, is a constituted Church of Antichrist.

But the aforesaid Church of Mr. *Cranford* is not a constituted Church of Jesus Christ, etc.

Ergo it is a constituted Church of Antichrist.

4. That Church which is a constituted Church of Antichrist, is a Church constituted by the power and authority of Antichrist.

But Mr. *Cranford's* Church is a constituted Church of Antichrist:

Ergo Constituted by the authority and power of Antichrist.

5. That Church which is constituted by the power and authority of Antichrist is one and the same with Antichrist *in its constitution, etc.*

But Mr. *Cranford's* Church as aforesaid, is constituted by the authority and power of Antichrist:

Ergo it is one and the same with Antichrist in its constitution, etc.

6. That Church, whose constitution is one and the same with the Church of Antichrist in its constitution, is not separated from the constitution of the Antichristian Church.

But the constitution of Mr. *Cranford's* Church, etc. is one and the same with the constitution of the Church of Antichrist.

Ergo the Constitution of Mr. *Cranford's* Church was never separated from the constitution of the Church of Antichrist, and so consequently, neither that Party, or Church, formerly instanced by Mr. *Cranford*, from whom he, and the whole Presbyterian party, do plead succession from, as to their constitution and ordination, and so consequently, all such as plead the like succession and ordination as they do.

For that Church, whose constitution is Antichristian, cannot ordain Ministers of Jesus Christ.

But the Constitution of the aforesaid Church is Antichristian, *Ergo*, They cannot ordain Ministers of Jesus Christ.

So that all the Churches that have been constituted by baptizing or sprinkling of Infants, as aforesaid, have been constituted by the authority and

power of Antichrist.

But all the aforesaid Churches who pretend to have been separated from Antichrist, did never separate from the constitution of the Church of Antichrist.

Ergo, The constitution of all the aforesaid Churches have continued Antichristian, from their Separation to this present, and so consequently have neither had a true constitution or Ordination, as the Churches or Ministers of Jesus Christ, since their aforesaid separation.

But to leave them without any further plea in this particular, I shall urge the writings of them, whom they so highly esteem as the great Reformers of their times, presuming the testimony that they shall afford to my present purpose will be of force to leave an impress upon their consciences, I shall begin with *Melancton*, [Melanchthon] who in his Answer to the Anabaptists is forced to confess, [5] That about the year of our Lord 248, and after the departure of *John* the oldest Apostle, 158 years, there lived a certain Priest one *Finus*, who would that men should according to the manner of Circumcision baptize young children upon the eight [eighth] day, with whom says he, *Cyprian* [6] with 66 Bishops and elders more gathered together joined themselves and ordained, That every one without delay should receive Baptism, and that young children should be timely brought thereunto; after which (says *Bullinger*) the Carthaginian Council concluded thus to *Innocentius*, Viz.

[7] Forasmuch as we believe that Christ the Son of God was holily born of the pure Virgin *Mary* to fulfil and ratify the promises of God, which excludes not children from salvation, we will therefore that they be baptized.

In which two Instances we have the grand foundation laid to the Mystery of iniquity (foretold by the Apostle *Paul*, **2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2, 3, 4**, etc. as also by *John I Epistle 18, 19* [**1 John 2:18-19**]) whereupon Antichrist was to erect his Fabric apart from the true Church, from which they had revolted, as in the aforesaid Scriptures) and that chiefly instead of *Circumcision*, upon which Basis it is yet supported by the daughters of the

aforesaid Harlot, the Original of the rise thereof, being like[8] unto that of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*, who when he had through his subtlety procured a revolt of the ten Tribes from their obedience to the house of *David*, **1 King 12**. And after considering what would be the event thereof, if he should not use some means to bottom their worship *apart from each other* (as in v. **26, 27, 28**, etc.) did thereupon take counsel, etc. By means whereof he erected another foundation to settle the aforesaid Revolters upon, by way of allusion to what they had formerly practised; By which his subtlety, he is said to continue a firm and sure separation of the aforesaid Revolters from those of their brethren, that kept themselves to their first principle of obedience and loyalty to the aforesaid house of *David*, etc. So in like manner when the aforesaid [9] Revolters from the truth were grown so numerous as aforesaid, they thought it high time to use the like craft and subtlety, as the aforesaid *Jeroboam* did, to the end their like rebellious consorts or Renigadoes [Renegades] should not return to their former faith, or worship; and hence it was that they also took counsel together as aforesaid, where they likewise concluded, that instead of their former *constitution founded upon baptizing of such as had been taught, believed, and repented*, as hath been clearly proved, they should now constitute their *Churches, by baptizing of Infants, without any reference to the aforesaid motives, (viz.) of being taught, or having faith or repentance*, by which means their Church became every whit as distinct, or separate from the Church of Jesus Christ, as the aforesaid revolting *Israelites* became to the House of *David*. But lest Mr. *Cranford*, etc. should say these are my own words, without any further testimony, to strengthen and confirm the same, in point of History, or human testimony, I shall therefore present you with the opinions and judgements of such, who albeit[10] enemies to the true Baptism of the true Church, as their practise did declare, yet being urged to speak their consciences in relation thereunto, have declared and published as follows. And first of the confession of [11] *Luther* himself, Who in his Book Entitled, *The ground-work and cause, Tom. I.* where speaking of the Sacraments, uses these expressions upon the words of Jesus Christ, **Mark 16:16**. (Viz.) *That these words are spoken in reference to faith before Baptism, concluding, that where faith is not, there Baptism[12] avails not*, as the following words of the same place do show, saying, *He that believeth not shall be damned*, etc. *For it is not Baptism,*

*but by Faith in Baptism [note Luther's words!] that saves, as we read **Acts 8:36**. That Philip would not baptize the Eunuch until he had first demanded of him, whether he believed, etc. But without Faith the Sacraments profit nothing; yea, they are not only in vain, but bring damnation also to the Receivers.*

Again, writing upon the 48th Chapter of **Genesis**, he says, *That before we receive the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, we must have Faith.*

Again, in his book of the Civil Magistrate he also says, *That the Sacrament neither can, nor may be received without Faith [13] but with great hurt, etc. So that either before, or else even then present, when Baptism is administered, there must needs be Faith, or else there is a contempt of the divine Majesty, who offers his present Grace when there is none to receive it.*

Again, in his Epistle of Anabaptism, he confesses, *That it cannot be proved by any place of Scripture, that Children do believe, neither do the Scriptures clearly or plainly with these or the like words say, Baptize your Children, [14] for they believe: wherefore we must yield to those that drive us to the letter, because we find it nowhere written.*

Melanct[on] [15] on **1 Corinthians 11**. faith, [16] *In times past, those that had repented them were baptized, and was instead of an absolution, wherefore Repentance must not be separate from Baptism, for Baptism is a sacramental sign of Repentance.*

Again, in his Treatise concerning the doctrine of Anabaptists, he is forced to confess, that there is [17] no plain Commandment in the holy Scriptures, that Children should be baptized.

Zuinglius [18] in his book says, *That [19] in old time Children were openly instructed, who when they came to understanding were called Chatecumeni, [Catechumen] that is, such as are instructed in the Word of*

Salvation; and when they had imprinted the faith in their hearts, and made confession thereof with their mouths, they were admitted to baptism.

Again, in his book of the Movers of Sedition he likewise uses this expression, viz. When we speak of Children's Baptism, so it is that there is no plain word in the Scriptures, whereby the same is commanded.

Calvin [20] likewise is put to confess, That it is no where expressly mentioned by the Evangelists, that any one Child was by the [21] Apostles' hands baptized.

Having thus given you the testimonies of the late great pretended Reformers, etc. (though contrary to their practise) I shall in the next place give you the like testimonies of other Writers relating to Baptism, as it was practised in the Apostles' days, and the first two hundred years after.

Hier[onymus] [22] [Jerome] says, The Lord commanded his Apostles, that they should first instruct and teach all Nations, and [23] afterwards should baptize those that were instructed in the mysteries of Faith, etc.

Athan[atius] [24] [sic] says, That our Saviour did not slightly command to baptize, but first of all he said, teach, and then baptize, that true Faith might come by teaching, and Baptism be perfected by faith.

Haimo [25] says, That there is set down a rule [26] rightly how to baptize, that is, that teaching should go before baptism, for he says, teach all Nations, and then he says, baptize them, for he that is to be baptized must be before instructed, that he first learn to believe that which in baptism he shall receive; for as faith without works is dead, so works when they are not of faith are nothing worth.

Rossensis [27] says, The now Rulers of Churches use such Baptism as Christ never used in his Church.

[28] Eck, writing against the new Church Orders, etc. says, That the Ordinances concerning the baptism of Children is without Scripture, and concludes thus against the Lutherans; What are you such fools, to take on

you the Ordinances of men, which is found only to be a custom of the Church.

[29] Orig[en] *calls Baptism of Children*, [30] *a Ceremony and Tradition of the Church*, in *Levet. Hom. 8* in *Epist. ad Rom. lib. 5*. Augustine *also calls it a Custom of the Church*, *De Baptismo contra donat. lib. 4. cap. 23*. Pope Gregory *calls it, a Tradition of the Fathers*, in *Decretis destinet de consecrat. Cassander, in his book de Infantum Baptismo, says, That it came to be used by the Fathers which lived three hundred years after Christ.* [31]

From all which it is clearly proved (and that from the mouths of such as did then practise Infant-Baptism or sprinkling) that all such persons as have been incorporated into Church-fellowship by being baptized or sprinkled, while Infants were incorporated by a way or means that Jesus Christ never commanded to be used to such a purpose, as also by such a way as was never practised by his Apostles, and so consequently not incorporated visible Members of the Church of Jesus Christ, but contrariwise, visible Members of the visible Church of Antichrist, whose invention it was, and whose practise it yet is, instance Mr. *Cranford's* Church as aforesaid, and therefore as Antichristian as the rest; and so consequently the ordination, which Mr. *Cranford* and the rest of the Ministers of *London* (Presbyterian Ministers) have received, from such as have been so baptized or sprinkled as aforesaid, is every whit as Antichristian as their Baptism, which has been clearly made out to be a mere tradition of men, and therefore abominable in the Church of Jesus Christ, ***Mathew. 15:8.***

Having thus clearly proved, that all the aforesaid societies of people, are neither Churches or Ministers of Jesus Christ (albeit their separations as aforesaid) it must of necessity follow, that the Church, or society of People (now scandalously termed *Anabaptists*) was ever kept distinct and separate from Antichrist, and that to all ends and purposes whatsoever, whether in essentials, substantials, and circumstantial, so that the aforesaid Primitive Church and frame of Gospel-government, was never totally destroyed in her externals by the aforesaid red Dragon, or Beast, or Antichrist (*maugre* [in spite of] all their malice and endeavours to do the same) much less in her

internals, but contrariwise preserved and continued unto this present time; and therefore it will be needless to answer to your third assertion, *viz.*

That the Gospel-frame of Gospel-government is to be restored by some one man, etc.

For what need is there of restoring that by any one man, when the aforesaid Church has power to do it (when need requires) of, and by itself, the Church of Christ being as a tree (*Psalm 1:3*) whose seed is in itself: now experience teaches us, that a tree so planted as aforesaid, albeit in the autumnal or winter season, it become seemingly dead, by being deprived of its outward ornaments of leaves and fruit (which is procured by the coldness of the season, which causes the sap to shrink down into the root) yet the like experience does also teach us, that at the springtime, the aforesaid sap or moisture, being exhaled again by virtue of the heat of the Sun, does furnish the same tree again with its like natural ornaments of leaves and fruit, and that of, and from itself.

So put the case, that during the autumnal or winter season of the Antichristian persecution of the Church of Christ, it might be deprived of its aforesaid ornaments of order, and form of worship, yet the root and the tree being preserved (*viz.* the Word of God as the root, and Saints as the tree, wherein the aforesaid order and form of worship have been retained, during the aforesaid time) has by the virtue and power of the Sun of righteousness shining upon it (at the time of its approach out of its aforesaid condition) even as much power to furnish itself with its spiritual ornaments, of order, and form of worship, and that without any other artificial help whatsoever, as the aforesaid tree has to produce its own leaves and fruit.

But lest what has been said shall not satisfy you, I shall answer the particulars, wherein you conceive it defective, as first in point of its present Constitution, and Ordination.

In answer to which, I shall refer you to the Commands, and Practises of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, relating to the Constitution and Ordination of the Church which they first gathered, as in *Mathew. 28:18, 19, 20; Mark*

16:15, 16, 17. As also the book of the *Acts*, viz. by teaching, and baptizing, the gatherers, as also by Faith, Repentance, and being baptized, in such as were gathered thereunto, which hath been, and is yet, the present practise of those that have and do yet succeed the Apostles in that Gospel-Church so gathered by them. *Viz.* The Church now scandalously termed Anabaptists: And therefore one and the same with the aforesaid Gospel-Church so gathered as aforesaid.

Object[ion]. *But you will reply, that the standing Officers in the Primitive Church, ceased, while it was in its Wilderness-condition.*

Answ[er]. What need of Deacons was there in the Church at Jerusalem before the number of the Disciples were multiplied, *Acts 6:1 etc.* or when the aforesaid Church was scattered abroad by the then persecution (*viz.*) the whole Church, [*] except the Apostles, Acts 8:1*) and yet I presume you will not deny there was a Church of Jesus Christ then at *Jerusalem*, as in **Acts 8:14.**

So likewise when the aforesaid Primitive Church, was penned up into Mountains, Dens, Deserts, and Caves of the earth, and when, as it is likely, not above eight or ten persons might meet in one place together, what need had they of *Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, etc.* when one or two of them might supply the place of them all (so far as there was need of them) and so likewise in relation to the rest of the Ordinances, what need was there of any other then [*than*] of private teachings, prophesying, prayer, baptism, breaking of bread, which I have fully cleared to all rational men, might be then performed by the aforesaid Church in its then condition, where I compared it with the present Condition of the Popish Synagogue in this nation: And without which it had been impossible it should have subsisted for so long a time as 1260 years, (which that it did, I have also cleared by the aforesaid Instances of *Munzer, Storch, and Becold*, in their addresses to *Luther*, when the aforesaid time was expired, albeit the said *Luther* was ignorant thereof, supposing (as yet you do) that the aforesaid Primitive Church had been devolved into the *then Antichristian estate*, of which he then conceived himself a *Reformer*, (the contrary to which I think I have clearly proved) however I am confident, that the then poor distressed Saints,

had as much respect to observe all the commands of Jesus Christ, as possibly were then in their power to prosecute, during their *aforesaid wilderness-condition*, in the aforesaid *Mountains, Dens, Deserts, and Caves of the earth, whereunto they were confined, and in which they were preserved.*

Object[ion]. Peradventure you will bid me prove that the aforesaid Primitive Church was so preserved, and where.

Answ[er]. It is enough for me to prove that it was only *to be hid, and so hid from the face of the Dragon, etc. As that the said Dragon, etc. could not find it, or make discovery of it, which is your own confession*, page 2. in your aforesaid Book: By which your Expressions it is evident, 1. That it was only *to be hid. Ergo*, It had a *being where it was so hid*. 2. You say it was *hid from the Dragon, etc. Ergo*, Not *devolved into the Dragon, etc.* 3. You say *the Dragon could not find it, or make discovery of it. Ergo*, It was *apart from him*, or otherwise such words were ridiculous.

But that you declared the very truth in so saying (though not [\[32\]](#) wittingly) I shall prove further from Scripture, where Jesus Christ promises to be with it to the end of the world, **Matthew 28:20**. *Ergo*, It was to have a continuance unto the end of the world. And if so, then during the aforesaid time of 1260 years. Again, If continued a Church, then in all the Essentials, Substantials, and Circumstantials that appertained unto it, (so far as there was need of, in its then condition) as aforesaid. Again, I would gladly know any one Church (in that which we now call Christendom) that can produce the like hidden condition, [\[33\]](#) *as the Church now scandalously termed Anabaptists*. And much more in that it is so clearly discovered to be so near, *yea even one and the same with the Pattern of the first Church that was erected by the commands of Jesus Christ, and the practice of the Apostles*. And as to the place where it was so preserved, It may be probably conjectured to be in [\[34\]](#) Germany, in as much as the aforesaid *Munzer*, etc. did there discover themselves at the time aforesaid.

Redeem the time therefore which you have hitherto spent in opposing so plain a truth (as has been declared) by disclaiming that Error, as you have

done many more (*Viz.* your sprinkling and ordination, etc.) in doing of which, you will have the benefit, I my desire, and God the Glory.

FINIS

You may have this Book, as also another lately published by John More (Entitled, A General Exhortation to the World, etc.) at the Shop of Giles Calvert at the Black spread-Eagle at the West End of Pauls.

[1] *Nero began the first persecution in the Gentile Church.*

[2] *Nero first discovered by acting against Paul.*

[3] *From whence sprung the Cross in Baptism [among Catholics and Protestants].*

[4] *Reader, take notice that this story of the Anabaptists (scandalously so called) was written by an utter adversary to the Truth, as I shall hereafter make appear. Or otherwise through his ignorance of the Truth. Take notice also that the aforesaid Champions of the Truth, (viz) Munzer, etc. appeared at the same time that Luther, etc. began to oppose the Pope so that when there was but the least way made for the Church of Christ to appear, it had its Champions to publish it to the world, as by their expressions to Luther did appear, wherein they spake nothing but the very truth, for without all controversy, Luther, etc. was no other then [sic] Romish Sectaries, yea such as made only a division in Rome, but not from Rome, and so consequently, such as was [sic] never of the true Church of Jesus Christ, and therefore the Papists may boldly, and justly, question the Prelates, where their Religion was before Luther, as also the Presbyterians before Calvin, in as much as they are no other than the Daughters of that grand harlot, **Revelation 17:5**. Witness their National Churches, their Popish institution of Priests, and baptizing of Infants, which are infallible Characters, to prove them Harlots like their Mother.*

[5] [There is no note in existence - it appears that the margin has been mended or in some way covered over in this place. C.A.P.]

[6] Note the power of Antichrist in the year, 248.

[7] *Bullingerus ex Augustino contra Julianum, lib. 1. cap. 2.*

[8] *Simile* The revolt of Antichrist compared with the revolt of the ten Tribes from the house of David.

[9] Viz. Falers [sic] from the [unintelligible] faith, [unintelligible] Pray [unintelligible].

[10] The enemies of the truth forced to speak contrary to their own practice.

[11] The testimony of *Luther*.

[12] What then avails Infants sprinkling.

[13] [This marginal note obliterated.]

[14] But if unbelievers, then why are they baptized?

[15] The Testimony of Melancton.

[16] [Marg. says only "Note", C.A.P.]

[17] How then dare they do it, contrary to the practice of the Apostles?

[18] The Testimony of *Zuinglius*. Art. 18.

[19] Note old time, and why not so now?

[20] The Testimony of *Calvin* in his *Institutions*, lib. 4. cap. 16

[21] If not by the Apostles, by whom then I say.

[22] The Testimony of *Hieronymus* upon *Matt.* 28:19, 20.

[23] Then not [unintelligible].

[24] [unintelligible] [Testi]mony of Athanatius, in his third Sermon against the *Arians*. *Idem*.

[25] *Item Haimo in Postilla, fol. 278. Idem.*

[26] If such be right Baptism, then the other is wrong.

[27] *Rossensis* contracep. *Balilon*.

[28] Doctor *Eckius* a popish Priest in *Cinchiridion*.

[29] *Origen*

[30] Then a Pharisaical manner of worship. *Augustine*. Pope *Gregory*.

[31] *Cassander*. He guessed within 52 years.

[32] Many speak truth though not wittingly or willingly.

[33] Neither the Popish, Prelatical, Presbyterian, etc. Churches can claim the like hidden state and condition, as etc.

[34] Germany the most probable place of the Churches hiding, etc.

APPENDIX III

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTERS?

By Curtis Pugh

This woman and her younger, more attractive daughters pose a deadly spiritual threat. Because we care about people we call your attention to this danger by furnishing you with this little study. You can find out for yourself just what the Bible says by looking up the references given. For this “Bible detective work” you will need the Book of Revelation, the last book in your Bible, and perhaps a dictionary or encyclopedia. You will also need an honest and prayerful heart. Here are some clues to help you in your search.

1. Clue number one: A thoughtful reading of **Revelation** chapters **17** and **18** shows that this woman is more than just an individual. She symbolizes a “**city**” that controls the governments of the world (**Revelation 17:18**).

2. The second clue is her influence and popularity. She sits on many waters explained to be the peoples of the world, **Revelation 17:1, 15** (See how the Bible explains itself!) **Revelation 17:2** speaks, no doubt, of her deception of the peoples of the world. (See also **Revelation 14:8; 18:3; 19:2**). Evidently her popularity and social acceptability allow her to do her evil work freely.

3. Clue number three is her connection with civil governments. **Revelation 17:2** and **18** mention her ties with “**the kings of the earth.**” She is a world political power and is recognized as such by various governments.

4. The fourth clue is her bright colorful attire. Rich colors of purple, scarlet (**Revelation 17:4**) and “**linen**” (**Revelation 18:16** - white in color)

are hers. Could the leaders of this “**Harlot**” actually wear these colors? Her adornment is also gold, precious stones, and pearls. Think about this. What comes to mind?

5. Clue number five has to do with her immense wealth. She possesses riches in abundance (**Revelation 17:4; 18:7, & 11-19**). Vast financial holdings make this “**city**” a great power in world commerce.

6. Clue number six concerns a multitude of martyrs. Read **Revelation 17:6** and **Revelation 18:24**. What city of worldwide influence has been responsible for multitudes martyred because of their faith in Christ and the Bible?

7. The seventh clue is her name. **Revelation 17:5** tells us her name is “**MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**” She is not literal Babylon, for that is in ruins. She is “**Mystery Babylon.**” Archaeology has shown that Babylon was the origin of mystery religions such as the worship of Simiramis and Tammuz, the ancient eastern Madonna and child. Locate where and by whom these are venerated today under other names and you may be well on your way to solving this puzzle.

8. Clue number eight is her location. She is a “**city**” that sits on seven mountains (**Revelation 17:9, 18**). There is a famous city that sits on seven hills (mountains in the local tongue) which has named them (1) Palatine; (2) Capitoline; (3) Quirinal; (4) Aventine; (5) Caelian; (6) Esquiline; and (7) Viminal. Check this out with a dictionary, gazetteer, or encyclopedia!

9. The ninth and final clue also has to do with her names as does clue number seven above. In **Revelation 17:5**, she is also named “**THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**” This Harlot has given birth to many of the same sort as the mother. They too enjoy great prestige, popularity and power. They are socially acceptable and listened to by the civil leaders of this world. Identify the Mother and give a little thought to her offspring. You may be surprised at your conclusions!

Revelation 18:4 gives a great command and a serious warning: “**come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**” This harlot (and her harlot-daughters) are guilty of terrible sins and those who remain in her are “**partakers of her sins.**” They will be judged by God because they are a part of her.

Read these Scriptures and do a little research. When you do learn just who the Harlot and her Daughters are, please do not get mad at me for calling this to your attention. I did not write the Bible. I am only to tell you what it says. How you respond to the Bible has eternal consequences.

The vital question is this: are you a part of this “**Mother of Harlots,**” or her wicked Brood? If so, will you heed the warning and obey the call to “**Come out of her?**” Be done with her! Repent of your sins and trust in Christ alone and separate yourself from the Harlot and her Daughters!

“...COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT PARTAKERS OF HER SINS, AND THAT YE RECEIVE NOT OF HER PLAGUES.” (Revelation 18:4).

End

APPENDIX IV

THE NEED FOR A MOTHER CHURCH

By **Ronnie Wolfe [1]**, Pastor

First Baptist Church

Harrison, Ohio

“We will consider this topic in four sections with the following titles: **A Church Enclosed, A Church Fragmented, A Church Estranged, A Church Extended.**

A CHURCH ENCLOSED

“**A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.**” (Song of Solomon 4:12)

The Lord’s church is a distinct and separate organization from any other on the earth. The local church is not simply a fraction or a part of a larger and similar organization. She is loved by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. God purchased the church (local concept) with his own blood (**Acts 20:28**). Jesus Christ delegated authority to his church (**Matthew 28:18-20**). The Holy Spirit approved the church (local concept) on the Day of Pentecost (**Acts 1:5; 2:1-3**).

As we think of the church’s being a distinct organization unlike any other in the world, let us consider briefly her authority by example.

Example #1: In **Acts** chapter **6** we read of a problem arising in the church regarding the “**daily ministration.**” The problem was solved by a general agreement [today we think of that as a church vote] wherein they

chose seven men to take care of the “**daily ministration.**” The church exercised her distinct authority in doing this. Being members of this church, they voted in agreement to select these seven men.

Proposition #1: What if ten of the members of this church met somewhere away from the regular meeting place and voted to do something about the problem of the “**daily ministration**”? Would their agreement together or their vote determine what was or what was not to be done in regard to this “**daily ministration**”? The answer is no.

Example #2: In Acts chapter 15 we read of the disagreement that came to the churches over circumcision and the Mosaic Law. When the meeting took place, an agreement was made that is recorded in verse 20. In verse 22 we find that it pleased the apostles, the elders, with the whole church.

Proposition #2: If there were some in the church who met on their own and came to some conclusions concerning circumcision, would it have any validity in the “inclosed” church? The answer is no. In fact, the sect of the Pharisees (verse 5) did just that; but when it was considered in the context of the church, their decision was refused. Notice also that the persuasion of the “sect” was not even considered by the local church until their influence had caused confusion within the local church.

So, in saying that the church is “inclosed” this writer is advocating that each church of the Lord Jesus is completely independent of all other organizations and that no decisions pertaining to the work of God through the churches can be made outside this local establishment.

Keep this in mind as we consider the next point, which naturally follows.

A CHURCH FRAGMENTED

“That there should be no schism” (I Corinthians 12:25)

This very sect mentioned under our first point (the sect of the Pharisees, **Acts 15:5**) shows their true form in this chapter. First, we must notice that they were believers. These were not lost sinners who were trying to penetrate the church, but this “sect” formed right within the church itself.

They had formed their own clique and had formed their own sub-theology. They were not teaching works for salvation; they were simply putting the burden of the Law on Christian believers.

The most important aspect of this example, though, is that this sub-set of believers had separated themselves from the church and had taken authority upon themselves to carry on the business of the Lord’s church. **Acts 15:24** tells us that they “**went out from us.**” This is the perfect example of a small group of believers in a particular church who decide arbitrarily to meet in a different location and appoint themselves to be a body and take upon themselves the authority to select a pastor and deacons and to serve the ordinances; namely, baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

This is done on a regular and ongoing basis in Baptist churches around the country. What is wrong with this? Let us consider it by example.

Example: Bro. and Mrs. Swakley are saved through the ministry of the Shawnee Baptist Church. They both submit themselves to baptism under the authority of this church. After baptism, they are members in good standing with the privilege of participating in various aspects of that church’s ministries and activities. They may now vote on issues brought up by that church. They may be served the Lord’s Supper by that church and may partake of the same on a regular basis as long as they are members in good standing. They may NOT, however, make personal and private decisions for the church. Whatever decisions are made come before the church for discussion and consideration and are voted upon by the entire membership before any actions are taken.

Now, let us say, that Bro. Swakley moves to a different city and cannot find a Bible-teaching church to attend; so he decides (on his own) that he will get a few believers together and start meeting for prayer and fellowship.

After some time and consideration, Bro. and Mrs. Swakley decide that they may as well have a church in that community; so they take the following action: A preacher called to come to preach to them on a regular basis. The preacher preaches for awhile and someone is saved. They determine that the new believer must be baptized, so they decide that the preacher is to do the baptizing. The new convert is immersed in water just the way they used to do at the previous church. Now he is a member of this “church”.

At this stage of the drama most people would automatically and without question call this group of people a church. But if we follow through with this example logically, we find that some problems arise. Following are some statements and questions that will, I hope, show the problems.

1. To what church did this couple belong when they were first saved and baptized? Shawnee Baptist Church.

2. By what authority did they perform their privileges in that local church? Local church authority.

3. When they moved away from the community of the Shawnee Baptist Church, where was their membership? It remained at the Shawnee Baptist Church.

4. Was there anything wrong with meeting with other believers for prayer and fellowship? Absolutely not!

5. Was it wrong for them to call for a preacher to come and preach to them? Not per se! But a mental attitude is being formed at this time, an attitude of worshipping and functioning as a church.

6. What is now the status of the Swakley’s membership at Shawnee Baptist Church? By continuing to be members they remain obligated to the church and are under its authority. Distance does not change that. Names are not removed simply because people move to a different place except for nonattendance, which is done because of lack of faithfulness to the church. That is no way to have your name removed from a church roll.

7. Were they wrong for having the new convert baptized? Yes. Having their membership back at Shawnee Baptist, they usurped the authority of Shawnee Baptist Church by asking for the baptism of a new convert on their own.

If they had lived around the corner from the meeting place of Shawnee Baptist Church, would they have taken the same authority upon themselves? Then what makes it all right to do at a distance? Distance does not change authority.

Do you see what is happening? The same thing that happened in **Acts chapter 15**. A new “sect” is being organized and is going out “**from us**.”

8. Upon baptizing the new convert the authority for baptism was changed from the church to an individual or a fragment. Making this decision to baptize, whether it be made by one person or a few, is usurping the authority of the church; because it becomes an arbitrary decision. Now, does the authority for baptism, then, lie in the preacher? Some would say that it does; but if you will notice the above example, the authority is actually wielded by Mr. and Mrs. Swakley.

Mr. & Mrs. Swakley have now decided to vote without consent of the church to which they belong. Remember, distance makes no difference in authority. Mr. and Mrs. Swakley have now fragmented the Shawnee Baptist Church by separating to themselves and claiming authority which they do not have. This is no different from ten of the men of a church meeting outside of the building in the parking lot and making decisions for the church. These ten men have no business deciding who will or will not be baptized, because if their discussion determines that Mr. Back be baptized, they must first bring it up before the church before Mr. Back can be baptized. This is church authority.

If these same ten men decided to carry on church business by themselves and simply stay away from the Shawnee Baptist Church, they are still wrong in these ways.

1. They are wrong for not attending their church (Hebrews 10:25).

2. They are wrong for not giving to their church (I Corinthians 16:1).

3. They are wrong for not visiting for their church (2 Corinthians 5:20).

You may ask why they cannot simply ask for their names to be removed from the church roll of Shawnee Baptist Church. That can be done, but that is a negative aspect. That is like saying that you no longer agree with the theology or the program of the church and do not want to be like them or a part of them.

Not only that, but if your name is removed from a roll by request, you are still submitting to the authority of the church and are considered a disciplined member.

Too, if your name were removed from Shawnee Baptist Church by request, to what church would you belong? If you say none, then how do you become a member of another church?

In our example, the person simply places himself in the new church, and others are added according to his agreement; therefore, the first person to begin the work becomes the authority for all the actions of the church. The authority rests completely upon that one person.

You do not become a member of any local church simply by declaring that you are such. We have many people in the Harrison area who claim to be members of First Baptist Church but are not.

So we see how innocently that a church can be fragmented. Christ is against a church schism, and this is what develops under the example given.

A “CHURCH” ESTRANGED

“Certain which went out from us” (Acts 15:24)

When the foregoing example has been developed completely, we find a fine-looking building sitting on the corner of some city somewhere having people attend regularly and being baptized regularly and functioning in the same manner as the Shawnee Baptist Church before mentioned.

But remember that the authority for all this church business comes from one person, the person who got the ball rolling. They will tell you perhaps that the preacher has the authority to baptize, but you tell me who asked the preacher to come and do the baptizing and I will tell you that it was Mr. and/or Mrs. Swakley. So the authority for baptism, church business, the Lord's Supper, church discipline, etc. came from the Swakleys.

This church, instead of being just another Baptist church on another corner in another city is an estranged church, not a true church at all. At what time did the Shawnee Baptist Church vote to give the Swakleys (members of Shawnee) permission to meet together and carry on business as a church? At no time. They assumed it. They claimed it. Yea, they usurped the authority of their own church, betrayed that church, and estranged themselves from that church just as the "sect" in **Acts** chapter **15** did.

A CHURCH EXTENDED

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19)

The Bible offers a proper way for extending the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to spread throughout the world with her influence and her Gospel. This in modern times is called the "mother church" method. You will not find this phrase in the Scriptures, but the principle is definitely presented by example especially in the book of Acts.

Institutional Authority - A Biblical Principle

Please refer to **Deuteronomy** chapter **12**. This chapter shows an ancient principle that was practiced by Israel from the commandment of God. Notice

especially these verses:

Verse 5: But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

Verse 8: Ye shall not do after all *the things* that we do here this day, every man whatsoever *is* right in his own eyes.

Verse 13: Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest.

This same authority is found in the New Testament beginning with the preaching of John the Baptist and continuing throughout what is commonly called the church age. John was a man “**sent from God**” (**John 1:33**). John did not just begin a ministry of his own, but he had God’s direct authority.

This authority continues to our present age. The authority of John was given to the church by Christ in **Matthew 28:18-20**:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jesus And The Apostles Had John’s Baptism

Neither Jesus nor any of the apostles did anything regarding the church until they were baptized by John, so John’s baptism carried a very powerful authority. Even the Pharisees demanded to know by what authority Christ did the things that he did (See **Matthew 21:23**). Jesus answered the Pharisees with a question: “**The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From**

heaven; he will say unto us, **Why did ye not then believe him?**” (Matthew 21:25). The Pharisees could not tell Jesus from where the authority of John came. That is because they refused to recognize Heaven’s authority (See Luke 7:29-30).

From One Church To Another:

The Biblical Pattern

The church at Jerusalem was the first church in existence. When it was found that there were believers in Samaria through Philip’s preaching, the church at Jerusalem sent Peter and John; and they laid their hands on the Samaritans, and they received the demonstration of the Holy Spirit [authority] just as the believers in Jerusalem had received. This receiving of the Holy Spirit was God’s institutional sanction. This was necessary because the Samaritans thought that God’s authority was already upon them (See **John 4:20**).

When Saul of Tarsus was saved he was taken to Damascus. [See **Acts 9:1-19**] A man by the name of Ananias, who evidently was affiliated with the church at Jerusalem (see verse 13), [2] was sent (verse 17) to Saul that he might pray for him and that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. So, even Paul’s ministry was sanctioned by the church at Jerusalem. He was not an authority of himself.

When Paul and Silas were to begin their first missionary journey, they were sent out by the church at Antioch; and when they returned from their missionary journey, they reported to the church at Antioch. That is because they were not a ministry unto themselves, but their ministry was through the local church. Paul teaches us in **Ephesians 3:21** that God receives glory only through the church.

So down through the ages a continual line of authoritative baptisms has existed even unto our day.

If a person, then, begins a ministry without the express authority of an existing church of the Lord Jesus Christ, then he is a ministry to himself and has divided the church of the Lord and caused a schism, which the Lord hates. He has become a “denomination” of his own, and his ministry is not approved of God. He has taken authority unto himself despite the pattern that God has laid down in Scripture over and over.

May God bless us as we spread the Gospel by way of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. He promised that no matter how long the world stands the gates of Hell will not prevail against the church of the Lord. So the authority of God continues throughout history from the time of Christ. Every spiritual worker should be very careful to be sure that this authority is taken with responsibility in order not to usurp the authority of Christ’s churches. **(Ephesians 3:21)**”

Remarks on the Use of the Term “Mother Church”

by Curtis Pugh

Some Brethren object to the use of the term “Mother Church.” While they are correct in their point that the *term* is not used in Scripture, neither are such words as “the rapture,” “gambling,” “rape,” etc., but the *concepts* are dealt with nevertheless. Many scholars, including non-Baptist R.C.H. Lenski, have maintained that John addressed the letter we call **2 John** to a church under the simile of an “**elect lady**” with “**children**” (v. **1**). (“Lady” is nowhere used of a woman in the Bible, unless here). This “**elect lady**” had an “**elect sister**” who also had “**children**” (v. **13**). If this view is correct, there can be no argument as to the propriety of the term “mother church.”

Furthermore, the false church-system is given the name “**Mother of Harlots.**” While we would disassociate ourselves completely from her, nevertheless, the concept of motherhood in relation to churches, although false ones, is set forth clearly in this instance. It seems clear that the concept of each church being or having the capability of being a “mother” is Biblical even if the term itself is not used. The reader will note that churches are

likened to a “bride.” Certainly the Biblical pattern is that no church was ever established without previous “church connection” or authority from an already existing church - a “mother church.”

[1] Baptist elder Ronnie Wolfe graciously gave permission to include this excellent article as an appendix to this volume.

[2] Whether Ananias was a member of the Jerusalem church or the Damascus church is beside the point. The point is he was a member of a New Testament church and acted with church-authority. It seems likely that Ananias had previously been a member of the Jerusalem church and consequently heard of the outrages perpetrated by Saul against the Lord’s church. It seems probable that at the time of Saul’s conversion Ananias was a member of the Damascus church. That he was at this time resident in Damascus is clear. It would seem that he took Saul to meet “**with the disciples which were at Damascus,**” for we find Saul assembling with them (**Acts 9:19**). Obviously Ananias had authority since he not only put his hands on Saul with the result that Saul received the Holy Ghost, but Ananias also baptized him. Some think he was one of the seventy disciples. Extra-biblical writers say he was pastor of the Damascus church. This seems highly probable, but is not absolutely known [C.A.P.].