

Why Be a Baptist?

By H. Boyce Taylor, Sr.

Second Edition, 1928

Dedication

To my father and mother, who first taught me to love the Bible and the Baptists, this book is affectionately dedicated.

Contents

I Foreword	7
II Why I Am a Baptist.....	9
III Baptist Beginnings.....	18
IV The Baptist Book.....	27
V The Baptist Name.....	36
VI The Baptist Peculiarities.....	42
VII Three Differentiating Baptist Marks	50
VIII The Baptist Program.....	58
IX The Church of God, Kingdom of God and The Family of God Differentiated.....	67
X Principles of Baptist Co-operation.....	73
XI Women's Work in Baptist Churches.....	85
XII Baptist Churches Conservers and Propagators of the Truth..	95
XIII A Baptist Church the Climax of Divine Wisdom.....	102
XIV Why Be a Baptist?.....	113

I

Foreword

[p. 7]

THERE is nothing new in this book. Every truth contained therein can be found in the New Testament. The Lord Jesus was very fond of the Baptists. His forerunner was called by His Father "The Baptist." He himself walked 60 miles to get Baptist baptism. The only time that the three persons of the Godhead ever manifested their presence on earth at the same time was at a Baptist baptism, when the Son of God was baptized. The most intimate associates of God's well-beloved Son were all Baptists. In selecting His companions, He chose Baptists to be with Him. The first 12 missionaries sent out by the Son of God were all Baptist preachers. He was not ashamed to call

them Brethren. He organized His church out of Baptists. He had these Baptist preachers do all His baptizing. There wasn't anybody present when He instituted His supper, except these same Baptist preachers. Not His mother or brothers and sisters according to the flesh, but three of these same Baptist preachers were chosen by Him to be near Him in every crucial experience of His life. In the language of the miners, they were His "buddies." They were a simple folk. Baptists have been a simple folk from that day until now. They are a people of one Book. Wherever the Bible is read and obeyed, the Baptists go and glow and grow. The writer of this volume is one of the simplest of these folk. He believes the Book from cover to cover and loves to preach it. Like his Master, the common people often seem to hear him gladly. This volume contains a few of the messages, which at District Associations or Bible Institutes or Debates or at other places, these Baptist folk, the same kind the Lord loved so well while here on earth, have asked him to put in more permanent form.

[p. 8]

If the humblest of them away back in the backwoods or far out on the frontier or up in a hut on the mountain side or on the far-flung battle line on some mission field, shall be helped by any thing said herein to love the Book better and obey it more perfectly; or shall be encouraged to be more loyal to our Lord and to the church which "He purchased with His own blood," the writer shall be happy.

=====

[p. 9]

II Why I Am a Baptist

I am going to talk this morning on, "Why I Am a Baptist." In the last chapter of Matthew, verses 18-20, you will find these words: "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 alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." My text is found in Matthew 28th chapter, and 20th verse. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Peter told us "to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." That is a good reason why every Baptist here today ought to be able to tell why he is a Baptist. Every Baptist ought to be able at any time to give his reasons for being a Baptist: and contrariwise, since the Master never established but one church, every man, who isn't a Baptist, ought to be able to give reasons, good and sufficient to satisfy the Lord Jesus at the

judgment, why he is not a Baptist. For if the church that Jesus built was a Baptist church, then no churches but Baptist churches are churches of Christ and every man will have to face the Lord Jesus at the judgment and tell Him why he joined some church founded by an uninspired man, instead of the one founded by the Lord Jesus Himself. There is much talk now-a-days about a community church. Why should not Baptists, go in with all others and organize one church in every community? If it were left to us nothing would be more delightful. We like to agree and get along with other people. But it isn't left to us and to our

[p. 10]

consciences. The Master's plain command to the first church was "to teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Church-membership is not left to your consciences or your whims or your reasonings; it is a matter of loyalty and obedience to Jesus Christ who bought us and saved us with His own precious blood. Conscience is not a standard of right or wrong for any man, for conscience is a creature of education and needs teaching. The conscience of the ignorant, or uninformed would say one church is right or none, and the conscience of the man who is taught would say another. So you see conscience cannot be a standard by which men are to regulate their church membership. A standard must be that to which all men can come, and which when submitted to will make all men do what the Lord, Himself, says do. That is why Jesus said, "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The Bible is the standard and men's consciences never get right until they get right with the Bible and then they all agree. The fundamental and distinguishing Baptist doctrine and the one underlying all other Baptist doctrines is this: "The Bible, the Bible alone, is our only and all sufficient rule of faith and practice." If you can't find it in the Bible it isn't Baptist doctrine; if it is Baptist doctrine you can find it in the Bible. That is the shibboleth of this message this morning. Our authority for making this our distinguishing teaching is our marching orders, given us by the Lord Jesus, the Head and Founder of the First Baptist church.

The man God sent to make ready a people out of whom the Lord Jesus organized His church was called by God Himself the Baptist. (Matthew 3:1.) Mark you, he was not called the Baptist because he baptized. He was called the Baptist by the Lord before he ever baptized anybody, before he ever preached a sermon. He was called the Baptist because of the work God sent him to do. (John 4:1). His mission was set forth in these words: "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." His mission was the same kind of a mission that Baptists have always had. John was a Baptist because

[p. 11]

his mission was to make and baptize disciples. Baptists are the only folks on earth

who are still working at that kind of a mission -- who make men disciples, then baptize them and baptize nobody else except disciples or Christians. John the Baptist baptized Christ and all the twelve apostles and Christ's church is built on them, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). Since the material for the church Jesus built was made ready by a Baptist preacher it was Baptist material and the church organized out of it was a Baptist church. The church that Jesus called "My church" was therefore a Baptist church. To that church He gave His marching orders -- (Matthew 28:18-20). His marching orders are His program for that church and every other Baptist church until He comes again. His orders are very explicit: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: 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."

Baptists are commanded to teach all things the Lord Jesus has commanded: they are not commanded to teach anything He hasn't commanded. That is why I say Baptist doctrine includes all things commanded and taught and practiced by Christ and His apostles and excludes everything else. If it isn't in the Bible it isn't Baptist doctrine: if it is Baptist doctrine you can find it in the Bible. Our orders tell us to go and preach the gospel to every creature: that's why we are Missionary Baptists. A member of this church or any other Baptist church who doesn't believe in missions or who doesn't do something for missions is a hypocrite and disobedient to the last orders of the Head of this and every other Baptist church. The Bible tells us that "Jesus made and baptized disciples" -- and His orders to us are to "go, make disciples" and then baptize them. "Disciples were called Christians" at Antioch". A disciple is a Christian. The Oxford Bible in Matthew 28:19 gives these words as the literal translation, "teaching all nations, or making Christians of all nations." Jesus baptized none but disciples or Christians.

[p. 12]

He commanded us to baptize none but disciples or Christians. For that reason Baptists baptize no infants, no seekers, no sinners, no probationers, nobody except those who claim to be Christians; because Jesus, the founder of the first Baptist church, did not baptize anybody but disciples or Christians. He left us an example and told us to walk in His steps. That is why Baptists are sticklers for regenerated church-membership. Jesus started us that way and told us to "observe all things whatsoever He commanded."

Jesus walked sixty miles to be immersed in the river Jordan by the first Baptist preacher. That explains why Baptists are sticklers for immersion and for Baptist baptism. They were started that way and the Master told us to do as He said. The

Bible, our guide-book, makes baptism so clear and plain that anybody can read it out of the Book, if they want to. That is why so many of the common people are Baptists. I could tell you this morning, if I had the time, how that when there were no Baptists in Germany, John G. Oncken, made a Baptist by reading the New Testament, started to England to find a Baptist preacher to baptize him. I. N. Yohannon, a Persian, converted under a Presbyterian missionary, read the New Testament and came from Persia to New York to get Baptist baptism. In the island of Cuba, Diaz became a Baptist from reading the New Testament. That is why in the state of Parihyba, Brazil, men converted under a Presbyterian Missionary and made Baptists by reading the New Testament, sent for a Baptist preacher in Pernambuco to come up and baptize them. Baptists take the Bible as it reads and don't try to explain it away. The Bible says that John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there (John 3:23). Baptists believe what the Bible says and hunt "much water," when they go to baptize. The Bible says that Jesus came to the Jordan to be baptized by John (Matthew 3:13). That is why Baptists go to the water instead of bringing the water to the candidate. The Bible says Jesus was baptized in Jordan (Mark 1:9). That is why Baptists baptize in water instead of putting water on the candidate. Years ago Brother

[p. 13]

A. J. Preston met a prominent Presbyterian Judge in the city where he was pastor at that time, who said to him, "Have you seen the Birmingham morning paper? Did you read where De Witt Talmage immersed a man in the River Jordan the other day?" Bro. Preston said: "Judge, I want to ask you one question. How is it that when you read in a daily paper that a Presbyterian preacher in the 19th century baptized a man in the River Jordan, you say he immersed him: and then when you read in the Bible that in the first century a Baptist preacher baptized the Lord Jesus in the River Jordan, you deny that He was immersed?" The Presbyterian Judge has not answered him yet. The Bible says that Philip and the eunuch went down into the water (Acts 8:38). That is why Baptists do it that way today. The Bible describes baptism as a burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). That is why Baptists insist that immersion only is baptism. The Bible says that Jesus after His baptism came up straightway out of the water (Mark 1:10). It takes "much water," "going to the water," "going into the water," a burial and a resurrection and a "coming out of the water" to make a Bible baptism. That is why Baptists will not have any other kind. There isn't any other kind in the Bible and Baptists will not accept for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matthew 15:9).

The Bible says: "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12). For that reason Baptists have no god-fathers or god-mothers or sponsors and

do not believe in any proxies in religion. We do not baptize babies nor believe in infant membership because that puts a preacher or a priest or an ordinance or a church or a sacrament between the soul and God; and the Bible says: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). Baptists believe that infant baptism is a sin against God and against little children; because it takes away from the child the privilege and duty of obeying Jesus for itself in baptism after it has repented and believed in Christ for life and salvation. Because Baptist churches take the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, they are the only churches

[p. 14]

that in all their history have never connected salvation with baptism, either for infants or adults; but have always contended that salvation is essential to baptism rather than baptism being essential to salvation. God's order is always salvation first and then baptism. "The Lord added to the church daily the saved" (Acts 2:47). Peter gave us a reason for the baptism of the household of Cornelius that they had already received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:43-47).

Because the Bible says: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). Baptists do not believe that one church is as good as another and think it makes lots of difference what church you join. Since all other churches except Baptist churches were established by men -- to join any of them is to obey the commandments of men, and the Bible says, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Baptists do not believe that a wife ought to join the church with her husband unless the Bible teaches what his church teaches, because the Bible says: "If any man come to Me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26). The first loyalty and allegiance of every blood-bought soul is to Jesus Christ and he ought to obey Christ, even if he had to forsake father and mother and wife and children and all kinsmen according to the flesh to follow Christ. Paul said when it came to following Christ, "he knew no man after the flesh." A man or woman should follow Christ in the matter of what church he joins, even if in so doing it means a house divided against itself (Matthew 10:34-36).

Baptists reject all other baptisms except Baptist baptism because there is no other kind in the Bible. Jesus and the twelve apostles had Baptist baptism. For that reason we receive no other except Baptist baptism. To reject Baptist baptism is to follow the Pharisees instead of Jesus. "They rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John" (Luke 7:30). All rejecters of Baptist baptism are therefore followers of the Pharisees instead of Christ and

[p. 15]

"despisers of the Church of God," which was built by Jesus out of persons, baptized by the first Baptist preacher (I Corinthians 11:22, 12:28, Acts 1:21-22).

Baptists are a Democratic people. "One is your Master, all ye are brethren," said the Lord Jesus (Matthew 23:8). Baptists have no bosses or overlords. For that reason, Thomas Jefferson got his idea of democracy from a little country Baptist church in Virginia, whose Saturday business meetings he used to attend. While this government is not a pure democracy, but a republic, Baptist churches are pure democracies; that is, "a government of the people and by the people and for the people." They elect their own officers. Peter was no pope or bishop. He called himself a fellow-elder with other Baptist preachers (I Peter 5:1). He did not appoint a successor to Judas Iscariot; but the 120 members of that Jerusalem church nominated two brethren and then after prayer gave their lots and the lot fell upon Matthias (Acts 1:15-26). Peter in Acts 6 did not appoint seven deacons; neither did the apostles as ruling elders or a college of bishops elect them, but the twelve called the multitude of disciples together and they chose the seven deacons. Baptists not only follow the Bible in electing their own officers; but they also track the Scriptures by receiving and dismissing their own members. In Acts 9:26 Paul tried to join the church at Jerusalem, but they refused to receive him because they were not satisfied about his conversion. In Romans 14:1, Paul tells the church at Rome "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye," (showing that the church received folks into its membership. In I Corinthians 5, Paul tells the church at Corinth to exclude an unworthy member and in 2 Thessalonians 3:6 the church at Thessalonica is commanded to "Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly." If it isn't in the Bible, it isn't Baptist doctrine; if it is Baptist doctrine, you can find it in the Bible.

For that reason, Baptists, believe in Close Communion. Jesus Himself was a close communionist. He did not invite His mother, or the man in whose house He instituted the Lord's Supper to be present at that supper. How could you

[p. 16]

have closer communion than that? Our marching orders put salvation and baptism before the Supper. The church at Jerusalem in carrying out its marching orders had first salvation, all that "gladly received his word," then baptism, then church membership, then continuance in the apostles' doctrine, and continuance in church fellowship before getting to the breaking of the bread (Acts 2:41-42). Paul told the church at Corinth, (I Cor. 11:18-20) quoting the Revised Version, that if there was division or heresy present it was not possible to eat the Lord's Supper. Open communion therefore is an impossibility. Open communion is the eating together of

those who are divided into different sects and teach different and oft-times contradictory doctrines. All doctrines that differ from the Bible and the Baptists are heresies, and Paul says if there is division or heresy present it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper. So it is either close communion or it is not the Lord's Supper.

Finally, Baptists believe that if a man is once saved, he is always saved. No doctrine we hold is more abundantly supported by the Scriptures than this one. Jesus said of the man once saved that "he shall never perish;" that he "shall never thirst" and therefore can never go to hell because in hell they do thirst (Luke 16:24); that he shall "in no wise be cast out;" that "neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Paul in Romans 8:28-30 shows that all God foreknew will be called, justified and glorified. Beginning back in God's foreknowledge and reaching out beyond time to final glorification, Paul plainly says that not a single one whom God foreknew would be saved, will ever fail to reach final glorification. Therefore apostasy is impossible. But in Romans 8:38-39 Paul puts it, if possible, stronger still. He shows that nothing in life "death nor life," nothing in heaven or hell, "angels, nor principalities nor powers," nothing in time, "things present nor things to come," nothing in space "height nor depth" and then for fear something had been left out he adds "nor any other creature," which includes the believer himself, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

[p. 17]

Christ Jesus our Lord." Baptists believe those once saved are always saved, because the Bible says so. Baptists take the Bible alone as their only rule of faith and practice. That is why I am a Baptist. If you can't read it in the Bible it isn't Baptist doctrine; If it is Baptist doctrine you can find it in the Bible.

=====

III

Baptist Beginnings

[p. 18]

In J. R. Grave's Introduction to Orchard's *History of Foreign Baptists*, he says: "The reader should distinctly bear in mind that our author does not profess to write the history of our people in detail, but to demonstrate by testimony of both Catholic and Protestant writers -- our bitter enemies, that communities of Baptist have existed in all ages from the days of John the Baptist until now, maintaining essentially, the same faith and that 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'"

It is a distinctive tenet believed and taught by Baptist alone, that John the Baptist prepared the material and the Lord Jesus Christ organized the first Baptist church

during his personal ministry here upon the earth. Of this the Scriptures give abundant proof. Old Testament types and prophecy point clearly to this. New Testament apostles and historians acclaim their testimony true.

In Hebrews 3:1-6 Paul invites careful consideration to the house Jesus built. These facts are clearly brought out in that passage. Jesus was appointed by His Heavenly Father to build His house and faithfully obeyed His Father's orders. He not only built His house, but was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, because He was greater than Moses and the builder is greater than the house He built. Moses was only a servant in his house; but Christ was the Son of God and Master of His own house.

In 1 Corinthians 3:16). Paul speaks of the church at Corinth as the temple of God. In Ephesians 2:20-21). Paul refers to the church at Ephesus as "an holy temple in the Lord." The resemblances between the temple of Solomon and the church Jesus built are very marked and striking. David prepared the material out of which Solomon built the temple (1 Chronicles 29:16). John

[p. 19]

the Baptist prepared the material out of which Jesus built His own church. (Luke 1:17, Mark 1:2-3). Solomon built the temple out of the material David prepared. So Jesus built the church out of the material prepared by John. (Matthew 16:18, Acts 1:21-22). After the temple was finished it was dedicated with sacrifices (I Kings 7:51-8:1-5). After Jesus had finished the house His Father told Him to build, He dedicated it with the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 3:2, John 17:4, Ephesians 5:25). After the temple was finished and dedicated, then the Holy Shekinah came and filled it with glory (I Kings 8:10-11). Even so after the Lord Jesus had finished His church and put into it all the gifts enumerated, in 1 Corinthians 12:28, except the gift of tongues, then the Holy Spirit as the Divine Shekinah entered the church as the temple of God to make it His habitation forever (Ephesians 2:20-22).

Not only is the temple a type of the building of the church, but Zechariah foretells in his prophecy about Christ building His church. Note his words: "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zechariah 6:12-13).

Note the detailed fulfillment of that prophecy in Jesus. He was the Branch. He grew up out of His place. His place was Bethlehem, but He grew up in Nazareth. In Genesis 41:32 Joseph told Pharaoh that when God said a thing twice, He did it

because it was established. Twice does Zechariah clearly foretell that Jesus was to build His own temple or church. If we interpret Scripture by Scripture, that means that God had settled it before Jesus ever came, that He was to build His own church. How hard do men labor to prove this prophecy false by their efforts to set up the church on Pentecost. But it cannot be done. Zechariah answered all that before Jesus came. Twice does He say that Jesus would build His own temple and adds then that He should sit upon His throne

[p. 20]

and be a priest upon His throne. The order of events as here laid down is first Christ building His temple, then His resurrection and ascension and then a priest upon His throne. That is God's answer to the Pentecost theory. Paul tells us plainly that Jesus would not be a priest, if he were on earth, (Hebrews 8:4). The order of prophecy was the order of fulfillment; for prophecy establishes things. His house was built here upon earth by Him. Then God gave Him after His resurrection and ascension all authority in heaven and on earth, fulfilling the scripture as to His sitting and ruling upon His throne. Then He became a priest upon His throne, ever living to make intercession for us. The Holy Spirit was not content however to prefigure the building of Christ's church in type and shadow and foretell it in prophecy. The New Testament is clear and explicit as to the founding of this first Baptist church.

To be a New Testament church a church must have been organized at the right time, at the right place, by the right person, out of the right material, must have the right officers, the right polity, the right discipline, the right doctrine, right practices, the right gospel and the right mission. The first Missionary Baptist church complies with every one of these requirements.

1. It was instituted at the right time -- during the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:28, "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Holy Writ says the apostles were the first set in the church. In Luke 6:12-16 after an all night of prayer, Jesus called His disciples unto Him and chose 12, whom He named apostles. They were called out from others. That is what *ekklesia* means, "the called out." They were chosen to be with Him (Mark 3:14). He was the head and founder: they were the first members. No other church can qualify as to time except the Missionary Baptist church. It is the only institution on this earth that was instituted during the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus.

[p. 21]

2. It was instituted at the right place. The church Jesus built and which He called "My church" must have been organized in Palestine -- God's country. It was as impossible for the church Jesus built to be organized out of Palestine as it was for Jesus to have been born out of Palestine. The only church on this earth which began in Palestine was the Missionary Baptist church. All others we know of were born either in Europe or America. They are not only too young to be any kin to the church which Jesus called "My church," but they fit neither prophecy nor history as to the place of their beginning. Jesus' church was founded by a Jew and its constituent members were all Jews. That is not true of any other church in the world except a Missionary Baptist church. The founder and all the constituent members of this church were baptized by the first Baptist preacher in the river Jordan. Peter said in Acts 1:21-22 that no man could be one of the twelve, unless he accompanied with them from the Baptism of John. No other church in Christendom can qualify as the church Jesus built, except a Missionary Baptist church, because the founder and constituent members of no other church were baptized by the first Baptist preacher in the river Jordan. The first Missionary Baptist church was founded in the right place -- Palestine.

3. The first Baptist Church was founded by the right person, the Lord Jesus Christ. As we have before proven, He was the Head, Founder, Builder, Master, Lord and sole Owner and Proprietor of His own church. He called it "My church." The glory of building His own church He did not and will not share with any other. It is His betrothed at present and will some day be His bride (2 Corinthians 11:2). He is very jealous over her and will not give up the honor of founding His own church to another.

4. The church Jesus built was constituted out of right material. His fore-runner made and baptized disciples as a preparation for the organization of the church Jesus built. John the Baptist, true to his God-given name, was very careful as to whom he baptized. He not only demanded that those

[p. 22]

whom he baptized, should profess conversion before their baptism, but he demanded fruit worthy of repentance as the evidence of their salvation. He not only preached Jesus as the Lamb of God, who took away the sins of those who trusted in Him; but he magnified death to the old life in repentance and demanded that the tree should be made good by the new birth as a prerequisite to baptism. The Master Himself said of John the Baptist that among them that are born of women there had not arisen a greater than he. Out of this divinely chosen and well prepared material Jesus organized His own church. John made and baptized disciples. Jesus made and baptized disciples, though Jesus did not baptize but had His apostles do it. When the

Lord Jesus was going back to heaven He commanded His church: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: 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." (Matthew 28:19-20). The Oxford Bible in the margin says: "Go make disciples or Christians of all nations." It is significant that Alexander Campbell in his debate with Mr. Rice twice translated Acts 2:47: "And the Lord added to the church daily the saved." H. T. Anderson, a disciple of Mr. Campbell translated the same passage: "And the Lord daily added the saved to the church." And J. W. McGarvey, probably the most scholarly of the disciples of Mr. Campbell in this century, translates the same passage this way: "The Lord added to them day by day those that were saved."

Not only did John the Baptist and the Master and the apostles on and after Pentecost emphasize that only the saved should be added to the church; but in Acts 5:12-14, the inspired historian Luke, after telling about the fear that came upon the people after the death of Ananias and Sapphira, says that multitudes of believers, both men and women, were added to the Lord, but that none of them joined the church. When men and women are added to the Lord they are saved. These believers were saved in large numbers but because the Lord

[p. 23]

killed Ananias and Sapphira, they were afraid to join the church. Not only is the proof abundant that in New Testament days all these preachers put salvation before baptism and added only the saved to the church: but Luke actually tells us that a great multitude were saved and did not join the church because the standard of church membership was so high that they were afraid to join the church.

5. New Testament church officers were bishops and deacons. They were both ordained. Jesus ordained the twelve (Mark 3:14). Men elected to be pastors of churches in Acts 14:23 were ordained. When Paul gave Titus instructions about setting things in order in Crete, he told him to ordain elders in every city. These elders were the bishops or pastors of the churches in those cities. In Acts 6:1-7, we are told of the election and ordination of deacons.

6. The polity of this first church was given it by the Master in Matthew 18:16-18. "Tell it to the church" was His command. The doctrines and teachings of the church were given by the Master. They are included in the "all things He commanded." The New Testament is the law that governs Baptist churches in all things. "Nothing beyond what is written" is the Baptist shibboleth. Baptist churches make no laws. Their laws were handed down to them by the Master. In all matters of discipline and government the authority is in the church. Their action is final. The government of a

Baptist church is a pure democracy. It is a government of the people, by the people and for the people under the headship of Christ, who is the head of each local church. There is no appeal from the decision of a Baptist church. The head of each Baptist church has said: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The only appeal from the decision of a Baptist church is to the Lord Jesus in heaven.

7. This church was not only founded at the right time, the right place, by the right person, out of the right material, with right officers, right discipline, right government, right

[p. 24]

doctrine, and right practice: but it had the right gospel. Its gospel was the gospel of the Son of God and it began with the ministry of John the Baptist. Mark says so in the very first verse of his gospel. This gospel was not only preached by John and Jesus and the twelve and seventy during the personal ministry of Christ here on earth: but the Lord was very careful in Matthew 24:14 to tell them: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." No change in the gospel of the Son of God. John the Baptist preached it in his ministry. Jesus and His apostles preached it in theirs. Peter preached exactly the same gospel on Pentecost that he preached when the Master sent them out two by two. He said himself in Acts 15:9 that God put no difference between "us," Peter and the other Jews saved before Pentecost and on Pentecost and "them," the Gentiles saved down at the household of Cornelius. The Gospel of the Son of God has always been the same. He never had but one gospel. In the Gospel of John, John tells us very plainly about that gospel because he was writing to sinners and wanted to make it plain (John 20:31). The gospel of the Son of God, which began with the ministry of John the Baptist, and was preached by Jesus Himself, was good news of salvation through Christ. He is the only Savior and satisfies every need of the sinner's heart. When the sinner receives Jesus Christ he has eternal life. The believer has everlasting life right here and now as a present possession. When he gets it he can't lose it. That was the gospel the Son of God preached while here on earth.

That is the gospel He left for His disciples to preach, when He ascended on high and went home to heaven. Three things are magnified in the gospel of the Son of God. Remember them and tell them wherever you go. Eternal life is a present possession: the believer has it the moment he believes: when he gets it he can't lose it. "He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life." "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" That

[p. 25]

is the Baptist gospel, because it is the gospel of the Son of God.

8. And last of all this church founded by Jesus was a Missionary Baptist Church because its mission from its very incipency was to go and make disciples. From the day it was founded it was started a-going and a-preaching and a-giving (Matthew 10:1-10). First they were to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and preach the gospel of the Son of God to the Jews. That is Home Missions. Then after the resurrection of our Lord and just before His ascension He includes "all nations," "every creature" and "the uttermost part of the earth" in the commission, which He gave His church. As soon as He founded the institution, which He called "My church," He thrust them forth as missionaries, to go, to preach, to give until every creature shall hear the gospel of the Son of God.

We have now shown that the first Missionary Baptist church began at the right time, during the personal ministry of Christ: at the right place -- in Palestine: that it was founded by the right person -- the Lord Jesus: that it was built of the right material -- saved people, baptized by John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus: that it had the right officers -- bishops and deacons: that it was Democratic in government and discipline: that its doctrines and practices are biblical and according to the New Testament: that its gospel was the gospel of the Son of God: and that its mission until Jesus comes again is missions to every creature.

In conclusion, we sum up some facts to show that this church was in existence before Pentecost.

- 1.** The apostles were in it before Pentecost (1 Corinthians 12:28).
- 2.** The prophets and teachers were in it before Pentecost. (1 Corinthians 12:28).
- 3.** It had an ordained ministry before Pentecost. (Mark 3:14).
- 4.** It had the same gospel before Pentecost that it did afterwards. (Matthews 24:14).

[p. 26]

- 5.** It had a commission to preach before Pentecost and did it (Matthew 10:7).
- 6.** It had authority to baptize before Pentecost. (John 4:2).
- 7.** It had the Lord's Supper before Pentecost Hebrews 2:12, Matthew 26:30, 1 Cor. 11:2, 18-20).
- 8.** It had a rule of discipline before Pentecost (Matthew 18:16-18).
- 9.** The keys of the kingdom were given to it before Pentecost (Matthew 16:9).
- 10.** It had a church roll before Pentecost with an 120 names on that roll (Acts

1:15).

11. It had a church treasurer before Pentecost (John 13:29).

12. It held an election before Pentecost (Acts 1:15-26).

13. To this church there were about 3,000 additions on Pentecost (Acts 2:42).

=====

[p. 27]

IV

The Baptist Book

There is a great deal of loose and foolish talk these days by ignorant and uninformed people. To read their writings and hear them talk, you would think that the Bible, instead of being written to guide us into all the truth, was written to teach everything in general and nothing in particular. The idea of Unitarians is that every sect in Christendom can find support for its vagaries in the Bible or that the Bible is silent on all distinctive doctrines and every man is left to his own whims and fancies as to what he believes. Such is not the case. The Son of God said: "Thy word is truth" The Bible is God's compendium of truth. No man is left to his own choice as to what he believes or what church he joins. So particular was the Son of God as to what church God's children join, that He said: "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:7-8).

That means that if a man says it doesn't make any difference what you believe just so you are sincere, the Lord Jesus says he is a hypocrite and that his worship is vain, heartless and only lip service. That means that if a man says one church is as good as another, that he is not obeying Christ at all but is a man-pleasing time-server, who if saved at all will be saved so as by fire and all his works burned up (1 Corinthians 3:10-15). The Master never got off any such gush and sentiment. The Psalmist said: "I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name" (Psalm 138:2). God thus exalts the truth of His Word

[p. 28]

above His own name or the name of His Son or the name of His blessed Spirit. God sets unlimited store by the truth of His Word. Nothing is higher or holier than the truth. Satan in the garden of Eden began his work with Adam and Eve by insinuating a doubt in their mind and getting them to put a question mark about God's truth. He is still at the same old tricks. When he gets men and women to say it does not make any difference what you believe or what church you join, just so you are sincere, it is

equivalent to saying that believing a lie will do you as much good as believing the truth. The Bible says: "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Nobility of character is determined by just one thing, namely, by a man's attitude to the Word of God. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Next to the rejection of the Lord Jesus the worst curse that God can pronounce against a man is to turn him over to Satan with all deceivableness. "because they received not the love of the truth."

It makes a great deal of difference what you believe and what church you join. John the Beloved, in both his second and third epistles, which were addressed, one to a layman and the other to an elect lady, commends them and their children for walking in the truth and loving the truth. And the most terrible execration, which John was capable of writing, he wrote against the modernists of his day, who put so-called new truth above "what is written" and against Diotrephes, who with malicious words, prated against the truth. The Bible is God's textbook on truth -- all truth, pertaining to life and godliness. There are no contradictions in it. It is the truth without any admixture of error because it is the Book of Him, who is the "way, the truth, and the life." Because the Bible is God's book, it is the Baptist book. The first Baptist church began during the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus here on earth. The New Testament begins

[p. 29]

with the work of His fore-runner in getting a people ready for Him to build His church. The fore-runner said that Christ must increase and he must decrease. John soon passed from the stage of action and Jesus and His churches from then on until the end of the Book are the themes of discussion. Jesus and the Baptists are the theme of this book. These facts prove beyond cavil or gainsaying that the New Testament is the Baptist Book.

1. It Was Written By Baptists

The Holy Spirit chose just eight men to write. Matthew, Mark, James and Jude wrote one book each. Luke and Peter wrote two each. John wrote five and Paul wrote fourteen. All of them were Baptists. Matthew, John, James, Peter and Jude were all baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. Mark, Luke and Paul were baptized by others, who got their baptism from John. We know then that every book in the New Testament was written by a Baptist. If there were no other reason but that for saying the New Testament is a Baptist book, the fact it was written by Baptists, since it talks about Christ and His churches, would prove that it is the Baptist book.

2. It Was Written About Baptists

The New Testament was not only written by Baptists, but it was written about Baptists. It tells of the baptism of Jesus and the twelve apostles and multitudes of others by the first Baptist preacher. It tells of the organization by Jesus of the first Baptist church. It tells about the rapid spread of the Baptists and their doctrines and principles throughout the first century. It tells of their mission work throughout all Southern Europe, Western Asia and Northern Africa. This Baptist book tells about the persecutions of Baptists for a generation or two after the ascension of the Lord Jesus. Like Baptists today these New Testament Baptists were a free people and had many contentions and discussions of their differences. This Baptist book tells about them and about the democracy of these Baptists of the long ago in settling their differences.

[p. 30]

The letters from the writers of this Baptist book to Baptist churches and individuals are full of expositions of Baptist doctrines and of discussions of the problems and duties of the Baptist church members. There isn't a book in print today that discusses as many of the doctrinal and practical problems of discipline, missions, worldliness, the ministry, the Lord's Supper, speaking in tongues, the disorderliness of women speaking in the churches, church finances and a host of other things Baptist churches are wrestling with today, as Paul's two letters to the church in Corinth. The New Testament was written by Baptists and about Baptists and for Baptists and it will settle all their problems, if they will only read and obey it.

3. It Was Written For Baptists Of All Ages

The Lord Jesus promised perpetuity to Baptist churches. He plainly said the gates of hell should not prevail against the institution, which He called "My church." His world-wide commission as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 promised that He would be with His churches unto the end of this age. In Ephesians 3:20-21 He promised that God would be glorified in the church by Christ Jesus in every generation world without end. This Baptist book was written to encourage Baptist churches in times of backsliding or persecution, that there would be Baptist churches in every generation until He comes again.

Our enemies testify that our Lord has kept His promise and that Baptists can be traced through the centuries by a trail of blood.

Joan Bocher, of Kent, Anne Askew, and hundreds of other Baptists were murdered for their principles in the sixteenth century before the Smyth affair. The following edict was put forth by the Council of St. Gall, March 26, 1530: "All who adhere to or favor the false sect of the Baptists, and who attend hedge meetings, shall suffer the most severe punishments. Baptist leaders, their followers and protectors, shall be

drowned without mercy." (Bullinger, *Reformations-ge-schichte*, 11, 287: "A History of the Baptists," by J. T. Christian).

[p. 31]

In 1819 the king of the Netherlands appointed Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in Gronigen University, and J. J. Dermont, his chaplain, to write the history of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Baptists kept getting in their way when they made a statement concerning them, closing in these words: "We have now seen that the Baptist, who were formerly called 'Anabaptists,' and in later time Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian 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." Did these men tell the truth? They were not Baptists.

Alexander Campbell, in 1851, when he had been an ordained minister for forty years, and fifteen years before his death, said: "There is nothing more congenial to civil liberty than to enjoy an unrestrained, unembargoed liberty of exercising the conscience freely upon all subjects respecting religion. Hence it is that the Baptist denomination, in all ages and in all countries, has been, as a body, the constant asserters of the rights of man and liberty of conscience. They have often been persecuted by Pedobaptists; but they never politically persecuted though they have had it in their power." ("*Christian Baptism*," page 409.)

The New Testament was not only written by Baptists and about Baptists and for Baptists, thereby giving overwhelming testimony that it is the Baptist book: but there is one other proof that is stronger than any of these.

4. It Was Written To Make Baptists

The last commission of the Son of God before His ascension to His Father's right hand said: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." That

[p. 32]

commission was given to His church. It could not have been given to individuals, because perpetuity was promised unto the end of the age. The only thing that was to continue unto the end of the age was His church as an institution. To that institution He gave this world-wide commission. His first command was to make disciples or

Christians by preaching the gospel to every creature in all nations. Then He commanded His church, which was a Missionary Baptist church, to make Baptists out of all Christians, by baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He who has all authority in heaven and in earth commanded His church to make disciples or Christians of all nations by preaching the gospel to them and then make Baptists out of all Christians by giving them Baptist baptism.

The command of the Lord Jesus is as plain and as imperative to make Baptist as it is to make Christians. Those are our orders until He comes back. First make them Christians and then make them Baptists. According to the orders of Him, who has all authority in heaven and in earth, it is as much our business to make Baptists as it is to make disciples. If the Lord Jesus by His orders can make His will clear and plain, it is His will that every Christian on this earth be a Baptist. Not by force is this to be done but by teaching. And just as they are not to be made disciples by force but by teaching, so they are to be made Baptists exactly the same way, namely, by teaching all Christians the all things He has commanded. The same Bible that will make Christians, will make Baptists if faithfully taught. Baptists will have two big accounts to settle at the judgment bar of the Lord Jesus. The first one will be for not going our lengths to make Christians by giving the world the gospel of grace. The second will be for not doing our best to make Baptists out of all Christians. The orders of Jesus include both. The Book is very plain about the plan of salvation. It is equally plain about church membership. The New Testament will make Christians if read and believed. The same New Testament will make Baptists if read and obeyed. It is just as plain and clear on the second as on the first. Salvation

[p. 33]

first, then obedience in baptism and church membership. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." That is the order of the Lord Jesus and these New Testament Baptists obeyed their orders. The orders haven't changed. They still read that way. First make them disciples: then make them Baptists. Every disciple or Christian ought to be a Baptist. Why aren't they? Because Baptists have sold out for pay and popularity. They try to make disciples: but they don't try to make Baptists. They are afraid they will be called narrow or be unpopular or the collection will fall down. How much better is that crowd than Judas? Selling out the Lord for dirty silver. Who is doing that? All Union evangelists are. All compromising pastors, who dismiss any of their services are. All the "mixed multitude" who because of inter-marriage with other denominations want the soft pedal put on doctrine are. Who else? Every Baptist school in the Southland is selling out for pay and patronage. A Baptist school, which is not trying to make Baptists out of its students is recreant to its Master's orders and untrue to a sacred trust. The business of every Baptist school in the land is

first to make Christians and then to make Baptist out of all their students, who are Christians. Why should Baptist put any money in any school, whose chief business, is not first to make Christians and then to make Baptists out of all their students?

Jesus never told us to do anything, that He did not first set an example. He made and baptized disciples (John 4:1-2). Then He taught them all things needful for the Christian life. That is the business of Baptists everywhere: make disciples, make Baptists, make Missionary Baptists. That ought to be the business of Baptist churches, Baptist Sunday Schools, Baptist schools and everything else that is Baptist. Jesus was a teacher as well as a preacher. He confined His teaching to opening to His young preachers and missionaries the Scriptures. That ought to be the mission of every Baptist school. He left us an example, that we should follow in His steps. Three years or three and one-half of teaching the Scriptures, not only made home and foreign missionaries out of all His preacher boys,

[p. 34]

but it so saturated the very atmosphere of that first Baptist church with the spirit of missions, that when persecution arose, all the men and women in that church went everywhere "gossiping about Jesus" (Acts 8:1-3). If Baptist schools of this Southland gave a four years' course in the study of the Bible, all their students would go back home to set this whole land afire on Missions, just like they did in New Testament days. Churches, schools and every other agency of the Baptists ought to exist to make Christians: make Baptists: make Missionary Baptists. If they are not run for that purpose, they ought to die; the sooner the better for this wicked world. The New Testament was written to make Christians: to make Baptists: to make Missionary Baptists. Time and space would fail me to cite the many examples of those, who have been made Baptist by the New Testament. Judson and Rice on different ships, going out as Congregationalist missionaries, were made Baptist by studying their Greek Testaments, to meet Marshman and Ward, two English Baptist missionaries already on the field.

A Methodist presiding elder in the "Pennyrile" district of Kentucky held a meeting between Owensboro and Central City. A very prominent business man was converted, but did not join the church. A few weeks afterwards the presiding elder saw one of the stewards on the train between Owensboro and Central City and asked him about his convert. A Baptist deacon was sitting just behind the elder and steward. They either did not notice or did not care, who heard them. The steward's answer to the elder was that the new convert was reading his Bible. The significant comment of the elder, with a shrug of the shoulder, was: "Well we had as well say good-bye to him. He will go to the Baptists." How any man expects to meet the Lord Jesus, except with great

embarrassment, who knows the truth about baptism and church membership, and will not obey it, is more than I can understand.

J. B. Jeter's third wife was a Presbyterian. A baby was born in that home. His wife said something about like this: "Mr. Jeter, you knew I was a Presbyterian, when you married me.

[p. 35]

As an honest Presbyterian I believe that our baby ought to be baptized." He consented on condition that she would consent to his holding the baby while the ceremony was performed. She thought it would be a feather in her cap to have the most prominent Baptist preacher in Virginia and one of the best known Baptist editors in the South to hold their baby, while a Presbyterian preacher baptized it. So she consented. J. B. Jeter announced in his church in Richmond, that he would be out of his pulpit to be present at the Presbyterian church and why. That church was jammed and packed. The scholarly and dignified Presbyterian preacher preached and then announced that those who had babies to be baptized would please bring them forward. Bro. Jeter and his wife arose and he took the baby in his arms and they walked to the front. He was careful to get at the end where they were to begin. Quite a number of other parents had children present for that purpose. Just as the honored pastor of that Presbyterian church raised his hand to say the baptismal formula and baptize Bro. Jeter's baby, Bro. Jeter said something like this: "My brother, you and I have been good friends for many years. My wife has been a member of your church for years and I have never tried to proselyte her to my faith. But as a Baptist I believe that we ought to be able to give a 'Thus saith the Lord' for all that we do. This is my baby as well as my wife's. Before you sprinkle my child, I want you to take your Bible and read out of the Book your authority for what you are about to do." The scholarly, old-school Presbyterian preacher slowly raised his hand and pronounced the benediction. Mrs. Jeter soon became a Baptist. She said that her pastor was one of the most scholarly Presbyterian preachers in all the South. If he could not find infant baptism in the Bible, then it must not be there. If infant baptism was not in the Bible, she had never been baptized, for infant baptism was all she had ever had. With an open Bible she soon was led to the truth and obeyed her Lord in baptism. The Bible was written to make Baptists and it will do the work in every regenerate heart if they will only read it and obey it.

=====

[p. 36]

V
The Baptist Name

The Baptist name is as divine as a Baptist church. Both came from heaven. Both came from God. John was the name given the fore-runner of Jesus at his birth. He was called "The Baptist" because of his mission. These facts are very clearly stated in the Scriptures about his official name, "The Baptist." That name came from heaven. God gave it to him. It was given to him because of the work God gave him to do. He was "sent from God" (John 1:6). God called him "The Baptist" before he started to preaching (Matthew 3:1). He was not called "The Baptist" because he baptized: for God called him "The Baptist" before he came to Jordan or preached or baptized. God gave him the name. God sent him. God sent him to preach. God sent him to baptize (John 1:33). God sent him to baptize only one class of folks, namely, those who were made disciples or Christians before their baptism (John 4:1). That those, whom he disciplined, were saved before their baptism is clearly proven by his demanding "fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:8). The axe was laid to the root of the tree. They died to their old or past lives of sin. They confessed their sins (Matthew 3:6). John taught them to believe on Christ (Acts 19:4). They received Jesus as God's Lamb to bear away their sins. That was faith in Christ. The tree was good or in other words they were born from above by receiving Christ (John 1:11-12).

Then having a new heart, a new life, they bore fruit. Luke tells us in Luke 3:8-14 the character of fruit John demanded before he would baptize them. In His opening sermon, called the sermon on the mount, in Matthew 6-8. Jesus Himself, made it very clear and plain, that only those, who had been born anew and were fruit-bearers could get His sanction and approval as subjects of baptism.

[p. 37]

Having had some understanding of why God chose this name and gave it to the fore-runner of His Son, who was to prepare the material, out of which Jesus was to organize His own church, let us now see if the Bible gives us any reasons as to why that name was chosen. You will find that there are a good many scriptural reasons, laid down in God's infallible and inerrant word, as to why God called John "The Baptist."

1. The Name Baptist is the Only Name In the New Testament That Stands for a Baptized Disciple.

All who have received Jesus as their Lord and Savior are brethren (Matthew 23:8). All true believers are His disciples. Discipleship comes before baptism (John 4:1). All who have believed on the name of Jesus as their Savior and Lord are God's children (John 1:12, Galatians 3:26). All the elect are called sheep. Before their salvation they are called lost sheep (Matthew 10:6, John 10:16). All the blood-washed are called saints (Heb. 10:10,14, 13:12). All disciples are Christians (Acts 11:26). Every one of these titles may be scripturally applied to unbaptized believers. Not so with the name

Baptist. Webster's latest unabridged dictionary defines a Baptist as "one of a denomination of Christians, who maintain that baptism should be administered by immersion and be administered to believers only." The name Baptist is scriptural and is the only name that is scriptural, that is used as a denominational name or can be so used. The name Baptist came from God: the name Christian came from the heathen. The name Baptist is a denominational name. The name Christian, according to Webster's latest and best, includes all believers in Christ. Note what he says. "One who believes or professes or is assumed to believe in Jesus Christ." According to the lexicons as well as according to the Scriptures, all of God's children are Christians. The only name in the New Testament that stands for baptized disciples or believers is the name Baptist.

2. The Only New Testament Name, that Conforms to the Great Commission Is the Name Baptist.

In John 4:1 we are told that "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." John made disciples and then

[p. 38]

baptized them. Jesus made disciples and had the twelve baptize them. When He went to leave His last and final orders to the church He had established, He said: "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 Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20). What John began and Jesus continued, His churches were ordered to carry on and carry out without the changing of one jot or tittle until the end. The first Baptist made and baptized disciples. Jesus and the twelve and the seventy made and baptized disciples. When Jesus was going away He commanded His churches to make and baptize disciples until He comes again. The name Baptist is the only name that is a constant reminder of the commission given by the Lord Jesus to His churches until the end of time. It is a church name because it stands for a church program, the very program, that Jesus gave to His churches to do and to keep until He gets back. According to Mr. Webster the name Baptist stands for the how and the whom of baptism, namely, the baptism of saved people by immersion. All others baptize babies or baptize sinners to save them or baptize in some other way besides immersion.

3. The Name Baptist is a Differentiating Name.

It differentiates and distinguishes all who hold it from all other sects and denominations. It marks out the people who wear it. God said His people are a peculiar people. The name Baptist marks out the peculiarities of those who wear it. It distinguishes those who practice immersion only from all those who do not. It

distinguishes those who baptize saved people from those who do not. It distinguishes those who are baptized Christians from those who are not. It distinguishes those who have Baptist baptism from those who have not. It distinguishes those who reject infant baptism from those who follow Rome and receive it. It even goes further than that. The name Baptist is so distinguishing a name, that heretical

[p. 39]

Baptist sects, such as Hardshell Baptists or Free Will Baptists or Seventh Day Baptists have to use a pre-fix of some kind in front of their names to mark them as "sick" Baptists who are following a stranger. The only sheep that will follow a stranger is a sick sheep. So with Baptists. The pre-fixed Baptist is a sick Baptist or his pre-fix is a nickname. Like the Israelites in Old Testament days, Baptists have had many names; but they have always been the same people. The pre-fixes are soon dropped; but the name Baptist abides. God gave that name to the first one because of the work He sent him to do and it has been here ever since.

4. The Name Baptist a Divisive Name.

The Lord Jesus said: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division" (Luke 12:51). The Lord Jesus intended that His people should be a separate people. In New Testament days they were the sect everywhere spoken against (Acts 28:22). The Lord Jesus foretold the night of His betrayal and crucifixion, that His people would be a despised and a rejected people. The name Baptist is divisive in any community or crowd. He said they hated Him and they would hate His people (John 15:18-25). Everything that makes for unity among Baptists makes for division between Baptists and all other people.

Baptist churches are never united unless they are separated from everybody else. There are no exceptions to that rule. The Lord Jesus sees to that. If Baptists are friendly and obedient to Christ, Christ's enemies are not friendly to them. "Friendship of the world is enmity with God." There is no straddle or compromise. You are wholly on Christ's side or wholly on the world's side. The Baptist name meant separation from the world in the first man who wore it. John the Baptist lost his head because he would not compromise on the divorce question. Paul declared: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). Seven ones to make one. No unity unless agreed upon those seven ones. What are they?

[p. 40]

"One body" -- A local church. Each local church the body of Christ in that

community and He has no other.

"One Spirit" -- The Holy Spirit. Each Baptist Church built for a "habitation of God in the Spirit" in the community where located.

"One hope" -- The finished work of Jesus Christ. Not a dozen or an hundred ways to heaven. Jesus is the way.

"One Lord" -- The Lord Jesus. No human lords over God's heritage. The Lord Jesus head over all things to each of His churches. "One is your Master -- and all ye are brethren." The Lord Jesus the one and only Lord of Baptists.

"One faith" -- Which the Word calls "the faith once-for-all delivered to the saints." No new truth. If new, it isn't true: if true it isn't new.

"One God and Father" -- The Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and our Father through Him. No universal fatherhood of God. He has no Ishmaels, no "bastard" children, no "woods colts." Every child of God like Isaac, a child of promise and supernaturally born (Ephesians 1:19-21) [Galatians 4:22, 23, 28 - ed.].

The name Baptist has always been a divisive name because it stands for the whole truth without compromise. All Baptists have not so stood, but the name stands for division and separation. And God blesses and prospers them when true to their name. That is why "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Separation means persecution and persecution means multiplication and growth. A compromising church is always a dying and waning church. God so wills it and works all things after the counsel of his own will."

5. The Name Baptist an Exclusive Name.

The Lord, who founded the first Baptist church, never aimed for them to take in everybody and his dog. "Without are dogs." Baptists have no fellowship for lots of folks and lots of things. They are not inclusive, but exclusive. In 1 Corinthians 11:19-21, R.V., Paul said these wise words: "For there must be heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When therefore ye assemble yourselves together it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper." God never intended for Baptists to be a "mixed multitude." Through all their history, when the "mixed multitude" have

[p. 41]

corrupted our churches, they have sloughed off the heretical and the wordly. The name Baptist stands for cleanness and separation. The Lord Jesus sees to it that they are true to their name. About 100 years ago Baptists sloughed off the Hardshells and Campbellites. We are now in the process of sloughing off the Modernists and Unionists and Highbrows. Heresies are permitted to crop out among Baptists that the approved may be made manifest. Paul said, that is the only way for Baptist churches to rid themselves of the worldly and the heretical. If the churches do not put out the

heretics and the worldly, the indwelling Spirit, who abides in each local body of Christ, causes that crowd to get out, because He has no fellowship with them. "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" (I John 2:19).

The very name Baptist stands for separation. By instinct and tradition and teaching and creation and history and love they are a separate people. The Lord Jesus their head, the Holy Spirit their life, the New Testament their rule of faith, their individualism one of their fundamentals -- all combine to make and keep them an exclusive rather than an inclusive people. Nineteen hundred years of teaching and of persecution by all other sects has served to accentuate their exclusiveness. It will always be so. The Lord Jesus started them that way. And they get more so, rather than less so if possible. You cannot make Baptists like anybody else. They are a free people and you cannot bind them. And their freedom and their one-ness in Christ and doctrine, because they all believe the same Book, make them throw off all ritualism and formalism and tradition of men and seek the heights of freedom and fellowship in the heavenlies.

=====

[p. 42]

VI

Baptist Peculiarities

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14).

The word here translated peculiar means having "special and distinct characteristics or habits."

Thayer defines the Greek word translated peculiar "a people selected by God from the other nations for His own possession." The idea is the same. God's people are a people chosen by Him to be unlike all other nations and people, with special and distinct habits and characteristics. Baptists are now and have always been that kind of people. God made them so. They please Him best when they are most unlike other folks. He did not choose them because they were peculiar. They were just like other sinners until He created them anew. When He made them over by the new birth He made them peculiar. He chose them and redeemed them and created them anew as a people for His own possession: and His purpose for every one of them is to conform them to the Image of His Son. That means that by His grace and His Spirit and His Word and His Providences, He is making them more and more peculiar all the time.

The purpose of this chapter is to call attention to and stress some of their peculiarities. The more peculiar they become, the more they become like Christ, the better they please our Heavenly Father, the more heavenly and unworldly they become, the more people take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. These peculiarities are common-place with us; but they were not in New Testament days. Neither are they generally known on this earth today except in a very limited territory in the South. Instead of trying to hide

[p. 43]

their peculiarities and magnify their likenesses and agreements with other denominations God wants the Baptists to maintain their separateness and magnify the things, wherein they differ from all other denominations. If you think the writer has put it too strongly, read these words from the lips of the Son of God. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division" (Luke 12:51). He came to send division, according to His own testimony. How does He cause division? He causes division by making His people different from other folks. The things wherein they differ are their peculiarities. Why does He cause division? Because He wants His people to be wholly unlike anybody else (2 Corinthians 6:11-18). Wherein are Baptists to be a peculiar people? Ought they to glory in their peculiarities or to be ashamed of them? I maintain that their peculiarities are their glory and that in humility and meekness, because they are God given, they ought to be gloried in.

1. The Baptist Gospel is the Only Gospel

The gospel began with the first Baptist preacher. In Mark 1:1 we are told that John's ministry was the "beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Is that so or not so? The Bible tells it. The Holy Spirit thought it of sufficient importance to open up the second gospel with that declaration. Is it so? If it is, then there are several very common utterances abroad in the land that Baptists ought to quit endorsing and circulating. If the gospel began with John the Baptist, then the first gospel sermon was preached by the first Baptist preacher. Since Paul says there is but one gospel, the man who doesn't preach the Baptist gospel, does not preach any gospel at all (Galatians 1:7-8). If there is but one gospel and gospel preaching began with the first Baptist preacher, then every man, who preaches the true gospel, got his gospel from the Baptists and preaches the Baptist gospel. If the first gospel was the Baptist gospel, then honest preachers of the gospel everywhere ought to tell, that there is but one gospel and that it came from God to them through the Baptists. If God gave the gospel to the

[p. 44]

world through the Baptists, then the Baptists are under supreme obligations to God and to the world to give to them the gospel in its purity. The gospel is a Baptist gospel and Baptists owe it to the Lord Jesus to give the gospel to every creature. That is the ground of missions, according to Paul. It is a debt: a Baptist debt: a debt that Baptists owe to every creature. Listen: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also" (Romans 1:14-15). Missions are not charity. Missions are a debt Baptists owe a lost world. Missions are preaching the gospel to the literate and to the illiterate. The Baptist debt is not schools, nor hospitals, nor humanitarian service, nor relief for men's bodies. The Baptist debt to the world is the gospel. The gospel began with the Baptists. It is a Baptist possession. Its publishing to every creature is the Baptist debt. This gospel, that began with the first Baptist, not on Pentecost, is to be preached, the very same gospel, not another until Jesus comes again. (Matthew 24:14). Baptism is no part of this gospel (1 Corinthians 1:17).

The gospel is Christ's death for our sins and His resurrection for our justification or in other words the finished work of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). The gospel is for the lost -- not something we do for Christ but something He did for us. Baptism is for the saved -- only the saved. That is why baptism is no part of the gospel. They are not the same kind of folks. The gospel is for the lost. Nobody but the lost. Baptism is for the saved, nobody but the saved.

2. A Baptist Church is the Only Church.

That is the second peculiarity of the Baptists. The church Jesus called "My church" was a Baptist church. The material was prepared by the first Baptist preacher. In 1 Corinthians 12:28, we are told that the apostles were first in the church. Luke 6:13-16 tells of their selection by Jesus and the names of the first apostles. In Acts 1:22 Luke tells us that a man could not be one of the twelve apostles unless he had accompanied with them from the baptism of this first Baptist preacher.

[p. 45]

This first church was a Baptist church therefore because it was built by Jesus, who was Himself baptized by a Baptist preacher. Its first members were baptized by this same first Baptist preacher. Even Alexander Campbell admitted in his debate with Mr. McCalla, a Presbyterian, that the church at Jerusalem was a Baptist church. No other church except the one Jesus built was built out of Baptist material. No other church except the one Jesus built had a baptism, that came from heaven (John 1:33, Luke 7:30). No other church except the church Jesus built was built by one person of the Godhead. Since no stream can rise higher than its source, the only church in this world, that is a divine institution, is the Baptist church: for no other church, except the

Baptist churches had one person of the Godhead for its founder. No other church except the Baptist church was founded in Palestine. No other church except the church Jesus built had in its foundation Christ and the apostles (Ephesians 2:20). Since the expression "the church of Christ" is never found in the singular in the New Testament, but in the plural, we know that the church, which Jesus called "My church" is an individual, local, organized, and assembling body. The only church in the New Testament, that is called a body of Christ was a local church. In 1 Cor. 12:27 the definite article is left out, so that the literal of that passage is: "Ye are a body of Christ and members in particular." In other words each local body of Christ is composed of individuals, not a universal body, composed of churches or other organizations. The church which the Lord Jesus built was not only a Baptist church, but He promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. He kept that promise.

Alexander Campbell, who traced a succession through the Baptists, says: "The disciples of Christ are the same race, call them Christians, Nazarenes, Galileans, Novatians, Donatists, Paulicians, Waldenses, Albigenses, Protestants, or what you please. A variety of designation affects not the fact which we allege; we find an unbroken series of Protestants -- a regular succession of those who protested

[p. 46]

against the corruptions of the Roman Church, and endeavored to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints, from the first schism in the year 250 A.D. to the present day; and you may apply to them what description or designation you please." ("Campbell-Purcell Debate," 1837, page 77)

Again Mr. Campbell says: "Hence it is that the Baptist denomination, in all ages and in all countries, has been, as a body, the constant asserters of the rights of man and of liberty of conscience." - *Christian Baptist*, page 409.

Mr. Burnett, one of the leading editors of the Disciples of Mr. Campbell, said in "What and Where Is the Church?", page 73: "Christ founded His church upon a rock, and it has been there ever since. In the days of Alexander Campbell it was wearing the name 'Baptist Church.' With Alexander Campbell we say, the kingdom was with the Baptists before he and his coadjutors started the Reformation."

The only church on this earth that was founded at the right time -- during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ: at the right place -- Palestine: by the right person -- the Lord Jesus: of the right material -- the born again, who brought forth good fruit before their baptism: and to which the Lord Jesus promised unending perpetuity, was the first Baptist church, which Jesus built out of the material made ready by John the Baptist. Baptist churches are the only churches on this earth, whose baptisms like a

gold dollar are worth one hundred cents to the dollar the world around. The only church on this earth that Jesus could join if He were here, on His baptism, is a Baptist church, for all others say John's baptism is invalid. Baptists say the only baptism that is valid is John's baptism: for it is the only one that came from heaven. Baptist churches are the only churches on this earth, that will not be plucked up by the roots, when Jesus comes, for He said: "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13).

3. Salvation the Condition of Baptism.

A third peculiarity of the Baptists is that they are the only church in Christendom, that never have in all their history and

47]

do not now, make baptism a condition of salvation, either of adults or infants. Baptists have ever taught that babies who die in infancy, as well as all other unaccountable persons, go to heaven when they die. The only sin they have is the Adamic sin and Jesus as the Lamb of God took away that sin for the whole world (John 1:29, Romans 5:12-21). Jesus tasted death for every man in bearing the penalty of the Adamic sin for the race. Every man who goes to hell, goes there for his own sins, not for Adam's.

The Baptist shibboleth for 1900 years has been blood before water, Christ before the church, salvation before baptism. In the Old Testament type of redemption in Exodus 12, that order is very clearly stressed. The blood did two things. It protected them from the wrath of God and delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. Paul interprets that experience for us in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11. The blood was applied in Egypt. They were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and the sea three days afterward. That passage also throws some light on the meaning of baptize *eis* remission. Israel was baptized *eis* Moses (I Corinthians 10:2). Moses had been their Mediator, deliverer and leader for some time. They were baptized *eis* Moses, not in order to get him to be their Savior and deliverer, but because he was their Savior and deliverer. So in Acts 2:38. If we interpret Acts 2:38 in the light of Israel's experience and every Old Testament type and shadow, as well as in the light of the whole body of teachings in the New Testament, it must mean be baptized because of the remission of sins.

Prof. A. T. Robertson of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, than whom there is no greater Greek scholar in this country, said in answer to a query in *Western Recorder*: "It is perfectly good Greek to translate *eis* 'because of' in Acts 2:38." The Gospel of John was written to sinners to bring them to faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. The only mention of individual, personal baptism in that gospel is where it is said "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." That reveals two facts. First, only those, who had

[p. 48]

been made disciples or Christians, were baptized by John the Baptist or authorized to be baptized by the Lord Jesus. Second, in this whole gospel, in which again and again the personal conversations of Jesus with individuals or groups or crowds are recorded, He never mentions baptism. There can be but one explanation to that, namely, that baptism is not for lost men, but for saved men. This was His uniform teaching and practice always. All others except Baptists, either baptize sinners, as one of the conditions of salvation or baptize babies. One of the outstanding peculiarities of Baptists has always been, that they make salvation a condition of baptism, rather than baptism a condition of salvation.

4. Baptists Are Individualists.

This too is peculiar to Baptists. Alas, that some Baptists, who are not very well informed, do not live up to it. Their churches would be saved lots of trouble if they did. Their anxiety for numbers and greed for gain however cause them to pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Baptists never baptize children on the faith of their parents. There are no proxies in the religion of the Lord Jesus. Every individual repents for himself and believes for himself and is baptized for himself and that too as a voluntary act of his own. Baptists do not teach that a wife ought to join the church with her husband or vice versa. That was one of the heresies of W. H. Whitsitt that caused him to lose his position as President of the Louisville Seminary and Professor of Church History in that institution. Baptists are individualists. Jesus was an individualist. He plainly taught everywhere that homes ought to be divided, two against three and three against two, rather than disobey the truth or be disloyal to Him (Matthew 10:32-39). He taught very clearly that His disciples ought to follow and obey Him, even if it broke up homes (Mark 8:34-38, 10:29-31, Luke 10:25-35). Every duty is an individual duty of the individual soul to Jesus Christ our Lord. He should be obeyed at any costs and at all hazards. Jesus said: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things, which I say?" " Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken

[p. 49]

than the fat of rams, for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

5. The Bible Is the Final Authority.

Baptists are the people of the Book. The Bible is the final word on every subject on which it speaks. There is no appeal from it. It is the court of last appeal because it is the perfect Book. "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). If the Scripture can not be broken, it can not be amended or reversed or changed. It is the final word on all questions of truth or doctrine or duty or life. Jesus said so. It is an unchangeable

authority. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:17-18).

W. C. Wilkinson in his book, "*The Baptist Principle*," says that this underlies all other Baptist principles. We base and build all other teachings and obligations on this fundamental and final principle, namely, that the Bible is the final authority on every question. The Bible, the Bible alone, is our only and all sufficient rule of faith and practice. "Nothing beyond is written." "It is written," was the answer of the Son of God to the devil in every test. In other words, the Son of God said, the Book is final. No amount of argument or explanation or sophistry can answer or do away with the Book. The Bible is God's final answer on all questions. It needs no supplement. When the rich fool in hell wanted Lazarus sent to his brothers to warn them not to come to that place of torment, Jesus said No, they have the Book. If they will not hear that, they will not hear at all. No supplement or addition to the Bible. "It is written" is God's final and authoritative answer on all subjects.

=====

[p. 50]

VII Three Differentiating Baptist Marks

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesian 1:22-23).

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21-22).

"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16).

This is the greatest of all the church epistles. There is much confusion in the thinking of Baptists, as well as God's people generally, as to what Paul was talking about in this epistle, when he spoke of the church as the body of Christ. There are numbers of reasons, which to me are unanswerable, for maintaining that in this epistle as well as elsewhere in the New Testament, Paul was talking about a local Baptist church, the church at Ephesus.

First, the word *ekklesia*, which is translated church, as B. H. Carroll said in his discussion with W. J. McGlothlin, has as its "essential ideas, organization and assembly." The only church that has both organization and assembly is a local church. Prof. Royal of Wake Forest College, when asked as to the meaning of *ekklesia*, said: "I do not know of any passage in classical Greek, where *ekklesia* is used of unassembled or unassembling persons."

Second, the Lord Jesus used the word *ekklesia* twenty-three times, three times in Matthew and twenty times in Revelation.

[p. 51]

In every instance He used it of a local church. Whenever He spoke of a larger group than the members of the local church, He always said churches.

Third, Joseph Cross (Episcopal) in his book, "*Coals From the Altar*" says: "We hear much of the invisible church as contra-distinguished from the church visible. Of an invisible church in this world I know nothing: the Word of God says nothing: nor can anything of the kind exist, except in the brain of a heretic. The church is a body: but what sort of a body is that which can neither be seen nor identified? A body is an organism, occupying space and having a definite locality. A mere aggregation is not a body: there must be organization as well. A heap of heads, hands, feet and other members would not make a body: they must be united in a system, each in its proper place and pervaded by a common life. So a collection of stones, bricks, and timber would not be a house: the material must be built up together, in artistic order, adapted to utility. So a mass of roots, trunks and branches would not be a vine or a tree: the several parts must be developed according to the laws of nature from the same seed and nourished by the same sap."

So with the temple of Solomon. It was no temple until the stones were quarried from Lebanon, prepared, gathered into Jerusalem and put each in its own place in the building. Whether the church is referred to as a temple or a house or a body, in every instance these two essential ideas are there, namely, assembly and organization. It is not a body unless the members are assembled and organized. It is not a house unless the materials are assembled and organized. It is not a temple unless the stones and other material are assembled and organized. Peter had exactly the same idea in 1 Peter 2:5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

Fourth, Hort in his book, "*The Christian Ekklesia*" confesses the necessity of finding some other than etymological, grammatical or historical grounds by which to prove the idea of a universal church. He admitted that the use of the word

[p. 52]

ekklesia was "always limited by Paul himself to a local organization, which has a corresponding unity of its own: each is a body of Christ and a sanctuary of God." Look at his statement. That "The Christian Ekklesia" ever refers to anything but a local church cannot be proved by history: it cannot be proved from the etymology of the word: and it cannot be proved by the grammatical construction of the Scriptures where used. The only ground, Mr. Hort says, on which the use of the word as referring to any thing but a local church can be defended at all, is on theological grounds. That means you can not prove it from the Greek New Testament at all: but you perhaps might read it into the New Testament from some book of theology.

Let us sum up a little.

The word church was used by the Master twenty three times and always meant a local church. Mr. Hort of the Westcott-Hort New Testament admits that Paul never used it of anything but a local church. Scholars testify that *ekklesia* was never used in classic Greek except of an assembled or assembling body. The two essential ideas in the word *ekklesia* are assembly and organization. Every illustration of a church in the New Testament such as temple or house or body, makes the veriest of nonsense if it is not assembled and organized. The etymology of the word *ekklesia* makes it of necessity a local church. The grammatical construction of the passages where used cannot be twisted to mean anything but a local church. Both Hort and Harnack testify that historically the word *ekklesia* was never used of anything but a local church, until long after the close of the New Testament. So you are on safe ground, when you say that the church, which is the body of Christ, is always a local Baptist church. In the three texts at the head of this chapter, the church spoken of was the church at Ephesus. These texts clearly set forth three marks of a church in New Testament days, that differentiate Baptist churches from all other churches today and prove conclusively that Baptist churches are the only church's of Christ on this earth.

[p. 53]

1. A Baptist Church The Only Body of Which Christ Is The Head.

Christ is the head of a Baptist church in the sense that He is the founder of the first Baptist church. He is the head of each Baptist church in the sense that He is their only Lord and Master. He is the head of each Baptist church in that there is a oneness of life between Him and them. He is the head of each Baptist church in that His will dominates them just as your head dominates your body. He is the head of each Baptist church in that He is head over all things to each Baptist church. His word is their supreme law. He is their all and in all to them. That is not true of any other church in the world except of a Baptist church. When Alexander Campbell went to England he

carried a letter from Henry Clay, introducing him as the head and founder of the church which he organized. John Wesley was the head and founder of the Methodist Church. Calvin was the head and founder of the Presbyterian Church. Joe Smith was the head and founder of the Mormon Church. Henry the Eighth was the head and founder of the Episcopal Church. Constantine was the head and founder of the Catholic Church. Mrs. Eddy was the head and founder of the Christian Science Church.

The only church of which Jesus was head and founder is the Baptist church: and the only church therefore which is a body of Christ is a Baptist church. The relationship between Him and each Baptist church is as vital, as living, as real and as close as that between the head and the body or between a vine and the branches. This mark of a Baptist church differentiates it from all other churches.

2. A Baptist Church Is A Habitation of God Through the Spirit.

All other churches not only have a human head: but they are bodies without the Spirit and are therefore dead bodies. All of their born-again members have the indwelling Spirit of God in them personally: but their church is not a body of Christ and is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The church

[p. 54]

Jesus built was built for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:21-22). Every Baptist church unless the Lord Jesus has taken away the candlestick, is a living organism. The unconverted members have a name to live and are dead: but not only has each living stone life in himself, but the whole body has the Holy Spirit abiding in it. He is their life. He vitalizes them as a body of Christ. He lives in them as His home in that community. He is there to infill them with power. He is the representative of Jesus their head and makes real the presence and power of Jesus among them. He is the vice-gerent of Christ in His body and all the movements of the body of Christ ought to be under His control. He said to the church at Antioch: "Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work, where-unto I have called them" It is His to direct in the call of a pastor, in the selection of deacons, in the enduement and equipping of all officers and teachers in the Sunday School. The Holy Spirit is the administrator of the finances of the church. It is His and His alone to tell each individual member of each local church how much he ought to give. Ananias and Sapphira, in a time when the church at Jerusalem was filled and mightily moved upon by the Holy Spirit were instantly killed, when they lied to the Holy Spirit about their giving and refused to give what He told them to give. In 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 Paul plainly tells the church that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to divide out the work to each one severally as He wills. If our churches were not so faithless and so worldly, I believe that in every Baptist church there would be gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles

and discerning of spirits, just as this passage says. In the very next chapter Paul said that prophecy and tongues would cease and revelation would be done away. All other gifts mentioned there are still possible to the Spirit-filled church.

3. A Baptist Church Is A Living Organism.

Here are the three differentiating marks of a Baptist church. It has a live head. The Lord Jesus is the head of every Baptist church and His connection with each body is vital

[p. 55]

and lively. He works in them mightily. The heart of each Baptist church is the Holy Spirit. He indwells every one of them. His home in each local community is the Baptist church in that community. From that as a center, He works out His plans and purposes in the work and worship and walk of that church. His relationship to the living members of that church body is the same as the relationship of the heart to the members of your body and mine. Then each Baptist church is a body of Christ. The heads and founders of all other churches are dead or dying. All other churches are not bodies of Christ and the Holy Spirit does not indwell them.

A Baptist church has a living head -- the Lord Jesus Christ: a living heart -- the indwelling Spirit of God (Romans 5:5): a live and lively body. A Baptist church is not simply an organization: it is an organism. It has life in itself. Its life like the life of a vine comes from within, not from without. That is the difference between fruit and works. Works come from an outside pull: fruit comes from an inside push. When Baptist churches have to resort to suppers and bazaars and banquets and teas and picture shows and all other kinds of worldly entertainment to run the Lord's church, it looks very much like they have a name to live, but are dead. The Spirit's way is to work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure and as He works in us mightily, we work out our own salvation with and trembling.

The ladies' aid societies and W. M. U's. and B. P. P. Us. and R. A's. and G. A's. and Y. W. A's. and Sunbeams and clubs and lodges and boys' brigades and Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. and Boy Scouts and all the balance of the worldly organizations connected in any way with Baptist churches are so many parasites, that destroy their spirituality and power and will eat out their heart and destroy their life, if they are not cleaned off and cleaned out of the churches. The only living organism connected with any Baptist church is the church itself. Give it a chance and it will grow. It has life. It works from within outward. All other organizations have no life; their connection is external: just to the extent they

[p. 56]

thrive, they weaken the vitality and power of the churches. Our churches are dying at the heart because of the bloodsucking organizations that are fastened on them. Cut off the societies and the churches will take on new life and grow. Missions are dying all over the South because they have been taken out of the hands of the churches and pastors and put in the hands of the women or laymen. The Holy Spirit does not work that way. Back to the churches as well as back to the Bible is the imperative need of the hour.

Now note what Paul says about a Baptist church in Ephesians 4:16. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Here is what is said in that text about a Baptist church as a living, growing organism.

First, it has vital and living connection with the Lord Jesus, the Head.

Second, the whole body is fitly joined together. That will kill all hot air and high pressure emotional evangelism. That will make Baptist churches very careful to see that those who join them are fitly joined together rather than the mad rush we have now for members. Fitly joined members are praying members, giving members, going members, working members and lively members. No pep nor spizzerinctum needed in that church. It gets its life from the Word and the Holy Spirit. The useless and unscriptural appendages on Baptist churches will all slough off, when we get back to the New Testament methods of evangelism.

Third, a church composed of lively members, having the same life of the Spirit on the inside and united with the Lord Jesus as their Head, will be compacted by that, which every joint supplieth: for every member will then be an active, working, living member.

Fourth, "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." That is the secret of a happy, united church. All at it, always at it. But back of that is the effectual working

[p. 57]

of the Holy Spirit, who works in them mightily. The effectual Spirit is the cause of an effectual church.

Fifth, "maketh increase of the body." A spiritual church is always a growing church, as well as a happy church, and an united church, a soul-winning church, and a missionary church.

And last of all, a body of Christ, that has all these other evidences of the workings of the Holy Spirit in it, will be constantly edifying itself in love. Selah!

VIII

The Baptist Program

[p. 58]

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"
(Matthew 28:20).

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven"
(Matthew 5:19).

The Baptist program includes all the commands of the Lord Jesus. "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." This program may be epitomized in four words: "Go: Disciple: Baptize: Indoctrinate." The first three of these are discussed in other chapters of this book. We can not put too much emphasis upon them. They are vital, essential, fundamental. The Great Commission is the Baptist Magna Charta. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" is just as truly the command of the Lord Jesus as any other part of that commission. But who pays any attention to it? The average Baptist preacher or Baptist church not only does not pay any attention to this command of his Lord, but openly and flagrantly disavows all obligations to pay any attention to it. So obsessed have we become with pleasing men and so little regard do we have for the Lord Jesus and His Word that multitudes of pastors and churches have whittled out of our Lord's commission the part that tells us to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded. A common saying of what Samuel Johnson calls "the bigots of laxness" is: "In essentials unity, in non essentials liberty, in all things charity." A more traitorous utterance to the authority of the Lord Jesus was never spoken. Who are you and who am I to say that any command of the Lord Jesus is nonessential?

[p. 59]

If He thought it of sufficient worth to command it, how dare you insult Him and treat His Word with contempt by calling it a nonessential and refusing to obey it? There are no nonessential commands in God's Word. The Master's commands are like the members of my body. The members of my body are not all essential to life. You may lose a leg or an arm or an eye or an ear or your tongue or even your reason and still live. But what would you be worth to your family or friends or anybody else if you were eyeless, legless, armless, brainless and tongueless? So with the commands of the Word of God. The commands to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are the

only two that are essential to life: but there are no non-essential commands. Every command of the Lord Jesus is essential for the purpose for which He gave it. Our usefulness, happiness, activity, fruitfulness, growth and power, all depend upon our obedience to all the things that our Lord commanded. And we sin to our own detriment and hurt and the hurt and pain of others, if we count any command of His of so little importance that we think we can disobey it with impunity. There are no nonessential commands. There are non-vital commands; because some of them are not essential to life. But there are no nonessential commands. They are all essential for what the Lord gave them for: and He expects us to obey every one of them. But note what He commanded.

1. Teach All His Commands

He commanded His preachers and His churches to teach all things whatsoever He commanded. No choice was left to us. Whether it suited us or suited our members or suited our auditors or not, He commanded His churches and those who teach them to teach all that He commanded. We are under just as much obligation to teach what the Bible says about bobbed hair or immodest dressing as we are to teach what it says about the incarnation of Jesus or the resurrection of the body. The judgment will not be a very comfortable place for any man or for any church that is silent about any command

[p. 60]

of God's Word, because it is unpopular. The First Baptist preacher spoke out on the divorce question when it cost him his head. Divorce was one of the all things John was commanded to talk about and he fearlessly did what he was told to do.

2. Teach to Observe

We are not only commanded to teach all things He commanded; but we are commanded to observe them ourselves and teach others to observe them. The observance is the obedience. What Jesus wants is obedience. Obedience is the test of love to Him (John 14:15, John 15:14). John the beloved said that the man, who professes to know and love Jesus and does not obey Him, is a common liar and is wholly destitute both of love of Christ and of the love of the truth (I John 2:3), John 14:23-24).

Because John loved so much, he talked very plainly about the hypocrite, who claims to love the Lord Jesus and yet refuses to obey Him.

3. Observe All Things

There's the rub. Not only teach all things: but observe all things He commanded. A missionary was reading the sermon on the Mount to a lot of new converts just

barely escaped from the blindness and superstition of heathenism. He came to this passage "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matthew 5:42). They had already borrowed everything out of his home that he could well spare. So he skipped that verse. Then the Spirit rebuked him for "shunning to declare the whole counsel of God." When the rebukes of the Spirit became unbearable, he came back to it one morning and read it. To his surprise, instead of wanting to borrow more, they began to return what they had borrowed. God is able to take care of His Word and of all who obey it. The word translated "observe" means to guard, to stand firmly in, to observe. It has all three of those ideas in it. Baptists are the guardians of the truth. Some Baptists sneer at the denominational watchdog. Yet that is

[p. 61]

the very first meaning of this word, to guard. We badly need more Baptist watch-dogs today. That is a part of the Baptist commission. Then it also means to stand firmly in. That smites all Unionists, hip and thigh. All Unionists are cowards and traitors to the truth. And then this word also has the idea of observing or doing the thing commanded yourself. That has been the weakness of the denominational watch-dog too often. They say and do not. They are strict on close communion and disobedient about tithing and missions. The Master's orders to all His churches and servants are to observe to do all things He has commanded. And the emphasis is more on the doing, if possible, than on teaching others to do or guarding the commandments and ordinances. Obedience is one of the big words of Jesus to His children. Obedience is a lifetime job. The new birth is instantaneous. Baptism is done once for all (Ephesians 4:11-16). Paul classes as crafty deceivers all Unionists and Modernists, who, instead of teaching all things commanded by Christ, are hucksters of the Word, trading the truth for popularity or pay.

4. All Things Commanded You

Put the emphasis on the you. He commanded you to observe all things He commanded. That commission was given to His churches and the "you" includes every member of every Baptist church in all the world. That "you" is individual as well as collective. The only limitations to the obedience enjoined therein are the limitations found in the infallible Word of God. God's commands are His enablings. "All things are possible to him that believeth." "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." "As much as in me is" was Paul's limit. For that reason, he could say: "I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "My grace is sufficient for thee." is the Master's Word to each of us for any task He puts upon us.

[p. 62]

The all things He commanded include Baptist baptism as well as repentance and faith: for there was no other baptism but Baptist baptism, when this commission was given. He not only commanded the Lord's Supper, but put it inside of and under the control of the local church and no one has a right to put on the outside what He put on the inside (Acts 2:41-42, 1 Corinthians 11:18-20). It was His ordinance and He had the right to put it where He pleased and it pleased Him to put the Lord's table in the Lord's house, which is the local church, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). He endorsed tithing in Matthew 23:23, but He never commanded it. He commanded men to sell all and follow Him. He commanded men not to lay up treasures on earth, but to lay them up in heaven. He commended three women who gave their all; but He nowhere commended anybody for paying only the tithe. He both commanded and commended giving (Luke 6:38, Acts 20:35); but no man has given anything until he has paid his tithe, which is a debt he owes God. When Jesus said: "Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you," He meant all things commanded His churches in New Testament days.

No command of His is antiquated or out of date. His words are as binding today as the day He spoke them. The truth changes not. "Forever O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven." God meant exactly what He said and there isn't a command in the Bible, that was intended for His children to obey, that is not easily understood, if we come to it with open mind and let it mean what it says. The little girl was right, who said: "If God did not mean what He said, why did He not say what He meant?" There is lots of quibbling by the self-willed and disobedient as to what God meant when the meaning is right on the face of the command, if they were but willing to obey. "If any man will to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" -- declared the Son of God Himself. Every man is without excuse for his disobedience, when he stands before God. One other fact from my second text.

[p. 63]

5. Obedience The Test of Rewards

The disappointments at the judgment will be humiliating and embarrassing. We speak now only of the saved. The test as to salvation will be whether they know Christ. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:12). Where you go at death depends wholly on just one thing, namely, whether you have Christ in you, the hope of glory. But the Master was not speaking to sinners when he said in Matthew 5:19. He was talking to His disciples. His words are very clear and simple and plain to them. If you disobey the commands of God's Word and teach others, you will be the least in the kingdom of heaven: if you obey and teach them, you will be great in the heavenly kingdom. How illy the W. M. U. and the B. Y.

P. U. and the Seminaries and the Officialdom among Southern Baptists, will fare that day.

The Bible commands women to keep silence in churches (1 Corinthians 14:32-37, 1 Timothy 2:8-15). Suppose that is the very least command in the Bible. I do not think it is. But just suppose it is. What did the Master say about the folks who broke the least command in His Word and taught others to break it? They shall be least in the heavenly kingdom. What humiliation, when practically all the leaders of Southern Baptists are asked to take a back seat and the more honorable, who obeyed the little commands of the Bible, are asked to come up and take a higher seat. Who said it would be that way? The Lord Jesus and He will be the judge that day (Luke 14:7-11). The Bible says it is a shame for women to speak in the church. Women who thus disobey the Scriptures are honored in nearly all our Baptist assemblies now. But there is one place they will not be honored for their disobedience of God's Word. That will be when they have to take a back seat before Judge Jesus. The only women who will be honored then, will be home-bodies, who wore modest apparel, were submissive to their husbands and obeyed the Book. Blessings on them! There are far more than seven thousand of them: but they are a very small remnant among the women of the South.

[p. 64]

There are no degrees in sonship in God's family. There are no in laws and stepchildren. Every one who has received the Lord Jesus is a son and every son is an heir. But there is a vast difference between those who are least in the kingdom, and those who are great in the kingdom. That is where obedience and loyalty come in. The obedient child will be great: the disobedient child will be least. That is why it not only makes a difference, but makes a lot of difference as to what church you join. If you have been born again you are sure for heaven: but if you belong to a church that Jesus calls a synagogue of Satan or a harlot, all your works will be burned up and you will be saved so as by fire. Baptist churches are the only churches of Christ. There are no doubt great multitudes of saved people in the churches founded by Wesley, Calvin, Campbell, Luther, Daniel Parker, Henry the Eighth and others, but in the day of rewards they will be ashamed of all the works they did to build up their human institutions. The founders of these false churches can not reward them for building up what Jesus said He would uproot: and Jesus will not reward them for setting up rival churches to His own.

In the day of assizes it will make lots of difference what church you joined. And the Master said that if you love father or mother or the family burying ground or any thing else, even life itself, more than you do Him, that you are not worthy of Him. What a difference it will make at the judgment about the years of sinning wasted,

when you lived at one place and kept your membership at another or in your trunk. Every believer will be rewarded for what he does for the Lord Jesus: but no man will be rewarded for his work in any church founded by a man. It will make lots of difference that day as to what church you joined. And then one of the supreme tests of that day will be what you did for missions. Jesus was the founder of missions, as well as the founder of the Baptists. I doubt if any opposer of missions will get to heaven: for I seriously doubt the genuineness of his love for Christ. If any man does not love Christ he will be accursed when Jesus comes (1 Corinthians 16:22). Be that as it

[p. 65]

may, the man who piddles, about missions will want to hide out when he stands before Jesus. Missions are the very thing for which He died. Missions were His last command to His church. Missions are the business of His churches. He shows very clearly what His heart is interested in "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

No tither will get that blessing. That blessing is promised only to the man or woman who gives all to Christ and the gospel. Christ and the gospel are the very heart of missions. The lover of Jesus and His gospel to the point of distraction about missions, whose one obsession in life is missions, will be the great man in the heavenly kingdom. One other word. Read Matthew 10:40-42. No woman who dabbles in politics or social service or club life or who talks in public, will be great in the heavenly kingdom. What they do, they do for show. They have their reward. Jesus said so (Matthew 6:1-7). The lodge and club man will fare just as badly in the day of rewards. Nothing to show for his life's work. Won't it be awful that day? What humiliation and chagrin! But the woman who stays in her place as a worker at home, and in her church; who is given to hospitality and sacrificial giving, will be great in the kingdom. Here is what the Master said: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophets reward." The only way a woman can get a preacher's reward is by entertaining him in her home and loyally supporting him in his work. The Master and His Bible were both very peculiar. We have heard the other part of Matthew 10:40-42 quoted often, but never heard it quoted correctly. Jesus did not promise a reward to any Dick, Tom or Harry, that gave a cup of cold water to some child or needy one. Far be it. What Jesus promised was that He would reward anyone who gave even a cup of cold water to one of His least ones, if it was done

[p. 66]

because they belonged to Him (Mark. 9:41). The Red Cross and the "Good Fellows" and the clubs and the lodges and all the other worldly orders will look on in humility and shame that day, because they not only did not do their giving to those who belong to Jesus and because they were His, but they did it through organizations from which He received no glory. The Master's program was that all the glory for all our gifts and loving service should either glorify or magnify His church.

=====

[p. 67]

IX

The Family of God, Kingdom of God, and Church of God Differentiated

"Men are born into the family of God by the new birth, but men are not born into the church" H. B. Taylor, in *News and Truths*.

If that is the truth, if men get into the family of God by one process, and into the church of God by another and different one, it follows certainly, that the family of God and the church of God are two different institutions. He who has been "born into the family of God by the new birth" is a child of God, and, as such is an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17). Is it possible that these "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" are still out of the church of God? Again: he who has been "born into the family of God" has the remission of sins; for, certainly, God's children are not reprobates. Again: He who has been "born into the family of God" is a new creature. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We should feel under lasting obligations to Brother Taylor if he would tell us just what God must do to this person, or what the person himself must do to become a member of God's church, after he has been "born into the family of God," after he has remission of sins, after he has become a "new creature." His declaration that "men are born into the family of God" is entirely correct, but that the family of God is one thing and the church of God is another thing, is entirely erroneous. "The house of God, which is the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15). The family of God and the house of God are certainly the same, and the apostle here most emphatically

[p. 68]

declares that the house of God is the church of the living God. - *Gospel Message*.

We gladly answer the questions herein contained. In fact, while we are at it we go a little further and distinguish between the family of God, the church of God, and the kingdom of God as used in the New Testament.

The family of God includes all the children of God in heaven and on earth. In Ephesians 3:15 Paul speaks of the "whole family in heaven and on earth." This family includes all believers. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26). All believers are God's children. Since the Old Testament saints were saved by faith in Christ (Acts 10:43, Romans 4:16, etc.), they are all members of God's family.

God's family is bigger than the kingdom of God or the church of God for it now contains all the saved from Abel to the last man who has believed, whether in heaven or on earth. God has only one family. All believers are children and heirs of God.

The Kingdom of God includes all the saved on earth at any given time. In Matthew 13 the kingdom is used to include all professors. But the kingdom as used in John 3:3-5, Matthew 16:19, 11:11, Luke 16:16, Romans 14:17, Colossians 1:13, John 18:36, etc. is composed of all the born-again on the earth. This is not the kingdom of Daniel 2:44, Luke 9:11-27, Acts 1:16, etc. Those passages refer to the millennium. That kingdom is yet future.

What is sometimes called the spiritual kingdom is composed only of those who have been born again, who have been "translated, out of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son." In John 3:3-5 the Master said, except a man be born anew he can neither see nor enter the Kingdom of God. In Matthew 18:1-16 and Mark 10:13-15 the Master shows very clearly, that the kingdom is composed of only such as have received Him, whether children or adults. The family of God includes all the saved of all the ages, whether in heaven or on earth; the kingdom of God includes that part of the family of God who are on earth now.

The church of God is never used of any institution, except

[p. 69]

of an assembly or congregation of baptized believers in some given locality, e.g., the church of God at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The local individual church is the only kind of church God has on this earth today. There is only one family of God, composed of all the redeemed of all the ages in heaven and on earth. There is only one kingdom of God, composed of all the born again on the earth now. There are thousands of churches of God on earth. Every individual Baptist church is a church of God. No others are. When a man is born again he is born into God's family. He is in the family of God forever. The relationship does not change. Whether in heaven or on earth he is in God's family. When he is born again he also enters God's kingdom. This relationship is for life. When he dies he

passes out of the kingdom of God on earth and enters "His heavenly kingdom" (2 Timothy 4:18).

After he has been born again he is not yet in a church of God, but is now a scriptural subject for admission into a church of God. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Church membership was not something a man gets with salvation but a subsequent blessing he gets after salvation by being added to the church. Baptism is not essential to admission into either the family of God or the kingdom of God: but baptism is essential to admission into a church of God. Men are born anew into the family of God and into the kingdom of God: but they are baptized into a church of God (1 Corinthians 12:13). The "one body" referred to here by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:13 was the church of God at Corinth. Note in 1 Corinthians 12:27 he says, "Ye are a body of Christ, and members in particular."

That local church at Corinth was the body of Christ at Corinth. The members of the church at Corinth belonged to only "one body" of Christ. That body of Christ probably did not contain all the saved at Corinth (I Corinthians 1:2) and none of the saved anywhere else except at Corinth. Since they belonged to only "one body" and that was the local church at Corinth, Christ has no other kind of church or body except a local church. If they had belonged to a local church at Corinth, which Paul

[p. 70]

said was the body of Christ, and then to the kind of church the "Message" talks about, composed of all the saved everywhere, they would have belonged to two churches or bodies of Christ -- one local and visible, the other universal and invisible. The New Testament knows nothing of such confusion as that. God is not the author of any such confusion. Jesus Christ has only one kind of church or body on this earth, and that is the local assembly -- the organized body of baptized believers in any given community. The very passage cited in the "Message" in I Timothy 3:15 is in harmony with my contention. The church of God is there called the house of God; but the house of God is not used there in the sense of a family, but in the sense of a building. That the church referred to in that passage is a local church is clearly evident from even a casual reading of the context in 1 Timothy 3:1-14. Bishops and deacons are officers of local churches. Paul has just been telling them their duties as officials of the local church and adds that he writes these things that Timothy, a young preacher, may know how to behave himself in the house of God, the local church of which he was bishop. The church which Paul called a body of Christ, was a local church. Since Christ has but "one body" (i.e., one kind of a body) there is no church of Christ except the local church. The church which Paul called the house of God was a local church. The church that Paul said was "the pillar and ground of the truth" was a local church. The church to which the Lord Jesus promised perpetuity (Matthew 16:18) was a local

church, for He never spoke of any other kind. The meaning of the word *ekklesia* permits of no other kind. On that we let others more competent than the writer speak.

Prof. Royal, of Wake Forest College, N. C., who taught Prof. A. T. Robertson, of the Louisville Seminary, when asked if he knew of an instance in classic Greek where *ekklesia* 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 Profs. Burton of Chicago University, Stifler of Crozer, Strong of Rochester and many

[p. 71]

other scholars. Joseph Cross (Episcopalian) in a book of sermons entitled "*Coals from the Altar*," says: "We hear much of the invisible church as contradistinguished from the church visible. Of an invisible church in this world I know nothing, the Word of God says nothing; nor can anything of the kind exist, except in the brain of a heretic. The church is a body; but what sort of a body is that which can neither be seen nor identified? A body is an organism, occupying space and having a definite locality. A mere aggregation is not a body; there must be organization as well. A heap of heads, hands, feet and other members would not make a body; they must be united in a system, each in its proper place and all pervaded by a common life. So a collection of stones, brick and timbers would not be a house; the material must be built together, in an artistic order, adapted to utility. So a mass of roots, trunks and branches would not be a vine or a tree; the several parts must be developed according to the laws of nature from the same seed and nourished by the same vital sap."

Exactly so.

The limbs of a body scattered on a battlefield are not a body. The material of a house in the woods or quarries is not a house. These members and this material must be put in place before you have either a body or a house. So the saved are not a church unless brought together and organized or builded into a body or house of God. There is not and cannot be such an institution as a universal invisible church on this earth, composed of all the saved, because the material has never been brought together and builded into a house or body.

When the Lord Jesus and Paul spoke of the baptized believers of a larger territory than a local church they always said churches. There was no confusion in their speaking though there is much confusion in modern thinking upon this question.

Once more we try to make the distinction clear. The family of God is composed of all the saved in heaven and on earth. Old Testament saints and babies who died in infancy are in

[p. 72]

God's family. They are not now, nor were they ever in the kingdom or in any church of God.

All believers on the earth at any given time since the days of John the Baptist (Luke 16:16) compose the kingdom of God. There are no infants in it. All true believers, whether Catholic, Protestant, Baptist or non-church-members on earth are in the kingdom; for if true believers they have been born anew. Only baptized believers or Baptists are members of the churches of Christ.

=====

[p. 73]

X Baptist Co-operation

"We then, as workers together with Him" (2 Corinthians 6:1).

The writer is a denominationalist and a co-operationist. He has no sympathy with fundamentalism; because all the fundamentalists he has ever known have been unionists. And all unionists are traitors to the truth. As a citizen I can and do cooperate with other good citizens, even though they are not believers, in support of the Anti-Saloon League, law enforcement, humanitarian enterprises like the Children's Home Society of Kentucky and other worthy causes. We work together there because we are agreed as to the needs and the righteousness of their appeals. But we work together in these things because we are in agreement as to the principles of co-operation. The principles on which we agree to co-operate are that the cause is worthy; that all good citizens ought to help a worthy cause; and that our cooperation shall be as citizens and shall be voluntary. No compromise is made in that kind of cooperation.

In the work of the Lord Jesus Christ I do not co-operate with anybody but Baptists, because nobody but Baptists even try to do the Lord's work in the Lord's way. Here are three concrete examples. In Nehemiah 6:1-16) Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem and other enemies of Israel asked the privilege of helping in building the walls of Jerusalem. Why not? Were they not all citizens of that goodly city? Why should there not be co-operation in that building enterprise? Nehemiah refused to meet them for conference and maintained his separateness, because there could be no

co-operation even in building the walls of the city, without compromising both the Jews' separateness and their teachings. Again Jehoshaphat made an alliance with Ahab to fight the enemies of Israel. They were all Jews and the alliance was not for worship but

[p. 74]

for fighting the Lord's enemies at Ramoth-Gilead. God helped Jehoshaphat and delivered him, but after he got home, God sent Hanani to him with these words: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?" (2 Chronicles 19:1-3). Again later on Jehoshaphat joined with Ahaziah in a trading venture to make ships to go to Tarshish. They made the ships at Ezion-gaber. God sent Eliezer, the prophet, to tell him that all his ships would be broken up because he "joined himself with Ahaziah" in a business venture (2 Chronicles 20:35-37). In all of these ventures the Lord refused to work with His own servants because in each case God's servants were in co-operation with those who were His enemies. Even when the proposed co-operation was for the purpose of helping to build up the Lord's work, the Lord refused to let His servants go into the co-operation or destroyed their works, when they entered the co-operative work without consulting Him. The New Testament plainly forbids all such co-operation in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. No co-operation where there is no fellowship, no concord, no agreement, no communion, but a clear and ringing call to absolute separation.

Baptists cannot work with God, if they go into partnership with anybody but Baptists. Let us look into the Word of God and see if we can find out some principles of co-operation laid down in His Book.

1. Working God's Way

That is what the text says. "Workers together with Him." The only way we can work with Him, is by finding what He is working at and what His plans are and do it His way. We have failed in all the plans we have made from the Seventy-five Million Campaign and all succeeding campaigns up to now (1928) because we have made our own plans, instead of finding out His plans from His Word and working with Him. Instead of working with Him, we have gotten the cart before the horse. We have made the plans and wanted Him to work with us. God does not work that way. It is His work.

[p. 75]

He has very definite and clear plans as to how He wants His work done. He will not bless it unless it is done His way. When we give up our plans and accept His plans and let Him be the potter and we nothing but clay, His work always succeeds. Our co-

operation is not primarily with each other. Our co-operation is primarily with God. When we co-operate with God, we work together in harmony and unity and accord. Then the work goes gloriously and it looks so easy we wonder why we failed. We failed for the same reason Moses failed in Numbers 11:10-25. Moses had been trying Jethro's plan. He failed and wanted to die because he had made such an inglorious failure. Then he was ready to turn things over to God and God brought enlargement and victory. The price of co-operation is giving up your own way and going God's way. The method of co-operation is tracking the Book. The Book contains the blue prints of God's work. His instructions are to make all things according to pattern showed us in the Book.

2. The Local Church the Center of Co-operation.

We are not discussing details of co-operation but principles of co-operation. The very first principle of co-operation is that we must work with God. He does not co-operate unless we work His way. His way means that He is in the lead, makes all the plans, decides all doubtful questions, furnishes all finances, supplies both wisdom and power (Daniel 2:20, Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, 3:5), and has His way about every thing. Hudson Taylor's shibboleth still works: "God's man in God's place doing God's work in God's way for God's glory never yet lacked God's supplies."

The second principle of co-operation in the Lord's work is that the local church must be the center of co-operation. There's a reason. Each local church is a body of Christ. If we co-operate with the head, the Lord Jesus, we must co-operate with His body. That is the weakest place in Baptist co-operation. There is no co-operation with the Head, the Lord Jesus, because there is no co-operation with and

[p. 76]

through His body, the local Baptist church, to which we belong. The appeal that is being made everywhere is for co-operation with a program. The facts prove conclusively that the Lord Jesus is not co-operating with us. Receipts have been falling off year after year. Something is radically wrong. What is it? Southern Baptists are off center. They have put a program of men's or mostly women's making at the center instead of putting the body of Christ, the local church at the center of our co-operation. No board, no schools, no W. M. U., no south-wide or statewide conventions, no executive committee, no body of men or women or both, however wise, can be the center of Baptist co-operation. The only thing the Lord Jesus is the head of is a local church. He is the head over each local church and also He is the head over all things to each local church. Read Ephesians 1:21-23. Some Baptists will co-operate with any body and any thing; because they themselves are off center and not rightly related to the Head, the Lord Jesus. But most Baptists, in their hearts are loyal to the Lord Jesus and will not continue to co-operate except with Him. And no

Baptist can or will long continue to co-operate except with the Lord Jesus and through His body, the local church.

What saith the Scriptures? "Hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all things" (Ephesians 1:22-23). Jesus is the head of the body. The body is the local church (1 Corinthians 12:27). Jesus is the head over all things to each local church. That means He is head of all co-operation and all co-operation must be through the local church, if He is head over all things to the church and the church is His body. If co-operation is through the W. M. U. then Jesus is not head over all things to the church. The W. M. U. is the head over the church in co-operation. Whatever is included in that co-operation is taken out of the hands of the church and is done independent of the body of Christ. If done independent of the body of Christ, it is done independent of Christ the head also: for there can be no co-operation

[p. 77]

with the head without cooperation with the body. Here is another Scripture that is equally clear or more so (1 Corinthians 16:1-4). The orders of Jesus the head, not only to the church at Corinth, but to the churches of Macedonia also, included weekly giving of every member. This giving was for the poor saints in another continent. Corinth was in Europe and Judea was in Asia. It was not a local budget, but a benevolence budget. This benevolent budget was not a charity gift but proportionate giving, according as God had prospered them. But the two main things about this giving was that the giving was to be done through each local church: and each church was to choose one of their members, through whom the gifts were to be sent. That covers the very point at issue in this discussion, namely, the giving to be done through the church as a body of Christ: and the various churches were to select one each of their own members to go along to carry their co-operative gifts. This co-operation was under the headship of Christ and through His body, the local church. Church co-operation, under church control is scriptural cooperation. The local church, as the body of Christ, is to be the center of Baptist co-operation. No other co-operation honors either Christ the head or the church, which is His body. That is why He is not blessing our so called co-operative work. It isn't scriptural co-operation. The church as a body has nothing to do with it. Our present plans of co-operation head up in the convention or the executive committee of our boards.

The churches have no say-so in the co-operation, except to pay the bills. The budget ought to be made by the churches. The budget ought to be put on by the pastors and the churches. The money ought to be disbursed by the churches. Biblical co-operation is co-operation with Christ through His body, the local church of which the donor is a member. In these churches, who had a part in this co-operative work, in

the passage we are studying, all dividing of funds was done in the local church; and all gifts were designated gifts, when they left the local church. That way every church knew exactly where their money went and one of their members went

[p. 78]

along to see where their money went and came back and reported. With our mail facilities now the church can dispatch their funds: but the principle that the local church should divide the funds and report back to the church where every dollar of their money went still holds good. That is one fundamental principle in Biblical cooperation. The churches decide where the money goes and when it leaves the church treasurer every dollar of it is already designated. That is the way to do away with big salaries and overhead expenses. Let the churches say where the money goes.

But says some one, suppose the church has no budget or includes all things in its budget, which are not scriptural, what must we do then? The answer is easy. Co-operation is with Christ the head through His body the church. If the church is out of fellowship with the head and the body is not in co-operation with the head, then your first allegiance is to Christ. He is the head of every man, as well as the head of every local church (1 Corinthians 11:1-3). The Lord Jesus never made a woman the head of anything. Headship belongs first to God, then to Christ and then to men. No man is under any obligation to co-operate with anything that has a woman as the head of it. He is a sissy, if he does. If your church is run by women, then do your own co-operating directly with Christ the head and wait until His body, the church, acknowledges the headship of Christ before you co-operate with them. To co-operate with a church out of co-operation with Christ would be to be a party to and partaker of their rebellion against the authority of Christ, the head. No member of any Baptist church is under any obligation to co-operate with any organization that puts a program instead of the Lord Jesus as that for which an appeal for co-operation is made. No Baptist is under obligation to co-operate with an executive committee or board or any thing else, that makes itself the center of co-operation, instead of making the Lord Jesus and His body, the local church, the center of all co-operation. Baptists have no need of an executive committee, such as the Southern Baptist Convention now has. It has not a single

[p. 79]

scriptural function. There is a place for district state, home and foreign boards, who receive and disburse funds for the objects given by the churches and employ workers and direct the work entrusted to them by the churches. The very fact that God the Spirit has so many missionaries ready to go to the foreign fields and no money to send them speaks volumes as to the ability of God the Spirit to get the funds we need, when

the getting of the funds is under His sovereign control, just as the calling out of the workers now is. The heart of co-operation is the co-operation of each member of each local church with the body of Christ of which he is a member as thus described by Paul: "From Whom (the Lord Jesus) the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16).

3. No Co-operation Except on the Book

The first principle of Baptist co-operation is that it must be co-operation with Christ the Lord in the lead. The plans must be His. The power must be His. The work must be financed by Him. The workers must be of His choosing. His Spirit must be acknowledged as His vice-general and His authority must be unquestioned. He must be given the benefit of the doubt on every question that comes up. No quibbling with Him; but on the contrary unquestioned obedience to Him in all things. He brooks no rivals. He divides honors and authority with no one. He must in all things have the preeminence. There can be no co-operation with Him except on His terms. That is the very first principle in all co-operation in the work of Christ. And then, in this co-operative work, the very center of it is that the individual co-operates as a member of the body of Christ, with the body of which he is a member. The head and the body and each individual member work together. That is scriptural co-operation. Each member co-operates with and through the body of Christ, His church, and not through any other body, inside or outside

[p. 80]

of the church. Biblical cooperation is with the Lord Jesus and through His body, the local church. You may work some other way, but you are not co-operating with Christ and His church if you work by yourself and independent of your church, you may be operating, but you are not co-operating with the church, which is His body. Co-operation, if Biblical co-operation, is Christ the head and each member of His body working together to carry out His plans. Biblical co-operation is church co-operation, not independent nor individual nor society, nor class co-operation. Baptists never learn to work together until they make the local church the center and heart of their co-operation. The letter to the church at Ephesus, which is the great church epistle, is full of co-operation, through the local church as the body of Christ. That is where Southern Baptists are weakest; and our leaders are responsible. They do not magnify the local church; neither do they magnify co-operation through the church, as the body of Christ. Baptists ought to magnify Christ the head, and each local church a body of Christ. That is the only way in which Baptists can or ever will co-operate. They are

too individualistic to ever co-operate with any plan, except the Bible and Baptist plan, which is church co-operation.

The third essential in Baptist co-operation is that there can be no co-operation except on the Book. Baptists are a people of one Book. If you read it out of the Book, they will believe it. If you cannot read it out of the Book, they will be shy of it. That is why five-sixths or perhaps nine-tenths of our Baptist people in the South are not co-operating with our mission work. Our leaders have too many things in our South wide program, which the common people cannot find in the Book. And in many states, the number, who are co-operating, grows beautifully less all the time, instead of growing and multiplying. The reason is that co-operation is not asked on the Book. Too many things are in the co-operative program, that are not in the Bible. Make our programs read like the Book and Baptists will take to them, just like they now take to the other things, preached to them out of the Bible. Without discussing

[p. 81]

them at length, here are some of the things in our co-operative program, that are not in the Bible. They are the flies in the ointment. They are neither Biblical nor Baptist. Unless you can find them in the Bible, Baptists are always shy of taking hold of anything they cannot read right out of the Bible. Baptists will sooner or later reject anything they do not read about in the Word of God. And no man has to be educated in order to find the truth on any question in the Bible. The Bible was written for the common people. Lincoln said that God must have loved the common people or He would not have made so many of them. Baptists are mostly common people and the Baptist Book God made, He has made so clear and plain, that the simplest of the common people can read right out of the Book the things God wants them to know and do. It takes no long and labored argument to show the truth to the common people. If it is the truth, you can read it to them right out of the Book. For that reason Southern Baptists are not taking hold nor supporting these things in our present denominational program: standardized and modernized schools; subsidized papers; enormous overhead expense: presiding elders under the alias of enlistment men; the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention; an Episcopal budget handed down to the churches instead of a Biblical budget made by the churches and handed down to their servants, the various boards, for there is just as much Bible for handing down pastors to the churches, as for handing down a budget to the churches.

Baptists are a self-governing, self-propagating and self-supporting people, when they follow the Bible. Where subsidies thrive, self-support dies. Where enlistment thrives, missions die. Where handed-down budgets thrive, local self government dies. Where overhead expenses multiply, contributions dwindle. Where education is magnified, the gospel of grace, which is the child of humility, is unknown. Where

standardization is supreme, the Lord Jesus is dethroned. Where education is the standard, the head is the main thing, mind master, faith is only a form of intellectual assent and Campbellism, Unitarianism and Modernism prosper.

[p. 82]

Back to the Bible should be the watch-word of Baptists everywhere. The Baptists are the people of one Book, the Book, the Bible. They never thrive anywhere unless the Bible is supreme. That is why in so many educational centers spirituality is dead and formalism and infidelity have right of way. If the Bible is the final authority, then Christ is first in all things and the heart is the center of man's being. If education is standard, then the mind is exalted above the heart; intellectualism is first and the Lord Jesus takes a back seat and all things center in the head. If the Bible is the truth, then out of the heart, not the head, are the issues of life. If the Bible is the truth, then psychology, pedagogy, biology and all the other ologies are soulish, but not spiritual. They leave out the real man. They say man is body and soul. The Bible says man is body, soul and spirit. All education, whether simply modern or modernistic, has no appeal and can make none to the spirit of man. All they know is the intellectual or soulish man.

James tells us about the wisdom that comes from psychology and the other ologies, "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15). The word translated "sensual" is the adjective form of the word *psuche*, from which the first half of the word, psychology, comes. Four things are said about soulish or psychical education.

First, it is not from above. That is true of all education acquired in the schools, standard or otherwise. It is all from beneath. Its tendency is downward. It does not come from above and no stream can rise higher than its source.

The second thing said about this soulish education is that it is earthly. Green's Greek Lexicon translated this word "low, grovelling" and cites James 3:15 as the example where it has that meaning. That is the Holy Spirit's estimate of all worldly education.

Third, the wisdom of the world acquired in the schools is sensual or soulish.

And fourth, this wisdom is devilish. The vital distinction is as to where it came from. The wisdom acquired in the schools is from beneath and for that very reason is low, grovelling, sensual and devilish. The wisdom that God gives is from above. It is not acquired. It is

[p. 83]

God given and is received by revelation. The Bible is the only source of this wisdom. The Holy Spirit is the teacher of it. That is why so many children of missionaries, as

well as hosts of young preachers in this country, turn out to be confirmed worldlings. They send them to the schools to acquire wisdom from beneath, instead of centering their teaching in the Bible and receiving God's wisdom from above. The Bible is the true university. The Bible is the only source of wisdom. All other education is from beneath. Psychology takes cognizance only of the body and soul. It knows nothing of the spirit. When a man is born anew Jesus said: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The spiritual man is the new man. This new man lives in a world that the psychologist and all other worldlings, however well educated, know absolutely nothing about. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

The new man, the spiritual man, feeds and grows upon the Word of God. (1 Peter 2:2).

I may have gotten a long way from co-operation. But the longest way around is sometimes the shortest way through. That was true in this case. Co-operation is a matter of the spirit -- the new man. The Bible says "All thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13). Co-operation is one of the things of the Spirit, that Jesus spoke of in these words: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me" (John 6:45). Co-operation is first of all taught of God. We are workers together with God. Co-operation is with Jesus Christ and His body, the church, to which we belong. Just as Jesus opened the Scriptures and taught His disciples all things from the Scriptures, concerning Himself and His world wide-mission program, so all real co-operation today must be based on and grow out of His eternal and infallible Word of truth (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45). John the beloved, in writing to his well-beloved friend, one of the

[p. 84]

New Testament's big laymen, Gaius, shows that the heart of all co-operation, is in being fellow-helpers to the truth. Note his words, in a rather free translation of 3 John 5-8. "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers (foreign missionaries); Which have borne witness of thy love before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: because that for His name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the heathen. We therefore ought to receive such (these foreign missionaries) that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth." That is co-operation of the Biblical order, the Lord Jesus and each individual member of His body, the local church, co-operating in the support of His missionaries, as fellow-helpers to the truth.

=====

[p. 85]

XI Woman's Work in Baptist Churches

There are few men for whom we have higher regard personally than J. B. Gambrell and J. B. Moody. We would not say one word intentionally to wound or grieve either of them. They are both much older than the editor of *News and Truths*. We do not want to be, nor do we mean to be, disrespectful to our elders. If anything in this article seems to be so we here and now disavow any such intention and beg our readers to remember that any statement that might be so interpreted is not aimed at them personally but at the position which they have espoused. We mention them by name because they both have mentioned us by name in their recent discussions in the *Baptist Standard* and the *Baptist Advance* and because they are by common consent the acknowledged champions of "women speaking in public in mixed assemblies" in the South.

With Bro. Gambrell we agree most heartily in saying: "No Scripture must be so interpreted, as to contradict another Scripture, when that other Scripture is of certain and unmistakable interpretation."

And yet that is exactly what both of the brethren have done, as we will show a little later on.

The Issue

Both of the brethren are seemingly confused as to the issue in their own minds or have unwittingly confused the issue in their articles. The issue is not as to whether a woman may speak in a public mixed assembly, but whether it is scriptural and right for a woman to speak in public in a mixed assembly. Thousands of women at Asheville spoke every night before and after the service in a public mixed assembly, but only two spoke in public in that mixed assembly. Yet

[p. 86]

both of the brethren in their articles make arguments upon cases where women did the first, which is not the point at issue at all. Bro. Gambrell cites the case of women speaking on Pentecost as a case in point. The women scattered through that gathering throng on Pentecost did speak as the Spirit gave them utterance, just as thousands of women spoke every night at Asheville both before and after the regular services at the Asheville Convention in a public mixed assembly, but all their speaking was private, not public. No woman spoke in public on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is very careful to safeguard that very point so that no one need be mistaken unless he just wants to be. In Acts 2:14 it is specifically said that when that assembly was called to

order and the time for the public speaking began that "Peter standing up with the eleven" did the talking. No woman on the day of Pentecost under the control of the Holy Spirit dared to stand up before that mixed assembly and say one word. And Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:37 that no woman led of the Spirit will disobey his prohibitions there given as to women speaking in mixed assemblies before men. Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 14 are in perfect harmony. Bro. Gambrell's one and only argument in the *Standard* article was based upon an interpretation of Acts 2, which (quoting his language) is "monstrous, impossible and wrong." The consistence of the Scriptures on the woman question is shown (and incidentally their verbal inspiration) in that on an occasion when women spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit has the inspired pen-man to make it plain that women, speaking as He gives them utterance, do not stand before mixed assemblies and speak. Peter and the eleven and they only stood up and spoke to that Pentecost assembly.

Bro. Moody misses the issue as widely as does Bro. Gambrell. He cites women prophesying "preaching in a private and personal way" and Priscilla's private instruction of Apollos in support of his position, not one of which touches the question of women speaking in public before mixed assemblies.

[p. 87]

The issue before us is as to whether the Scriptures ever authorize by precept or example women standing before mixed public assemblies and addressing them as the two women did at the Asheville Convention. We think we will be able to show that the Scriptures are consistent throughout on that very point and that the only seeming exception is Deborah and the exception was made in that case because the men were all "sissies." The brethren are welcome to all the consolation they can get out of that exception.

But let us clear up the issue just a little further by noting just exactly what it is that women are prohibited from doing.

Prohibitions on Women

1. To speak in public in mixed religious assemblies (1 Corinthians 14:37). This prohibition goes even to the extent that they are forbidden to speak out from the audience and ask questions.

2. To lead in public prayer in a mixed assembly (1 Timothy 2:8-9). The word translated "men" here means "men" as distinguished from women and children, so says Thayer's lexicon. That means men only are to lead in public prayer in mixed assemblies.

3. To teach men (1 Timothy 2:12). This prohibition limits the work of women in Sunday Schools to teaching women and children. There is plenty of work for them to do there without getting out of their place and teaching men's classes. It is significant that nearly all Sunday School experts today are saying that the teaching of men and boys above the intermediate department is a man's job. God said so a long time ago.

4. To be in authority over a man (1 Timothy 2:12). Women are prohibited from having any place in the work of our churches that puts them in authority over their brethren. So important is this that Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:3-10 says that whenever a woman comes into a church assembly she ought to have a veil or covering of some kind on her head as a sign that she is under authority, not in authority. The flagrant violation of this prohibition by evangelists and evangelistic

[p. 88]

singers and the women who prefer to obey them rather than God, is one of the many ways now prevalent in which the authority of God's Word is being broken down.

These are the prohibitions which God the Spirit put upon our sisters.

Her Compensations

We mention only two.

1. Her child-bearing. (1 Timothy 2:15).

As B. H. Carroll well said: "The woman shall live, indirectly, in the children she bears if they (the children) prove to be worthy. The man lives or dies according to his rule and leadership in public affairs; the woman lives or dies in her children. His sphere is the public arena. Her sphere, the home. Washington's mother lived in him; Lois and Eunice lived in Timothy. The Roman matron, Cornelia, pointed to her boys, the Gracchi, and said, "These are my jewels."

The world is better and brighter when women sanctify and beautify home, proudly saying, "My husband is my glory, my children are my jewels and I am content to live in them. Why should I desire to be a man and fill his place: who then will fill mine?"

2. Her Hospitality and Service.

In Matthew 10:40-42 the Lord Jesus Himself shows that those who receive God's prophets and minister to them and to His needy little ones will get as much reward as the prophets do to whom they minister. In other words the Master said that women, upon whom these tasks pre-eminently fall, will get just as much reward for their private work faithfully done, as the men will for their public work, faithfully

performed. The women who speak in public, like the folks who give and pray and fast to be seen of men, get their reward here in what men say about it.

Woman's Sphere and Work

While on this question it is well to give what the Scriptures have to say on the positive side of the question as well as on the negative side. There has been the weakness of

[p. 89]

much of the discussion of Paul's prohibitions. The women have been told what they were not to do; but when with earnest sincerity they came and asked what God wanted them to do they have oftentimes been put off with no definite answer. Now God's Word is just as clear and plain on what women ought to do as on what they ought not to do.

We believe a careful reading of some of the things that God has commanded women to do will show that the most neglected work in the world is woman's work. Just to the extent that woman becomes man's competitor in doing a man's work, just to that extent her own work goes undone. Because so many women are trying to be men and fill men's places today women's work is the most neglected, the most slighted, and the most needed work in all the world.

What is woman's sphere and work?

1. The Home. Women should above all else be homebodies. Woman was made to be man's helpmeet. The "virtuous" woman in Proverbs 31 was a "worker at home." Paul enjoined Timothy, the young preacher, to teach the women to be, not idlers or tattlers, or busybodies, but "keepers at home (1 Timothy 5:13-14). Peter had somewhat to say along the same line in 1 Peter 3:16.

The divorce court, the apartment house, and the modern club are menaces today that threaten the sanctity and happiness and continuity of our American homes, because many women are not willing to be and to do the things necessary to make their homes little paradises of love and of God. The woman who neglects her home life to do any kind of public work, religious or otherwise, is not occupying her God-appointed sphere or doing her God-given task. Her husband is a stranger among men, wandering around lodges and hotel lobbies and other loafing places at night to find the companionship and love he ought to find at home; and her children are a menace to the public well and moral welfare of the community in which she lives. The home life is one of the most neglected spheres of woman's work, for no house ever was or ever can be a home without a woman to "guide the

90]

house." Paul enjoined that only women should be put on the list of those supported by the church, in the church, in 1 Timothy 5:9-10, who were too old to be mothers and whose home had been broken up by their being made widows and their children already "brought up." Therein is a striking example of the "consistency of the Bible on woman's work." God never calls women to neglect their homes or husbands or children to do any kind of public work.

2. Motherhood. Paul enjoins "younger women to marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion of the adversary to speak reproachfully."

Billy Sunday told only the other day in an address to the women of Kansas City of how two physicians had told him recently of six and twelve women respectively in his choirs and engaged in other religious work in other cities where he had been, who had come to them and asked them to "prostitute their manhood" and sin against God and their husbands and homes and their unborn progeny by "relieving them of the cares of motherhood." Some doctor was found who was criminal enough to do what they asked, for none of them have had babies since. Just that thing is giving the adversary occasion to speak reproachfully of many women in many churches.

3. Teach women. God's Word prohibits women from teaching men (1 Timothy 2:12). God's Word equally as clearly enjoins women to teach women (Titus 2:3-5). The reason so many young women are ensnared in the meshes of the white-slavers today is because they have not been taught. The reason so many girls are decoyed into the disgraceful, licentious modern dance is because mothers and other women teachers are too busy trying to do the men's work to take time to teach their daughters modesty and decency and chastity. The reason of the popularity of the "movies" with their unlimited temptation under the most favorable surroundings for too much freedom between the sexes is because the women are neglecting to teach their daughters the sacredness of their own person and the necessity of making boys "hands off" for the preservation

[p. 91]

of their own chastity. The shameless exposure of their person, by wearing dresses too low at the top and too high at the bottom and by having on too few clothes, so prevalent among many modern women, is a sad commentary on the woeful neglect of older women to teach younger women how to dress "becomingly and chastely." One of the best known evangelists among Southern Baptists said in Murray some years ago that in the last 10 towns in which he held meetings there were more fast girls than boys. That such a fact as that exists in any town is the most severe indictment that can be brought against the women of that town. It proves my proposition that the most

neglected work in the world is woman's work. They can not do the work of men without neglecting their own. Just to the extent that Bro. Gambrell and Bro. Moody encourage them to get out of their places and enter into competition with men for places in public religious work or in business or politics, just to that extent they are responsible for women neglecting their God-given and Bible-taught tasks. For Bro. Gambrell's information we will say that every one of those ten towns to which the evangelist referred were in the West where women have "more freedom" than in the East.

4. Hospitality, service, sacrifice.

In 1 Timothy 5:10 Paul outlines women's work as fourfold.

(1) Home "bringing up children."

(2) Hospitality "entertaining strangers."

(3) Service "washing the saint's feet."

(4) Sacrificial giving of time, labor or money to "relieve the afflicted" and other good works.

The widow who gave her two mites and Mary, who broke her alabaster box upon her Lord, were fine examples of sacrificial giving. Dorcas and others of her class were notable for heroic self-sacrificing service to the Lord's poor and afflicted. Lydia and Priscilla and the woman who fed Elijah a whole year and many others are marvelous examples of keeping open house for the Lord's servants. Women have their hands full if they follow out Paul's program as outlined above. Paul

[p. 92]

was as specific in telling women what they ought to do as in telling them what they ought not to do. Just to the extent that they violate his prohibitions they neglect the God-ordained tasks he enjoins. If they do the men's work the men will lie down on the job and let them, and their own work will go undone. The men will not do it for them. If they attend to their own work the men will do theirs when they see they have to do it.

Now having gotten out of the way some common objections let us note how remarkably consistent the Scriptures are in their teaching upon woman's sphere and work.

The cases cited by the advocates of women speaking in public are all cases of "wresting the Scriptures" except Deborah and she did not talk in public but she did exercise authority over men. But God tells why He permitted that.

Miriam, the Samaritan woman, the women at the Savior's tomb, Priscilla, Anna the prophetess, Phillip's daughters who were prophetesses and others are cited as examples of women speaking in public in mixed assemblies. In Miriam's case (Ex. 15:20) the Scriptures are very specific in saying that she led the women in their singing. Moses led the men.

The Samaritan woman did all her talk in personal private conversation to her neighbors and acquaintances as she went from house to house in the city and told of the Savior.

The women who were first at the tomb, though not last at the cross, as is so often said, went and told what they had seen to the disciples privately.

Anna the prophetess spoke of the infant Savior to the passers-by as they came and went. There were no public services in the temple and a woman was not even allowed to go into the men's court.

Priscilla was the wife of a man by the name of Aquila. His name is mentioned first when Paul met them and in their greeting in Corinth. She was however more active in her Master's work than her husband. In every other instance except one her name occurs first. That one case is the case of where they gave some private instructions to Bro. Apollos.

[p. 93]

Mark you, it was done privately, not publicly. God's Word says "they took him (Apollos) unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." But the significant thing about the incident is this, namely, that indifferent Aquila, who is always mentioned after his wife elsewhere in the Scriptures, is here mentioned as taking the lead in even a private conversation with Apollos to set him straight in some matters. Did it happen so that Aquila's name occurred first in this instance or was it the careful work of the Holy Spirit, who is the author of God's Word, to impress upon the readers that woman's sphere and work is not that of leadership?

The incident in connection with Phillip's daughters is equally significant. Phillip had four daughters who were prophetesses. Paul was abiding at Phillip's house at Caesarea "many days." While there God sends to him a prophet named Agabus, whose home was probably at Antioch, to tell him of the imprisonment that awaited him at Jerusalem. Now why did God send a man all the way from Antioch to tell Paul that, when he was staying in the home of a man who had four daughters, who were prophetesses? Was it Paul's prejudice against women that the Lord humored by sending Agabus to him or was it a striking example of the consistency of the Spirit

who inspired all prophecy, to maintain the clear teaching of God's Word that women must not usurp authority over a man?

Now let us note Deborah's case. She was the only woman judge and deliverer. She did exercise authority over men. Why this exception? God tells. In Judges 4:20 Barak said positively that he would not go at all unless she went with him. She told him then the honor would be a woman's if he was too cowardly to undertake the job without a woman taking the lead. The secret of this exception was to be found in the fact that the men of Deborah's day were cowards and "sissies." If Bro. Gambrell and Bro. Moody have the same kind of men to deal with, then they may get some help out of Sister Deborah for their cause. But so long as there are manly men in Texas and Illinois, who can and will lead in God's work, there is no warrant

[p. 94]

from God's Word in Deborah's example for the brethren to put the women forward and thereby help to increase the number of "sissy" men in our ranks, who lie down on the job and let the women do the work.

The Lord Jesus said some very plain things to the church at Thyatira because they permitted a woman, who called herself a prophetess, to teach (Revelation 2:20). The "certain and unmistakable" Scriptures on this question are the prohibitions of Paul in I Corinthians and I Timothy and the example of the Lord Jesus while on earth in not appointing any woman to official position and His prohibition in Revelation 2:20. All the Scriptures the brethren introduce to support women speaking in public in mixed assemblies can be explained harmoniously and consistently with these plain prohibitions of God's Word. According to all principles of sound exegesis, in the language of Bro. Gambrell, their interpretation is "monstrous, impossible and wrong;" it arrays Scripture against Scripture and makes "certain and unmistakable" Scriptures to be contradicted by others, whose interpretation is to say the least of it doubtful.

=====

[p. 95]

XII

Baptist Churches Conservers and Propagators of the Truth

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15.)

The great apostle to the Gentiles tells his son Timothy to "hold fast to the pattern of sound words." Many Baptists have forgotten that exhortation. One of the most common phrases heard in our Baptist Zion today is about "kingdom work." It is neither scriptural nor sound. The Scriptures never use it. They talk about church work but never mention kingdom work. What the Scriptures are silent about is not scriptural. It is as unsound as it is unscriptural.

Two serious errors grow out of our much talk about kingdom work.

First, if our work is kingdom work, then since all the born-from-above are in the kingdom, "union" meetings and "union" missionary activities and "union" Sunday School work and many other unscriptural practices and agencies divert both funds and workers from scriptural church work on the plea that they are kingdom workers. Serious leakage, both of men and money, would be stopped and much needed time, money and work would be conserved to the spread of the truth, if our Baptist people would quit using the unscriptural expression "kingdom work" and magnify church work. No commission was ever given by our Lord and King to anybody, even though in the kingdom, who was not loyal enough to the King, to obey Him in baptism and become a member of His church. His commissions were given to church workers, not to kingdom workers.

And herein is the second serious hindrance to our

[p. 96]

Lord's work that is done by Baptists, who magnify kingdom work. Unconsciously and unwittingly perhaps, but none-the-less truly and painfully, do they cripple and impair the work of the churches of the Lord Jesus, by leaving the impression that the kingdom and kingdom work are the main things; and that it doesn't make any difference whether the born anew obey their Lord in baptism and obey the commission, given by Him to His churches or not. And growing out of this unsound talk about "kingdom work" and the resultant idea, that the kingdom is the main thing, you hear everywhere today the specious plea from men, who are disloyal and disobedient to our Lord and King, that it doesn't make any difference what church you join, just so you are sincere. "Bigots to laxness," as Samuel Johnson called them, may so talk and so think: but the Son of God did not so teach. He said "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

Obedience is the test of loyalty and love. And no one is obedient to Him, who substitutes sincerity for obedience. The institution, which He founded and called "My church," is the only one that He would recognize and own. Since the only time we find the expression "churches of Christ" in the New Testament, it is in the plural, the Holy Spirit thus testifies in the most convincing way possible, that the "My church"

founded by the Lord Jesus, is a local and not a universal church. It makes lots of difference to Him, whether you belong to His church or some church founded by a man. And when you see your church works, that were wrought to build up some man's church instead of the one He built, go up in smoke and ashes at the last day and you are saved so as by fire, you will think it made a good deal of difference as to what church you joined.

But to my text.

1. A Local Church Spoken of in the Text

The first question that men ask, when they read this text is: What kind of a church did Paul mean, when he said the church is the pillar and ground of the truth? Catholics say

[p. 97]

he was speaking of a universal, visible church, the hierarchy, which they call the Holy Catholic church.

Protestant Pedo Baptists and others say he was speaking of the universal, invisible church, which they say includes all the saved.

The context shows conclusively, however, that Paul was speaking of a local church. In 1 Tim 3:8-14). Paul had been setting forth the qualifications and duties of bishops and deacons and their wives. They are officers in a local church. This is always true and their service as there outlined is limited to the individual church of which they are officials. The church spoken of in the text then must have been the local church, of which Timothy was pastor at this time. Jesse B. Thomas in his book, *"The Church and Kingdom,"* on page 232 says of this passage: "It is singular that any reader of this epistle should interpret this personal counsel to a local pastor as to the proper behavior of a pastor or his people, in relation to the body, to which they both belong, as in any way referring to a world-church. For, in the first place, both house (household) and church are an anarthrous, as well as the words following. It should read 'a house of God which is a church of a living God, a pillar and a stay of the truth.' This implies as Hort concludes that 'Paul's idea is that each living society of Christians is a pillar and stay (bulwark) of the truth, as an object of belief and a guide of life for mankind.' It would have been useless to instruct Timothy as to the duties of a pastor of the church universal, for he held no such office, or the church invisible, for it has no officers at all."

The American Commentary says in loco: "Paul sends these instructions to Timothy that he may know how to conduct himself in the affairs of the Ephesian

Church. The importance of guiding aright the affairs of the church is shown from the momentous relation of the church to the world as the pillar and base of the truth, in conserving and proclaiming divine truth among men. Each church is a column and base of the truth. It is God's chosen institution, by which His truth is

[p. 98]

upborne and made known through all ages. Its office is to conserve and publish it as God's message."

Strong's Theology says: "The whole church, not the bishop (so-called) is to maintain pure doctrine and practice." This is proven "from the committing the ordinances to the charge of the whole church to observe and guard. As a church expresses truth in her teaching, so she is to express it in symbol through her ordinances. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not to be administered at the discretion of the individual minister. He is simply the organ of the church; pocket baptismal and communion services are without warrant. The only organized body known to the New Testament is the local church, and this is the only body of any sort, competent to have charge of the ordinances. The Invisible church has no officers. The Lord's Supper was observed by these churches as organized bodies." Pages 505, 551.

These testimonies are unanswerable and are abundant to prove that the church referred to in the text is a local church.

2. Each Baptist Church a Conserver and Propagator of the Truth.

The word translated "pillar" means a stay, a column, a support, that which upholds whatever is resting upon it. That means that every Baptist church is to uphold and defend the truth against all comers in its community. Wherever any Baptist church is recreant to that sacred trust, the truth falls to the ground in the community in which it is located. Wherever Baptists compromise, the truth is compromised: wherever Baptists are true to the faith, the truth is conserved and upheld and caused to stand. The only foundation that truth has in any community is the Baptist church in that community. No other church has the truth and if it had it, it is not strong enough to support it, because of the weakness of its foundation, being wholly of men. Only a church of Christ can support the truth, because no other has a foundation against which the very gates of hell themselves can not prevail. If the truth falls Christ is dishonored and the truth

[p. 99]

defamed. How important then that Baptist churches should uphold and conserve and defend the once delivered faith!

Baptists are not simply to conserve the essentials, they are to conserve and preserve all the truth. The truth is a unit. It stands or falls together. "If Christ isn't Lord of all He isn't Lord at all." If Lord of all, He is Lord as to baptism and church-membership and tithing and world-wide missions and church polity. If these things are thrown into the scrap-heap on the plea that they are non-essentials, then His deity and God-hood go with them. He spoke as authoritatively about them as He did about His God-hood. There is more in the New Testament about close-communication than there is about the virgin birth: more about baptism than there is about His deity; more about church polity than there is about the resurrection: more about the work of the local churches than about the second coming of our Lord. The World's Sunday School Convention at Tokio some years back furnished indisputable proof, that when Fundamentalists scrap the Bible teachings about baptism, the Lord's Supper, church polity and church perpetuity, in order to get together on what they call the essentials, that in a pinch they will compromise the gospel, the deity of our Lord, the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures and every other so-called fundamental. The local churches of our Lord are the God-ordained pillars and conservers of the truth and only those churches, which are conserving all the truth, are really conserving any of it.

But not only is each local church a conserver of the truth: it is also a propagator of the truth. The word translated "ground" means a base, a bulwark, a base of supplies for the spread of the truth. Each church is to be not only a conserver of the truth, but a publisher and proclaimer of the truth. What a base of supplies was to the men at the front in the army, a Baptist church is to be to the gospel and the truth. Just as munitions and nurses and doctors and food and recruits were supplied the men at the front from the base of supplies; so every church of the Lord Jesus is to supply

[p. 100]

men and money for our missionary work and workers at home and abroad. The commission was given by our Lord to the first church and then as the churches multiplied, to each one of them. Each church was a recruiting station for men and supplies for all kinds of missionary work. Each New Testament church was, under the Holy Spirit, a self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating base for the truth. Jerusalem sent men to Samaria. Antioch sent men and money to western Asia and to far-away Europe. Philippi sent resources and supplies to Paul and Timothy and the balance of their co-laborers and supported them while they preached the gospel and organized churches and trained workers. Paul robbed other churches to open up work in Corinth, a great wicked, heathen city, on foreign mission territory: and the one charge of inferiority he brought against them was that they were not self-supporting and did nothing to support him in propagating the truth in other places.

Churches that are willing to be helped out of mission funds instead of helping to support missionaries who are carrying the gospel to others, are inferior churches and are not worth supporting long. They are cumberers of the ground and ought to die and get out of the way of churches that will be real bases of supplies for the truth. Eight or ten times in the New Testament we are told to be church-builders: never once are we told to be kingdom-builders. The command to make Baptists is as imperative as the command to make disciples or Christians. And the command to teach or indoctrinate the churches, thereby making them self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating bases of supplies for the truth and the whole program of the Lord Jesus, is just as imperative as to make disciples or to make Baptists. If a church will not be made self-supporting and self-propagating, either in the mountains or in the cities in the homeland or on the mission fields, it ought to be turned out to die. When the Son of God told the church at Ephesus that if they did not repent and do their first works, He would remove their candlestick from them, He said in the plainest way possible, that if they did not become self-propagating

[p. 101]

and missionary as in the days of their first love He would let them die. A church that isn't missionary isn't worth supporting and ought to die. The most far-reaching work Paul ever did, he did in the nearly three years he was at Ephesus. Six or seven other churches, known as the seven churches of Asia, were all founded and established by Paul during his stay at Ephesus. When the Lord Jesus walked among them in the days of His revelation to John, He sends word to their pastor (angel) that, if they do not repent and become missionary as they were in their first love, He is going to let them die. It was to this same church, while Timothy was their pastor, that Paul sent word in the words of the text that they are to be the "conservers and propagators of the truth." The business of a Baptist church is to be a conserver and a propagator of the gospel and the once delivered faith. If they and their pastors are not doing that, then the Lord Jesus, the great Head of the church, threatens to remove their candlestick, for though they have a name to live they are in reality dead. That is why a "peanut" pastor is a menace to any church. The very life of the church is threatened by the Lord Jesus, the head of the church, if they leave their first love. The first love of the church at Ephesus made them the most missionary church in all Western Asia except Antioch. Seven other churches were established by Paul during his three years' stay in Ephesus. They were a great missionary center. Their missionary zeal and enthusiasm had now lagged and flagged and the Lord Jesus is now threatening their very life because of the decay of their love for missions and the gospel.

=====

[p. 102]

XIII

A Baptist Church the Climax of God's Measureless Wisdom

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him" (Ephesians 3:8-12).

This is a big text; but it discusses a big subject. It takes a big text to tell all Paul here tells about the subject the Holy Spirit revealed through him. The subject matter was of God's choosing, not of Paul's; it was given to Paul by revelation, not something he evolved from his own reason. The messenger through whom God revealed His long hidden wisdom on this subject was also of God's choice. Paul was both an object and a subject of God's grace. Objectively he had been in God's purposes of grace a long time. From the ages he had been God's chosen instrumentality for the revelation of this long hidden mystery. Subjectively he had been apprehended by God's sovereign grace on the road to Damascus and God's purposes of grace for him unto all nations and all times, revealed in part both to him and in him, before he arose from the earth (Acts 26:16-18). God's purpose of grace included revealing Christ in him as well as to him. No man ever knows Christ simply by what he hears. Christ is revealed to him by the gospel of grace; but Christ is revealed in him

[p. 103]

by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 37:1-14). Sinners are born from above by the word and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5). The new birth is miraculous and supernatural (Galatians 4:28, Ephesians 1:19-21). Paul is a pattern believer in the supernaturalness of the way his faith was wrought in him (I Timothy 1:16).

God's purposeful grace was revealed unto Paul in his salvation, in his call into the ministry, in his call to the mission field and in his call as God's chosen steward through whom His mysteries of grace and glory were to be revealed. God sought Paul: he was not seeking God. God called him into the ministry: no man called him out. God's call was effectual through the effectual working of His power. God's calls are all effectual both unto salvation and the ministry. God-called men are thrust into the ministry: they do not go into it themselves, neither are they called out by others. Paul was a minister by grace and a foreign missionary by grace: both of which mean that men had nothing to do with making him either a minister or a missionary. God's

sovereign grace and power were not bestowed upon him in vain. This grace was bestowed upon him unto all nations and that grace did not fail to accomplish God's eternal purpose in him.

God's grace always works sovereignly and powerfully. No man can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest Thou? Paul's call was very definite. It would not have been of grace if it had not been. Grace leaves nothing to man's planning or choosing. There is no mixing of grace with any thing of man. Grace and works do not mix: neither do reason and revelation: neither do God's unchangeable plans and men's changeable ones. Grace bestows all her gifts through faith: and faith excludes all works or efforts or wisdom of men. Grace called Paul to a very definite work -- preaching the gospel and revealing Christ. It was to a very definite people -- the Gentiles -- the heathen. Grace was effectual in working out every detail of God's purpose for him, both in him and through him. He finished God's predestined course for him before the lion killed him. (2 Timothy 4:17, 7). The theme of this whole chapter is God's sovereign and effectual grace. God's purposes never fail.

[p. 104]

Having first of all seen something of God's purposes of grace in His chosen instrumentality for revealing His long hidden mysteries, let us now turn to the text and find out, if we can, what this mystery, hidden from creation, but revealed through Paul, includes.

1. What Is a Mystery?

A mystery isn't something we can not understand; but something that no man can reason out. As used by the Gnostics and other secret cults in Bible days it referred to the secrets of their orders, which only the initiated knew. As used in the Scriptures it refers to previously hidden truths, which the prophets and other wise men, desired to look into and probably tried to fathom; but which no man knew then or knows now except by divine revelation. In all of them there still remains the supernatural element, notwithstanding what the Scriptures reveal about them. The mysteries of the kingdom, of godliness, of the translation of the living saints, of Israel's blindness, of the incarnate Christ as the embodied fullness of the Godhead, of the seven stars and seven candlesticks and other Bible mysteries are still pried into by curious minds: but no man knows anything about any of them, except what is written. "Nothing beyond what is written" is true of all Bible mysteries. We know only what is revealed and there is still much about each of these mysteries that God has not seen fit to reveal. Many questions arise about them in inquiring minds but there is only the blackness of darkness, and no light at all, when we try to go beyond what God has revealed. He has revealed all we need to know.

2. The Mystery of the Church.

The mystery revealed in the text was one that had been hidden since the creation. God had hid it in Himself throughout all past ages. Paul was His chosen steward through whom He would turn the light upon this mystery. This mystery is as to His purpose and mission for a New Testament church. The greatness of this mystery is seen in that even after God has revealed it, men refuse to believe and try to make it mean

[p. 105]

something entirely different from what God revealed. So contrary is what God herein reveals to all human reason and human wisdom and human plans, that men will not receive the truth, even after God has revealed it to them. Many try to make the church, through which God's wisdom is revealed to three world's a great compact visible hierarchy, like the Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic or Lutheran or Episcopal or Presbyterian or Methodist churches, with their compact organizations and overlords and ecclesiastical courts and well greased machinery. That kind of a church would reveal human wisdom, but not the wisdom of Him, who said: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways." And other great and wise men say: "No, the church is not a great, compact organization like that, with its intricate machinery." But they in their wisdom imagine that it is an invisible, universal institution, composed of all the saved of all ages and climes. That would be Satanic wisdom, but not divine wisdom. Satan has just such a compact organization of spirit beings and forces. It may be referred to in the text by "principalities and powers." One thing is sure. Just three chapters further over (Ephesians 6:12) "principalities and powers" do refer to the forces of evil under Satanic control, with whom the Christian has to wrestle and war. If we interpret (Ephesians 3:10) by (Ephesians 6:12), the "principalities and powers" referred to not only may mean but must mean the invisible spirit forces of the god of this age, with the most compact organization of super-lords, called "the rulers of the darkness of this world," at work in the air all about us, trying to defeat God's purposes and plans. Wherein would God's wisdom be revealed to men and demons and angels, if the church here referred to was an invisible, universal organization of spiritual forces? Satan has an exact counterpart of that and better organized. If there is such a thing as an invisible, universal church, it is badly divided in every way. It has no unity as to plans, as to headship, as to its mission, as to methods, as to ends to be accomplished or as to program. Wherein would the manifold wisdom of God be shown by such confusion worse confounded

[p. 106]

in His ranks? Satan has an invisible, universal, compact organization of spirit forces to fight the gospel and the saints. The idea of an invisible, universal church being the

church here spoken of would not be a mystery: for Satan had just such an organization at work before God revealed His mystery to Paul. A big, invisible universal organization of any kind does not fit the text. It was not hidden from creation: Satan had one of his own. It was not a mystery that men could know only by revelation. And as B. H. Carroll well says, such an institution would lack the two essential features of being an *ekklesia*, or church. In his discussion with W. J. McGlothlin as to the meaning of the word *ekklesia* some years ago, B. H. Carroll said: "The proposed new sense (that is, making *ekklesia* refer to an invisible universal body) destroys the essential ideas of the old word, namely, organization and assembly, and would leave Christ without an institution, an official business body on earth. How can there be a body of disciples apart from organization and assembly? Miscellaneous, scattered, unattached units do not constitute a body."

The church referred to in the text was neither a universal nor a universal invisible institution. It was the local Baptist church at Ephesus, to which Paul was writing.

3. Baptist Church Reveals God's Manifold Wisdom

Men can take great, compact organizations with their super-lords and intricate details and do things. Satan organizes his limitless forces of evil spirits, with their rulers of darkness and accomplishes wonders. God's "exceedingly various, multiform, multifarious, manifold, immense and infinite" wisdom is seen in that He has no great compact organization of any kind to accomplish and carry on His purposes and will. His only organizations are little, independent, local democracies, with no super-lords and no centralized power of government. Through them He will carry out His commission and make His gospel known to the ends of the earth.

First, it should be borne in mind, that this was hidden in God from creation until New Testament days. Nothing like a Baptist church was ever heard of until Jesus Christ came and organized

[p. 107]

out of the material prepared by the first Baptist preacher, John the Baptist, the first Baptist church. To this church He gave His world-wide commission: but unto Paul was reserved the privilege, as a steward of this long hidden mystery, of revealing that the only organization God would have for carrying His gospel to the ends of the earth, would be these independent local assemblies. In Old Testament days He had centralized governments, patriarchal, then tribal, then a theocracy, then judges and then kings. Nothing like these little, independent democracies was ever heard of until the Lord Jesus established the first one. God's mystery, hidden in Himself, was now revealed by His chosen steward, the first great foreign missionary, who put into practice what is herein revealed.

Paul went out without any centralized power or organization behind him, depending upon God and these little, independent democracies to support him in his world wide-missionary activities. All this is said in the text and fits only in and with God's missionary activities through Baptist churches in New Testament days, with no centralized head, government or power.

But in the second place do these little independent democracies reveal the "multiform and exceedingly varied" wisdom of God? If they do, we ought to be able to see that wisdom; for Paul said that God's purpose was through him to throw light upon how this mystery makes known God's many-coloured wisdom. Has God's wisdom been revealed through these little, independent churches through the centuries, and if so, how?

First, God's infinite wisdom has been revealed through the centuries in that He has perpetuated them from Christ's day until the present. Alexander Campbell said that "public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced." Ypeij and Dermout, Dutch Reformed historians, said: "On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through

[p. 108]

all ages." Sir Isaac Newton said: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized with the Church of Rome."

Prof. William Cecil Duncan, University of Louisiana, said: "Baptists do not, as do most Protestant denominations, date their origin from the Reformation of 1520. By means of that great religious movement, indeed, they were brought forth from comparative obscurity into prominent notice. . . . They did not, however, originate with the Reformation, for long before Luther lived, nay, long before the Roman Catholic Church herself was known, Baptists and Baptist churches existed and flourished in Europe, in Asia and in Africa."

Both God's wisdom and God's power have been seen in the perpetuity of Baptist churches: for Satan's compact organization of spirit forces, all the powers of Rome, the last mistress of the world, and the compact ecclesiastical organizations of both the Roman and Greek Catholic churches have all spent their utmost strength and combined powers to stamp out and destroy these little, independent democracies. Only the infinite wisdom and omnipotent power of our sovereign God could have prevented three such mighty and universal forces as these from accomplishing their aim. But Satan and his rulers of darkness; temporal Rome and her armies and fagots and stakes; and ecclesiastical Rome, with her intrigue, her bans, her councils and her

conspiracies, have all failed to stamp out the Baptists. Thus have three worlds been forced to know and confess the manifold wisdom of God.

But again, not only have the preservation and perpetuity of Baptist churches, with their simple faith and lack of central control, against the three most compactly organized powers in the universe, namely, satanic spirits, ecclesiastical Rome and Rome, the mistress of the world, demonstrated God's manifold wisdom and mighty power: but His method of doing it has also revealed His matchless wisdom. He has never fought the devil with fire. He has not matched force against force. He has never raised any armies. Though always persecuted and hunted into the dens and caves and mountain fastnesses

[p. 109]

of the earth; yet Baptists have never been persecutors. His method of their preservation has always been by a Book, the Baptist Book, the Bible, the infallible and inerrant Word of God. God's Book and God's Spirit have preserved the Baptists and Baptist churches. Presbyterians and Episcopalians thrive and grow on education. Methodists and the so called Holiness cults live on emotionalism. Catholics blossom and reach their glory and power where ignorance abounds and force has sway. Baptists, even under bitterest persecution, multiply and fill the earth, wherever the Bible is read, and obeyed. Again, God's multifarious wisdom is seen, in the remarkable unity of these little independent democracies. Bound neither by creeds nor tradition, nor oaths, nor ritual, nor centralized ecclesiastical authority, yet the rank and file of our Baptist churches are more nearly one in faith and practice than any other people on earth. Others with their ecclesiastical courts and centralized government marvel at the unity of our Baptist hosts and can neither understand nor explain it. A few educated leaders, obsessed with their own importance and infected with germs of unionism or modernism, imbibed in the vitiated atmosphere of rationalized "kultur," may give us a good deal of notoriety at times: but the great body of common people, that compose the overwhelming majority of Baptist churches, are sound at heart and one in faith on the great historic truths of God's Word. The secret of their unity is found in their reading the same book the world over and obeying it.

And then the marvelous wisdom of God is manifested through Baptist churches to the world and to Satan's organized forces of evil in forces He uses. It is still true as it was in New Testament days that He uses "unlearned and ignorant men." He not only uses that kind, but He actually chooses that kind. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and

[p. 110]

base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Corinthians 1:26-29). And therein is the Scripture fulfilled, which says: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." A Sunday School Board expert at the recent Southern Baptist Convention sensed God's methods and God's plans rightly when he said: "Thirty years from now 80% of the First Churches in all our cities will have back-woods, country boys for their pastors, just as now." Rural and back-woods churches furnish nearly all of the worth-while laymen and preachers for all positions of responsibility and trust, either in church or denominational life. Satan doesn't do it that way. He goes to the colleges and universities and selects the mighty and noble and wise. God's much-varied wisdom is seen in that He chooses the weak and the foolish and the base and the despised and the noughts and with them confounds the wise and mighty and noble.

Lastly, God has given a demonstration of His immense and muchly varied wisdom to kings and councils and hierarchies and ecclesiastical courts and satanic cabals, through little, independent, Baptist democracies in His choice of preaching for the spread of His truth. The wisdom of this world magnifies schools or social service or organization or money or publicity. The Bible doesn't. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Baptists thrive in the country because it is there that they depend upon preaching. Preaching and teaching the Bible are God's two chosen agencies for the salvation of the lost and the edification and confirmation of the saved. Up in the Blue rass last summer we heard pastors talking about live societies in their churches and dead churches. They are organized to death. Some churches are lodged to death and some are clubbed to death and some are societyized to death and some are organized to death and some are starved to death and some are entertained to death and some are sung to death (but not with

[p. 111]

spiritual songs) and some are hugged to death by the world and some are unionized to death and some are lectured to death and some are ritualized to death: but you never heard of a Baptist church being preached to death. Baptist churches thrive and prosper and grow and multiply by the preaching of the Word of God. Satanic wisdom puts the emphasis on organization and show. Worldly wisdom puts the emphasis on education and social service. God's marvelous and manifold wisdom puts the whole and sole emphasis upon preaching the Word. Information, inspiration, evangelization and indoctrination are the four corner-stones on which Baptist growth and enlargement and spirituality and consecration and liberality rest. Preaching is God's one ordained

method for evangelization and indoctrination: and preaching and Bible study are God's only prescribed agencies for information and inspiration. God's favorite preacher told his favorite son in the ministry that the Bible would "thoroughly furnish or equip him for every good work." This same preacher wrote to the church of which this favorite son of his was the pastor and told them that God gave to the churches pastors and teachers for "the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The pastor by preaching and teaching the Bible can bring every member of his church, who will hear and obey the Word, to perfection in character and service, like unto his Lord's.

Baptist churches from the foundation of the world in God's hidden purpose are His chosen agencies through which to demonstrate to earth, heaven, and hell, His infinite and many coloured wisdom. This demonstration is two-fold. He will demonstrate through them His wisdom and power in choosing them as His agencies for carrying His commission, to the ends of the earth and carrying out His purposes to the end of the age. And then He will demonstrate through them His manifold wisdom in perfecting the individual members

[p. 112]

in life and character and service like unto the image of their Lord. And as the climax of this demonstration, He will show the depths of His measureless wisdom by perfecting redeemed men and women in the likeness of their glorious Lord (the most beautiful likeness in all the universe of God) by the foolishness of preaching and teaching just one Book, God's Book, the Baptist Book, The Bible. Therefore, Brother Pastor, as most highly honored of all God's workmen, in heaven or earth, preach and teach the Bible.

=====

[p. 113]

XIV

Why Be a Baptist?

T. T. Eaton used to say that if one Christian ought to be a Baptist every Christian ought to be a Baptist. He was right about it. The Bible ought to be the only and all-sufficient rule of faith for every child of God. A. T. Robertson is right in saying that given a new heart and an open Bible and everybody will be Baptists.

The last chapter in this book closes where the first one began. If it is in the Bible it is Baptist doctrine. If it is Baptist doctrine you can find it in the Bible. That is why

every saved man and woman ought to be Baptists. Because Baptist doctrine is Bible doctrine and vice versa because Bible doctrine is Baptist doctrine is God's unanswerable reason why every child of God ought to be a Baptist. But says some one: "How am I to know that Baptist doctrine is Bible doctrine?" "What saith the Scriptures?" Test every doctrine by the Book. "Nothing beyond what is written." Here is the chapter and verse proving that 50 Baptist doctrines are Bible doctrines. If it is Baptist doctrine you can find it in the Bible.

1. The Bible Alone is Our Only and All-sufficient Rule of Faith and Practice.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

2. One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

3. Jesus the Son of God was Very God of Very God.

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

[p. 114]

4. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Godhead and as truly God as God the Father and God the Son.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

5. An Inerrant Bible.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:13-17).

6. The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

7. The Personality of the Devil.

"Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

8. The Genesis Account of Creation.

"For by him all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16-17).

9. The Fall of Man.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. . . . By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Romans 5:12, 19).

10. The Sovereignty of God.

"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isaiah 14:24).

11. Unconditional election.

"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election

[p. 115]

might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger" (Romans 9:11-12).

12. Free Moral Agency.

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

13. Baptists are Individualists. No Proxies in Religion.

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

14. Free Church in a Free State.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

15. Salvation by grace.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10).

16. Justification by faith. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

17. Sanctification by blood.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12).

18. Repentance before faith.

"But the publicans and the harlots believed him: when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him" (Matthew 21:32).

19. Only the blood-washed in heaven.

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14).

20. Only one way to be saved.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

[p. 116]

21. Just one gospel.

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham" (Galatians 3:8).

22. No new birth without the gospel.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. -- And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1: 23-25).

23. The new birth of the Word and the Holy Spirit.

"Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 2:13-14).

24. Eternal life a Present possession.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

25. Children of God by faith.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

26. Salvation before baptism.

"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10:47).

27. Once-for-all Salvation.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

28. Democratic church government.

"One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matthew 23:8).

29. Church receives members. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations" (Romans 14:1).

[p. 117]

30. Church excludes members.

"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" (Matthew 18:17).

31. First Church founded by Christ.

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles" (1 Corinthians 12:28). And when it was day, He (Jesus) called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13).

32. The Lord's Supper a Church ordinance.

"For first of all when ye come together in the church" (I Corinthians 11:24-26).

33. Immersion of the Saved.

"Much water" (John 3:23). "Went down both into the water" (Acts 8:38). "Buried with him by baptism" (Romans 6:4). "Risen with Him" (1 Corinthians), "Straightway coming up out of the water" (Mark 1:10).

"The Lord added to them daily the saved" (Acts 2:47). Campbell's translation).

34. Baptist Baptism from Heaven.

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of Him" (Luke 7:29-30).

35. Bishops and Deacons the two Church Officers.

"To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1).

36. An Ordained Ministry.

"That thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5).

37. World-wide Missions.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

38. This commission was given to the churches, which will be here until Jesus comes.

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

[p. 118]

Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

39. Heathen Lost Without the Gospel.

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17).

"He that believeth shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

"How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Romans 10: 14).

40. The Lord's Day, the Day of Worship.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).

41. Degrees In Heaven.

"If any man's work abide which he hath built -- thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Corinthians 3:14-15).

42. The Final Judgment.

"For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

43. The Resurrection of the Body.

"Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6).

44. Resurrection of Saints.

"Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23).

45. The Second Coming of our Lord.

"And, behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12).

46. A Never-ending Heaven of Bliss.

"I go and prepare a place for you,. And if I go and prepare a

[p. 119]

place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3).

47. An Unending Hell of Fire and Brimstone.

"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (Revelation 14:11).

48. No Second Chance.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

49. No Annihilation.

"It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:45-46).

50. The End of All Who Believe in Salvation by Works.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23).

The proof is abundant that if it is Baptist doctrine, you can find it in the Bible. Why ought you to be a Baptist then? You ought not to be, unless you take the Bible as your only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. If you should be a Baptist for any other reason than that, you would be a hypocrite. Love to Christ and love for the Bible are the only reasons why anybody should be a Baptist. The mightiest preacher of the ages said: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be accursed when Jesus comes." If he has been born again he will love the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus Himself

said: "If you love me, keep my commandments." You cannot keep His commandments without being a Baptist. That is why you ought to be a Baptist. Love for the Lord Jesus and love for the truth will make every born-again man in the world a Baptist, if he will obey the Book. That has been tried in every country in this world today, where the Bible is read and loved and obeyed. In India and Burma and Germany and Russia and Persia and Bulgaria and Brazil

[p. 120]

and Cuba and any number of other countries around this world, before there were any Baptists in those lands, the reading of God's Word made Baptists out of folks who were not Baptists, and they went sometimes half way around the world to get Baptist baptism. In that they are following their Lord. He walked sixty miles or more to get Baptist baptism. Right now in Peru, where there are no Baptists, two different groups of believers, made believers through the distribution of Bibles by the colporteurs of the British and Foreign Bible Society; right now I say these two groups of believers, widely scattered, are waiting and begging for some Baptist missionary to come and give them New Testament baptism. The New Testament was written to make men disciples and then make them Baptists. You can't obey the Book without being a Baptist: and you can't be an informed and obedient Baptist without being a Missionary Baptist. Love to Christ and loyalty to His Word will make every saved man in the world a Baptist. That is why you ought to be a Baptist.