

Baptist Distinctives

Carl E. Sadler, Th.D; D. D.

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**President
Kentucky Mountains Baptist Schools
RR#2 Box 87F
Booneville, Kentucky
(606) -**

Preface

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Introduction

Thank you for this privilege of sharing some very important truths concerning the *Lord's churches*. These truths are very precious to me and countless millions of others like me. I, along with them, consider the *Lord's churches* as the 'apple of His eye' and the institution through which He should and will get great glory in this age and in the ages to come.

His *churches* have been like an abbey to me where I can live with others who love the *Lord* and carry out my desire to serve the *Christ* who loved me and gave Himself for me so that I may have eternal life and enjoy the presence of God in my life. His *churches* have been like a mother who seeks the welfare of her children, and like a nurse that cares for the health of her patients. Oh, what a blessing the *Lord's churches* have been to me.

I am afraid God's children (especially in the last several years) have neglected the study of the nature and the history of the *Lord's churches* to their own harm. The Biblical truths of the *church* should find an important place in the study of God's Word by His people. The general attitude of Christians is: "Oh, one *church* is as good as another; it does not matter to what *church* you belong; the *churches* are so imperfect and so full of hypocrites; why be concerned about the *churches*, we are all working for the same place;" or, "I do not want to be tied down to the demand of a *church*."

This general attitude has pervaded Christianity so much that many *Baptists* have begun to voice it also. Of all people, *Baptists* should treasure the *Bible* truths concerning the *church* and praise God for His institution that through the

grace of God has preserved the Word of God and has "*kept the faith that was once delivered to the saints.*"

A study of the history of the true **church** will reveal many things to us that the world has kept hidden. The lack of a true study has caused much misunderstanding of **Baptist** tenets by the world, especially the Christians of other denominations. There are many people who believe that **Baptists** baptize in order to save people. They do not know why **Baptists** baptize (they call it **rebaptism**.) those who come into their **churches** from other denominations. They have no knowledge of **Baptist** origin, or a faulty view of it. They think the name '**Baptist**' is self-imposed as some others who have taken the name **Church of Christ**', '**Christian Church**', or '**Church of God**', etc.

There is also a lack of knowledge as well as a disinterest by some **Baptists** concerning their origin, history, accomplishments, and beliefs. It is the duty of every **Baptist** to know what and why they believe and practice as they do. The **Bible** instructs Christians to be able to give an 'answer for the hope within'. It is also the duty of **Baptists** to teach and train their people in all truth. This means their history and accomplishments as well as their beliefs. In other decades **Baptist** were better indoctrinated in their own beliefs and practices than they are now, especially about their history and accomplishments. The environment in which I was reared was much more conducive to the reception of particular beliefs of individual groups than this present day. **Methodists**, **Presbyterians**, and other denominations also stood for their beliefs more strongly in the previous decades than they do now. This generation is characterized by the attitude: "So What?"

Character and destiny are both determined by what one believes. A faith not worth fighting for is not worth having!

Many Christians believe that their relationship with *Christ* and His *churches* is that it is something 'caught' rather than something 'taught'; morals are more important than doctrines; denominational affinity is bigotry; or, it matters not what one believes as long as he does right. All of these are wrong. Truth must be taught or it will not be caught. Doctrines result in morals for they are as the spring and morals as the stream. Bigotry is a state of mind that is manifested in intolerance or obstinacy which is not the same as determination or firmness. As to believing and doing, **believing is the more important because it comes first.** What one does is the result of his belief. Beside this, God saves people who believe rather than those who do.

The Name '**Baptist**'

The people (*churches*) who are known as *Baptists* have not always been called by that name. They have not always called themselves '*Baptists*'; neither have they always been called '*Baptists*' by their enemies. Since the time of the early *church* they have been called by many different names. The name '*Baptist*' is the one that has lasted for the last 300-400 years. It, like the name 'Christian', was first given as a meaning of derision by their enemies; yet at the same time it carried a lot of meaning. The name '*Baptist*' came from the hatred of the *pedo-baptists* because '*Baptists*' rejected the baptism of babies. Before being called '*Baptists*' they were called '*Anabaptists*', a word that means re-baptizers. The name '*Christian*' and the name '*Baptist*' are both like the 'cross', having been changed from the marks of shame to badges of honor.

When we call ourselves '*Baptists*' we are not bragging. We have nothing to brag about because what we have is because we are recipients of God's grace. Often we fail to tell of the good things about us for fear some will think we are bragging. There is such a thing as false modesty - when we fail to tell about the things we ought to tell.

Every name in the *Bible* has a special meaning. For example: *Matthew 1:21* - "*And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.*" '*Jesus*' means Saviour.

The name '*Baptist*' means all that John the Baptist means. He gave the meaning to the name '*Baptist*'. He was the first baptizer; there was none before him. His baptism came from heaven and not from men, just as his name came from

heaven and not from men. He was commissioned by God the Father (*John 1:6,33*). He was filled with the Holy Spirit (*Luke 1:15,17,80*). He was praised by *Christ*, who sought baptism by him and no other (*John 1:6, 33*). *Christ* lauded him profusely, saying he was "*the greatest born of woman*". *Christ* equated his baptism with the counsel of God (*Luke 7:29-30*). John the *Baptist* taught and baptized the twelve apostles, which means they were *Baptists* in faith and practice. This first *Baptist* was honored by Peter and Paul as being the first Christian preacher. He was called "the *Baptist*" before he baptized.

John was not in the *Old Testament* dispensation. He was the *Baptist* that pioneered the *New Testament* dispensation. He was the forerunner of *Christ*. He, along with *Christ*, pioneered important revolutionary changes in God's management of His household. This change was manifested in his baptism which was administered to repentant sinners to show symbolically that their old natures were buried and new natures were received. He ended the *Old Testament* priesthood to which he had a right (*Luke 1:15-17*) and introduced a new priesthood in *Christ*.

The name '*Baptist*' means all that baptism means. Baptism means our death to the world of sin and it means newness of life for immersed believers. It means union with *Christ* forever. It shows a vow of continuous loyalty to *Christ*. It is the answer of a good conscience and it means equality for all believers. It symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of *Christ* because it is a symbol that pictures something that has spiritual significance. Baptism that is according to the *Scriptures* and *Baptist* baptism have the same meaning. Such baptism does not have the same meaning that pouring or sprinkling has. It does not have the same meaning that those who believe in "falling from grace" try to impose upon it.

The name '**Baptist**' is a Biblical name. It is found fifteen times in the *New Testament* and always with honor. To me, it seems as an ideal name for those who are faithful to *Christ*. I do not believe it belongs to those who deny the *Bible* as being inspired, to those who deny the perpetuity of the *Lord's churches*, to those who deny salvation is of the *Lord* and by grace only, or to those who do not baptize according to the Biblical pattern. The name has Biblical authority and therefore we must remember its Biblical meaning. It implies a focus on *Christ* as the "*Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world*". As John the *Baptist* was a witness for *Christ* so must those who take the name '*Baptists*'.

Other denominational names have historic and honorable meanings, but fall short of the meaning of the word '*Baptist*'. The '*Methodists*' get their name from the good methodical habits they practice. '*Presbyterians*' receive their name from the kind of government they have in their *churches* - elders who rule. '*Episcopalians*' get their name for the same reason - bishops who rule. '*Congregationals*' get their name from their manner of government too-self-governing '*Pentecostals*' take their name because they say they receive the same gifts as bestowed upon the Christians on the day of Pentecost. The '*Brethren*' are so called because of their avowed relationship to others who are saved. Should not this name '*Baptist*' deserve all the honor *Christ* gave to it?

The name '*Baptist*' is also *Christ*-centered. We like the first *Baptist*, John, point to the "*Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*". Present day *Baptists* magnify *Christ* and His redemptive work as the only name whereby men can be saved. Our chief ordinance, baptism, pantomimes the

death, burial, and resurrection of *Christ* in our behalf. We, like the apostle Paul, preach *Christ* and Him crucified.

The name '*Baptist*' is descriptive. It implies (The *Scriptures* say emphatically too) a burial of the old nature and a resurrection of the new nature of believers. It implies a burial of self-righteousness and a life by and through the imputed righteousness of *Christ* our *Lord*. As John the Baptist forsook the priest's home for the desert: good food for locust and wild honey; and luxurious clothes for camel's hair; so have *Baptists* through the ages forsaken the ways of the world to live an all-out life for *Christ*.

The name '*Baptist*' is a practical name. All the work of John is described at times in the word '*baptize*'. Baptism is a fitting climax of all preparatory Christian teaching and evangelism because it should come right after conversion. It (baptism) is a crucial step for new converts. It is the outward mark of the beginning of a new life in *Christ*. A true kind of baptism suggests that the new convert must share his new-found life with others - this is evangelism. The divinely chosen name '*Baptist*' when properly understood will increase one's moral vigor, sharpen the spiritual vision, and stimulate *church* growth.

Who Is The Baptist Hero?

We do not claim John the Baptist as our founder. *Jesus* is our founder, but He used the men John had prepared to build in the beginning His *church*. We do not deny a doctrinal kinship to John. Those who do are the losers. Some are so biased that they deny John's baptism as Christian baptism. *Christ* endorsed him and approved of his baptism (He walked over sixty miles to receive John's baptism and He began His *church* out of material prepared by John and his baptism). All *pedo-baptist* deny a doctrinal kinship with John and his baptism and many so-called *Baptists* are also denying such affinity. This is one of the reasons *Baptists* are drifting so far from *Christ* endorsed *New Testament* doctrines. Many *Baptists* have become victims of anti-baptist sterile theology in Europe and America. The bias against the *Anabaptists* of Luther's day by both *Catholic* and *Reformers* still exists. They have other heroes for their kind of *churches* instead of *Christ* and John the Baptist.

Many try to tell us that Roger Williams is our hero. Williams was a great man in some respects. He refused a Boston pastorate (*Congregationalist*) because he would not officiate an unseparated people. He saw the error of unbeliever's baptism and sprinkling. He did not receive *Baptist* baptism. He and Ezekiel Holloman baptized each other. That is not *Baptist* baptism. He began a *church* he called *Baptist*, but it was not. Neither his baptism nor his *church* came from a *Baptist church*. He ended up having communion only with his wife. His *church* soon went out of existence. Another was raised up in Providence, but not his. He is given credit by many as having started the first *Baptist Church* in America in Providence, Rhode Island in 1639. NO ! His was not the first in America because John Clarke brought his

whole congregation from England and settled in Newport, Rhode Island nearly a year before Roger Williams began his. The New England *Baptist Churches* sprang from the Newport *church* and not from the Providence *church*.

There are some who would have us believe that John Smyth was the founder of the first *Baptist Church* in England and then tell us that he was successively a *sabbatarian, an Anglican priest, a grafter in municipal politics, a forger, expelled for misconduct, a Puritan, a Separatist, a divider of pedo-baptist people, and self-baptized*. But records show that he went to Europe to receive *Baptist* baptism. He, too, was perhaps an excellent man, but why should we want him for our hero? There were many *Baptist* in the British Isles when he was there and many have as excellent record if not better than he. If he was a *Baptist* (much conflicting evidence about him), he was just one of many *Baptist* who lived at his time.

Here is a story that was told of one preacher who had some thoughts about John's baptism (this attitude is duplicated by many more): To his congregation one Sunday morning he undertook to show that when John baptized 'in' and 'into' water that it did not mean immersion. He said, "John did not really baptize **IN** Jordan but **CLOSE BY** the river Jordan." He continued, "Philip and the eunuch did not really go down **INTO** the water, but **CLOSE BY** the water." An Irishman who was in the assembly that morning came to the preacher later, and here is what he had to say: "Your Reverence, your sermon this morning brought me great comfort. It explains many mysteries which have long perplexed me. I could never understand how Jonah lived in the whale three days and three nights; nor how the three Hebrew children could be alive in the fiery furnace; nor Daniel stay alive in the lion's den. I am and have been a very wicked person and I have been afraid of

the future punishment I would receive for my wicked ways. You have relieved my fears. I will not go **INTO** hell and suffer for my wickedness, but will be **CLOSE BY** it. I will not be tormented **IN** the flames for I will be only **CLOSE BY**. Thank you, Your Reverence, for such a wonderful explanation of the words 'in' and 'into'".

Some Outstanding Achievements By Baptists

Baptists not only have an *ancient and Scriptural origin* and some distinguishing principles they have upheld, but they have in their history some men who have made outstanding achievements in the world. Achievements and ideals are great incentives to the character of those involved. If we would know our place as *Baptists*, we must consider our historic greatness concerning fidelity to the human rights of the people of the world as well as our heroic stand for God's Holy truths. *Baptist* principles have developed men with such a character of life that they have been potent factors in achievements worth while for the whole world. We have pioneers in so many fields of endeavor that to enumerate them might seem to be from a braggart spirit. But statements of irrefutable facts must be taken at face value.

Baptists have been *champions of religious freedom* from the very day of their establishment by *Christ*. From the time of the early *church* until the present day millions have been martyrs for the principle of religious freedom. It has been one of the outstanding principles of *Baptists*. In spite of both *Catholic* and *Reformers* persecution, they contended that all men had the right to worship according to the dictates of their own hearts. It did not come easy nor did it come quickly. The first charter for religious freedom to be secured was the charter in 1663 that made Rhode Island a free democratic state with full provisions for the liberty of conscience. This was secured by the efforts of John Clarke and Roger Williams.

Baptists have also been *champions of civil liberty*. The framers of the constitution of the United States were greatly influenced by the *Baptist* spirit of freedom and by the insis-

tence by **Baptists** to make the constitution a constitution of freedom. The first amendment, guaranteeing freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to petition was a result of this **Baptist** influence. This, too, was a long struggle.

Baptists were in the *forefront* of the *English translations of the Bible*. John Wycliffe and William Tyndale were both baptized by the **Baptists** of Wales. Both gave their lives for the cause of **Christ** and their devotedness to giving the people of England the Word of God in their own language so they would not need a priest to tell them what God said in His Word. In his death William Tyndale prayed, "**Lord**, open the King's eyes." The King James translation of the **Bible** came in less than 100 years.

The *father of modern missions* was William Carey, an English **Baptist** pastor. From his efforts personally and his pleas for taking the Word of God to the whole world organic foreign missions began in America. In 1810 the "**American Board of Commission for Foreign Missions**" was established. Two of these new missionaries who were sent to the foreign field (Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice) saw **Baptist** baptism as the true *New Testament* baptism and were baptized by **Baptists** in India.

Other areas have had their share of **Baptist** influence:

- The first aviator to cross the Atlantic was Lt. Reed, a **Baptist**.
- The first winner of a flight across America was Lt. Maynard, a **Baptist** preacher from North Carolina.
- **Baptist** Writers:

- Daniel DeFoe, writer of "Robinson Crusoe".
- John Milton, writer of "Paradise Lost".
- John Bunyan, writer of "Pilgrims Progress".

- Some great song writers were also **Baptists**:
 - Among them were Robert Lowery and Oliver Holden.
 - W.H. Doane gave us the music to "Pass Me Not O Gentle Saviour", "Near The Cross", "I Am Thine O Lord", and "Will Jesus Find Us Watching".
 - The following songs were written by **Baptists**: "How Firm a Foundation", "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less", "Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned", "Take the Name of **Jesus** With You", "Shall We Gather at the River", etc.

Here is a list of some outstanding men in the United States who were **Baptists**:

- George Washington.
- General Sam Houston.
- John Hart (one of the signers of the declaration of Independence).
- John Brown, whose fleet attacked the British when they came to collect revenue customs, etc.
- Abraham Lincoln was influenced by a **Baptist** mother.
- Henry Clay.
- President Arthur.
- Justice Hughes.
- William Jennings Bryant, and William Howard Taft had **Baptist** preachers as fathers.

Of the Tory sympathizers at the time of the American Revolution (926 in America and more than that exiled) not one name of a *Baptist* appeared.

It can be readily determined that there are two things that are extremely worthwhile to *Baptists: Religion and Freedom*. If this country holds such principles as our possessions and if there is a growing love for liberty in other lands, it is largely because these principles have been woven into our souls by generations of heroic souls who held the *Baptist* faith. These legacies of the past have made the present rich and strong for us. Advance in every walk of life has always been where the people are the freest. We, as *Baptists*, must keep it this way. This is not time for us to be underlings. Being the possessors of a heritage that has enriched the world, we must live lives worthy of our historic greatness. We dare not stand still and do nothing as this mighty stream flows by us in channels cut by our own principles. Our place is in the bosom of the water; in the middle of the stream.

Church Perpetuity

Illustration Of My Salvation:

Several years ago, in fact over forty years ago, I visited Canada for my first time. This was the first time I had ever been out of the United States of America. I was beholding a foreign country for the first time in my life. The visit was a great thrill to me, even though I saw very little difference between the land and the people in Canada and those in Michigan.

As I prepared to return to the United States I realized I would have to prove to the official at the border that I was a citizen of the United States. I took my driver's license, my social security card, and my discharge from the United States Army out of my billfold as evidence. The thought came to me - will this be sufficient?

You can realize how surprised I was when I drove up to the border patrol booth and the officer asked me only one question: "Where were you born?" He did not ask me for any identification - not my name, my occupation, my height, my weight, why I was there, or where I lived. I told him, "Logan County, Kentucky", and he told me to pass on through.

While I was registrar at Lexington Baptist College, we had a student from India who visited Canada as I did. He was not so fortunate. Though he was with other students from L.B.C., I had to verify to the border officials over the phone about midnight on Sunday that he was a student from India.

The reason I am an American citizen and have its protection, able to attend its public schools, and vote for the candidate of

my choice is because I was born an American citizen. I did not buy it; I did not work for it; I was born here.

In some ways this illustrates my salvation. I am a child of God because I was born of God. This happened before I confessed *Jesus Christ* as my Savior publicly, before I was baptized, before I became a member of His *church*, and before I served Him in any capacity. A person may be saved and go to heaven without ever hearing whether there is a *Baptist Church* or a *church* of any kind. There is only one thing that determines whether you are saved or not - being born of the Spirit and the Word of God. To be born of God you, must, under the power of the Holy Spirit understand you are a sinner that needs to be saved from your sins and that such salvation is yours through believing in the work that *Christ* did for you at Calvary. Having understood this, you must then place your trust in Him to save you.

Saved To Serve:

But the *Scriptures* make it plain that God did not save me just for my own enjoyment. He saved me to serve Him and be a blessing to others. Since this is true, there is a relationship I have to Him that must be considered. He saved me that I might be used of Him to save others and bring honor and glory to His name. I need to learn from Him how I can best serve Him and bring honor to His name. He has not left it up to me to serve Him as I see fit but according to His will for my life. He is now *Lord* of my life - "I am not my own, I have been bought with a price" - His laid-down life.

The saved are to be obedient to Him. There are many things the saved may do to be obedient to Him but there are also some guidelines given in the *Scriptures* to help us understand how it is to be done. Paul told the *Ephesians*

(3:21): "**Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.**" From this passage it is evident that my service to Him must have a relationship to **His church**. **Christ** has made a wonderful arrangement for us to serve Him so we may lose sight of ourselves and that others will see the light that **Jesus** reflects through us.

When I use the term '**church**' I am using it as **Jesus** and the apostles used it. To them the **church** was an assembly of regenerated, baptized saints voluntarily associating themselves together to carry out the will of **Jesus Christ**. The Greek word 'ecclesia' means "**assembly of a people for a purpose.**" **Jesus** glorified the word by saying. "My kind of assembly." They are an organized group of baptized believers assembling according to the pattern He gave to carry out His orders. I know of no other kind that can be called His **church**.

Since there are literally hundreds of different kinds of **churches** that claim to be His, how does one know which ones are His? Some of these **churches** have lasted a few years, while others have been in existence for several centuries. They do not all teach the same thing even though they use the same **Bible** for their teachings. Do they all belong to Him? Is one **church** as good as another? There are people who try to tell us they all are His and that one **church** is as good as another. I do not believe this. They are not all His; neither is one **church** as good as another. **Christ** would have to be quite a hypocrite to acknowledge all so-called Christian assemblies as His. Notice what He would have to acknowledge: Salvation is by grace but it also by works; believers are eternally saved and they also lose their salvation once they have it; repent and believe only to be saved or you may observe the sacraments and be saved; baptism is the immersion of believers only and it is also sprinkling/pouring

on unbelievers. These are only a few of the contradictions taught and practiced by the many kinds of *churches*.

Do you think the *Lord* claims those who: deny that He is God; deny He is virgin born; deny salvation by grace through faith; deny there is a hell; deny the verbal inspiration of the *Scriptures*; or deny that believers should live a separated life? No! I do not believe He claims those, and neither do you!

To get around these contradictions and to combat the *Catholic* view of a universal- visible *church* headed up by the pope some have invented an *invisible-universal body*, they call the true *church*. According to this theory (and that is all it is) the true *church* is composed of all believers bonded together by the Spirit while at the same time they hold to their particular views. Notice what we would find in such a body: there would be some *Catholics* with their Mary, the mother of God, and the wafer which is the body of *Jesus*; some *Mormons* and their community doctrines; some *Episcopalians* who hold on to their sacramental rituals: Some *Universalists* who teach there is no hell; some *Methodists* who claim they can fall from grace; some *Campbellites* who advocate baptismal regeneration; and some *Baptist* with their closed communion doctrine. It is strange that such a medley of contradiction are said to compose the *Lord's* true *church* when The Apostle Paul, under inspiration, said (*Ephesians 4:3-16*) that *Christ's* body (*His Church*) was: a unity of the Spirit with one kind of bond of peace; was one kind of body with one kind of Spirit, one kind of hope, one *Lord*, one kind of faith, one kind of baptism, and one Father.

There is only one system of belief that comes from God. Any and all others are not from Him. No two religious systems

teach the same thing, even though they may be called Christian systems. Therefore, they could not all be right. They (all the systems we know) could be wrong; but all could not be right.

Do any of the *churches* that claim to be from God belong to *Christ*? Yes, I believe His kind of *churches* are in the world today. Why do I believe this? Because *Jesus* said so (*Matthew 16:18*): "*Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" *Jesus* said His kind of *church* would remain. Some say, "This may be so, but there is no way of telling who is right." Others say, "It does not matter for there is some good and some bad in all of them."

Both are wrong! It does matter which ones are His and you can tell who is right. There are many identifying marks to distinguish the *Lord's churches* from those who are not His. Do not be afraid to test your *church*. In fact, it is such an important matter that you should put the Scriptural test to your *church*. There is too much at stake for you not to do so.

The Meaning Of Baptist Perpetuity:

Do not confuse the perpetuity of the *church* with apostolic succession. There is no such thing as '*apostolic succession*'. Their office died with them. Their authority and their special gifts ended with them. Their particular work as apostles was not passed on to others. No one today has the same power or authority as they had. Oh, I know there are some who claim to have this power and authority, but they do not have it and can not prove it.

We do believe *Christ* left His work to His kind of *churches* that they have had a continuous existence and will continue

until *Christ* comes again. The work of *Christ* is too important to be left to the whims of men. He left His work in the hands of men, but not merely as individuals. He left it to them to carry out through the institution He established while He was here on earth. We do not believe that it is impossible to establish the fact that there have been *churches* like the one He established on earth ever since He built the one at Jerusalem. There has not been a time since *Christ* founded *His church* that He has not had one like it - One that He calls His own. Though we may not be able to trace the history of each *Baptist Church* back to the one at Jerusalem, we believe they have come from one like them. Like begets like. *Baptist Churches* do not just 'spring up' - they come from other *Baptist Churches*.

This is not an unreasonable position. I am glad the species 'man' extends back to Adam and Eve rather than to some monkey in a banana tree. We can be very sure that the horse in the field had a horse for a mother and the cow in the pasture had another cow for a mother. The *Jews*, with justifiable pride, point to Abraham. *Masonry* claims a uninterrupted succession from Solomon. The followers of Zoroaster assert that the fires lighted by him have never been lost. Many *Americans* point with pride to their ancestors from England, Scotland, Ireland, or elsewhere.

I affirm the perpetuity of *Baptist Churches* from the expressed promises of *Christ* in *Matthew 16:18* and *28:16-20*. The first passage clearly teaches that He would build a *church* that the gates of hell could not prevail against. Is that promise being fulfilled or did He make a mistake in this promise? If His promise is true are *His churches*, *Baptist Churches* or are they some other kind? With the exception of *Baptist Churches* it is comparatively easy to ascertain when each of the various other kind were established. The only one

with even a semblance of an early origin is the **Roman Catholic Church**. This **church**, by the common consent of the Protestants who came from her has neither the birth-marks nor the ear-marks of a **Scriptural church**. Their faith and policy, when tried by the truths in the **New Testament**, conclusively show the lack of Scriptural origin or teaching. They claim they do not need Scriptural origin for they have a pope who is infallible and has the right to change, subtract, or supplement any portion of the Scripture.

If then, it be true that **Christ** did organize a **church** that has had a continuous existence, and if it be true that all except **Baptists** have a starting point this side of **Christ** that can be proven and have **Baptist beginning** cannot be proven, then it must be that **Baptists** were instituted by **Christ**. We must either suppose that there has been a **church** like the one **Jesus** established existing continuously, or say there has not been. Are we prepared for the latter alternative? Are we prepared to call **Christ's** words inaccurate? Are we willing to say that God, during some time since **Christ**, had no **church** to bear witness to the work of **Jesus** among a perverse and crooked generation?

The second Scripture (**Matthew 28:16-20**) teaches it was **His church Christ** made promise to be with until the end of the world (age). The 'they' of **verse 17** refers to more than the eleven apostles. There had been a doubter among them (Philip), but that was cleared a week after **Christ's** resurrection. The promise in **verse 20** could not refer to the apostles in particular because they would soon die and not be living at the end of the age. I believe that both the promises of **Jesus** and the nature of God demand us to believe in a continuous line of witnesses from the Apostolic days to the present.

Then there is the fact that He built the *church* on an everlasting foundation, *Christ* (*Ephesians 2:20; Matthew 16:18*). The *church* is a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, who is eternal (*Ephesians 2:19-22*). The *church* has a marriage relationship to *Christ* (*II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-24*). If this line of witnesses is not the *Baptist Churches* that have been faithful through the ages since *Christ*, then who is this line of witnesses? There is no other that comes close to the *original church* established by *Jesus*.

The opponents of the *Baptists* are not able to consistently assign a human founder for them. Notice some of their inconsistencies: Stork, some time after Luther, yet Luther denounced the *Baptists; Mennonites* or *Dutch Baptist* after Luther; the *Anabaptists* of Germany; *some Swiss* about 1523; in Saxony in 1520; there were some when Luther began the reformation; they sprang up in different countries simultaneously as a result of the reformation; John Smyth of England about 1620; or Roger Williams in Rhode Island, 1639. Yet the same men (historians) could say emphatically when the *Methodists, Presbyterians, Church of England, Congregationalists*, and the *Church of Christ* began. These same historians say that there is no proof or hint in the *New Testament* that apostles baptized infants, that confessions were made to priests, or that the bread only was given to the laity, etc.

Dr. Albert H. Newman expresses generally the position of honest historians: "The probability is that there never was a time when Christians of a decidedly evangelical type, possessing many of the features of the *Baptists*, and with organization closely resembling *Baptist Churches*, did not exist. We can, I think, say with all confidence that there has been an unbroken succession of evangelical life. Beyond this I do not care to go."

But to say that principles and practices like the *Baptists* existed without the perpetuity of *Baptist Churches* is like saying that Democrats continue without any organization. Therefore, to say our principles existed and were practiced in the days of our *Lord* until now demands the existence of *Baptist Churches* through the centuries.

Baptist have in the past and at the present been too indifferent to the position they occupy. We have depended too much upon the known strength of our principles and the ease with which we can defend them from the *Scriptures*. As a result we have neglected to support the perpetuity of our *churches*. We owe a change in our attitude concerning this to our *Lord* and to ourselves. We must learn to show an adequate reason for the differences between us and others. We owe it to *Christ* whose truth we hold so distinctively as to separate us from all others of His believing people. We owe it to ourselves to know and show that we have not made a gross error in our claim to be the *church that Jesus built*.

We should rejoice that *Baptist Churches* were born of divine purpose, were fashioned by divine hands, and that neither death nor hell shall ever prevail against them. In this age: as long as the tide shall ebb and flow; as long as the rivers shall run into the sea; as long as the stars shall shine in their glory, so long shall *Baptist Churches* continue on the earth. The most glorious page in human history, though stained with tears and blotted with blood, is the page that tells of the struggle of *Baptists* through the centuries, As I read of the catacombs in Rome where they were imprisoned, I can vision them worshipping a *Christ* that saves. As I think of the Alps and the ceaseless snow that covers them, I am reminded of my spiritual forefathers whose blood stained the snow during the "*Dark Ages*". As I give thought to the English *Bible* I

possess, I can almost hear William Tyndale cry as he burns at the stake, "**Lord**, open the king's eyes!" I am touched with tears and I bow my head with thanksgiving to God for giving me such a spiritual ancestry and for the heaven born heritage which has been bequeathed to the **Baptists** of this generation. May we prove worthy of it for **Christ's** sake!

Our Distinctives

Those Tenets That Distinguish Us From All Others:

Baptist are glad to hold many true doctrines in common with other Christians. We are not the only Christian group that believes in the inspiration of the *Scriptures*, the doctrine of the trinity, the ruin of man that was wrought by sin, salvation by grace through faith in *Christ*, future rewards for the righteous, future punishment for the wicked, and many others.

Our separate existence is to be explained and justified by our belief in certain important principles which are neither held nor held so tenaciously and consistently by others. Dr. Curry said: "No religious denomination has a moral right to a separate existence unless it differs essentially from others. Ecclesiastical differences ought always to spring from profound doctrinal differences. To divide Christians, except for reasons of great import, is criminal schism. Sects are justified only for matters of conscience growing out of clear Scriptural precepts or inevitable logical difference. Human speculation, tradition, authority of pope, or council, or synod, or conference, or legislature, is no proper basis for an organization of Christians. Nothing short of the truth of *Revelation*, the authoritative force of God's word, rising above mere prejudice, or passion, or caprice, can justify a distinct *church* organization." If Dr. Curry has voiced the truth (I believe he has.) then there are many *churches* operating without the distinctions needed.

Baptists disclaim three doctrines as our distinctives which many consider as our distinctives. Two of these are held by us and one is sometimes erroneously charged to us. These three are:

1. ***Immersion only is baptism.*** -
This is held by us, but not by us only. Disciples of ***Christ***, Greek Orthodox, some Holiness, and others also practice immersion only. ***Baptists*** believe baptism to be Scriptural requires more than immersion. We believe it is immersion of believers as a symbol of what saves and under the proper authority.
2. ***Closed communion*** -
Is sometimes given as one of our distinctives. It is, but this principle is held by most other denominations. Most agree that baptism/sprinkling/pouring comes before communion. In other words, only the baptized can participate. So, in the ***Baptist*** position the lines are drawn a little closer.
3. Sometimes we are accused of ***baptizing in order to save***. This is not believed and practiced by the main stream ***Baptists*** which we believe to be ***Missionary Baptists***. We believe the very opposite. I do not know of one ***Baptist*** preacher who preaches baptism as essential to salvation.

There are ***three distinctives that are ours*** which are not held by others as we hold to them. They are:

1. ***The New Testament is the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice.***
2. ***Individual responsibility to God for the performance of duty.***
3. ***The church is a visible body of scripturally baptized believers, equal in rank and privileges, administering its own affairs under the leadership of Jesus Christ.***

Some of you may think I omitted something. Wait until I have developed all three. You will find every tenet which characterizes **Baptists** in distinction from others included in these three. Others from other denominations may think I have stated something they believe. I ask you to wait until I have expanded these thoughts and you will find there are no people other than **Baptists** interpret and practice these three principles. If you do believe and subscribe to what I explain and you are not a **Baptist**, you need to get out of the **church** you are in because you do not believe what they believe, but what **Baptist** believe that makes them distinctive from all others. I will now develop these three:

The New Testament Is The Sole And Sufficient Rule Of Faith And Practice:

The **Old Testament** is equally the Word of God with the **New Testament**, but it is typical and preparatory to the **New Testament**. It was the school-master to get to **Christ** and the **New Testament** teachings (**Galatians 3:16-25**). **Christ** is our only **lawgiver** and the only **Lord** of our consciences. We do not go to the **Old Testament** to find laws for the **church**. Principles may be there but not the practices. This age is "*not under law, but under grace.*" We are under the grace principle rather than the law principle. "*The law came by Moses; but grace by Jesus*" (**John 1:17**).

Circumcision was practiced in the **Old Testament** by Israel, God's people, but there is no substitute for it in the **New Testament** for God's people. There are some who declare that baptism/sprinkling takes its place but the **Bible** facts are against such a substitute. **Baptists** deny that infants should be baptized because infants were circumcised under the law and promise. Circumcision is too broad for baptism in that it included servants who were not heirs and it is too narrow for

baptism because it excluded females. Baptism was not typified by circumcision either to the actual or spiritual seed of Abraham. It does not actually because of its inclusion of females and not spiritually because all nations are included. Paul could have settled the annoying circumcision controversy (*Acts 15*) at Jerusalem if he had said, "Baptism has taken the place of circumcision": but he did not say such because it was not true then nor true now. The reason that various groups of Christians baptize infants is because they do not let the *New Testament* be their guide.

The *New Testament* alone is sufficient for the creed and practices of the *Lord's churches*. Creeds and decrees that come from men are not binding on *New Testament* believers. The believer has his absolute guide in the *New Testament* illuminated by the Holy Spirit. No *church*, no group of people, nor one man has the right to change the mode of baptism nor anything else taught in the *New Testament*. They have no right to undo what *Christ* has done. Other denominations sprinkle or pour and call that baptism. Where do they get that right? From where do they get the right to baptize babies? Not from the *Bible*, that is sure; some man or men did it. Some denominations have more than two ordinances (baptism and the *Lord's* supper). Where do they get such rights? They do not get it from the *Bible*. Some baptize in order to save those being baptized, or to help them get saved? Where do they get such doctrine? They do not get it from the *New Testament*.

When the *New Testament* is disregarded, men do what is strictly forbidden by it. They should note what God says about them in *Revelation 22:18-19* (adding and taking away from the book). They add by adding their rites and rituals. They take away by changing the way things should be done.

All of the *New Testament* is the law of Christianity. The *New Testament* is all the law of Christianity.

Individual Responsibility To God For The Performance Of Duty:

Individual responsibility *separates* the individual from the family, friends, government, etc. It brings him face to face with God, his Creator. Notice what John the *Baptist* had to say:

Matthew 3:9 - "And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

The Apostle John writes in the same manner

John 1:12-13 - "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God".

This means: read the *Bible* for yourself; interpret the *Bible* for yourself; approach God for yourself; and serve God by your own self. Of course all of this must be done under the direction of the Spirit of God. *Baptist* believe this! It is true, God has placed in His *churches* those who can help others understand God's will for their life, but we do not interfere with their liberty of soul. We do not baptize infants nor force our children into our *churches*. We may encourage, but the final analysis is: "Do what the *New Testament* and the Holy Spirit directs you to do. Every member of a *Baptist Church* is there of his own choice. There is no priest, except *Jesus*,

between the individual and God. All believers become priests and may confess directly to God".

As a result of this principle, we believe in the *separation of church and state*. By this, we mean that no government has the right to interfere in the affairs of the *churches*. No *church* has the right to be supported by the government because of this separation. All through the centuries, *Baptists* have been champions of religious liberty. We believe and teach that no government has the right to interfere in our affairs. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had our spirit when they told Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 3:16-18 - "... be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods..."

Our *Lord* gave us this principle in:

Matthew 22:17-22 "Shew me the tribute money,... Whose image... Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's".

The Apostles left us an example in Acts when they said:

Acts 5:29 - "... We ought to obey God rather than men."

Baptists do not believe in coercion in matters of the conscience. Even God does not force men. Religion is purely voluntary. My, what *horrors* have been wrought by the disregard of this principle. Calvin *burned* Servetus at the stake and Melancthon *approved*. Luther *killed Baptists* in Germany and the German *princes were in favor of it*. The *Anglican Church* kept John Bunyan in prison twelve years and burned others. Some of the most shameful acts in

American history are shown in the records of **Baptists** being persecution by others. For example, Obadiah Holmes was whipped on the Boston Common for being at a **Baptist** prayer meeting. John Clarke was imprisoned at the same time for the same reason. Choice land that belonged to **Baptists** in Connecticut was sold to build a Protestant **church** and support its clergy. The **Congregationalists - Puritans** - were guilty. In Virginia the **Church of England (Episcopalians)** jailed Lewis Craig, William Weber, James Greenwood, John Shackelford, John Waller, and John Ireland, all **Baptist** preachers, for preaching the gospel. Patrick Henry said to a judge when such trials were taking place, "What is the crime? For what? My God! You mean for preaching the gospel?"

Baptists have never persecuted others. The day we start, we cease to be the **Lord's church**. An incident concerning this principle took place in Grand Rapids, Michigan just around the corner from the **church** building where I pastored. The Jehovah Witnesses were having street meetings in front of several store buildings. The merchants came to me to sign a petition to stop them. They knew I was opposed to such false doctrines. I would not sign their petition. I did not want those heretics there any more than the merchants, but I believe in **religious liberty** for all people - those who have the truth and those who do not have the truth.

The Lord's Church Is A Body Of Scripturally Baptized Believers, Equal In Rank And Privileges, Administering Its Own Affairs Under The Leadership Of Jesus Christ:

Baptists are the only people who can define the **church** in this fashion without destroying themselves. These are the only ones to whom **Christ** gave authority to preach the

gospel, baptize the saved, and indoctrinate the saved. Others are doing part of this, but do not have *Christ's* authority.

The *Scriptures* are plain, in spite of the many Christians who teach otherwise, that *Christ* organized His kind of *church* while He was on earth and before He was crucified. He said in

Matthew 16:18, "... upon this rock (massive boulder, not Peter, the small rock, but Himself) **I will build** (am building) **my church** (my kind of assembly - not one like the Jewish synagogue or Temple); **and the gates of hell** (the jaws of death) **shall not prevail against** (swallow it up) **it**".

Acts 2:1,41 (the passage many use to show the beginning of the *church*) says, "**And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all** (the 120 *church* members) **with one accord in one place.**" "**And they that gladly received His word were baptized; and the same day were ADDED unto them about three thousand souls**".

The *church* our *Lord* built was not started on the day of Pentecost; it was empowered that day as He had promised and told *His church* to wait for. You cannot add to something that is not in existence. Before the day of Pentecost they met every requirement of a *New Testament church*. They were Scripturally baptized assembled ready to do God's bidding. They already had the authority; they were waiting for the power.

Christ's church began with the material prepared by John the *Baptist*.

Luke 1:17,76 - "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." "And thou, child shall be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."

John records an instance in which some of this took place

John 1:35-37 - "Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! and to the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."

Paul says the same thing in

I Corinthians 12:27-28 "Now ye (plural - the church at Corinth) are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles,... "

Are these passages a description of some *imaginary invisible-universal church* or are they telling us of a *local visible body* that *Jesus* called His *church*?

This early *church* had a baptism that was done under proper authority, and they administered baptism under proper authority. *Jesus* said John's baptism was from heaven *Matthew 21:25 - "The baptism of John, whence was it"* from heaven, or of men? He wanted baptism from John himself *Matthew 3:13 - "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee*

(60 miles away) *to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him*". Jesus, before He ascended back to heaven gave His *church* authority to baptize *Matthew 28:18-19* - "... *all power* (authority) *is given me ... Go ... teach ... baptize...*"

They baptized only believers and only baptized believers were admitted into the early *church*. They made disciples before they baptized them. Note:

Acts 2:47 - "... *and the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved.*"

Acts 2:41 - "*They that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there was added unto them ...* "

Acts 5:14 - "*And the believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both men and women.*"

There is no *New Testament* evidence that baptism was ever administered except upon a voluntary profession of faith. If permission were granted to take into the *church* one unconverted, then it would be permissible to take all the unconverted in. Baptism is a symbol that demands repentance and faith before it is administered. It is a sign that the one being baptized has died to sin and has been raised to walk in a newness of life in *Christ*. The household baptisms do not furnish any evidence that anyone but believers were baptized. At Cornelius' house *Acts 10:44-48; 11:14* - "*all heard* (understood) *the word.*" Those at *Philippi Acts 16:13-15,40* - "*her* (Lydia) *household*" were working people; and *Acts 16:31-34* - were all believers - "*believing in God with all his* (jailer) *house.*" The household of Crispus *Acts 18:8; I Corinthians 1:14* were all believers and the household of

Stephanas were saints *I Corinthians 1:16; 16:15* - "... *first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.*"

Infant baptism is not described in any *New Testament* record because the *early church* did not practice it. History gives no record of infant baptism until about the close of the 2nd century. Dr. Archibald Alexander, a *Presbyterian* scholar at Hampton Sidney College, in 1796 said to the presbytery, "Only two things keep me from giving up infant baptism and joining the *Baptists*. They are (1) the universal prevalence of infant baptism as early as the 4th and 5th centuries, and (2) if *Baptist* are right, they are the only Christian *church* on earth."

There is an interesting account of J.J. Jeter and *Presbyterian* baptism that is worth repeating here: He was pastor of the *First Baptist Church*, Richmond, Virginia. His first wife had died and his second marriage was to a *Presbyterian* lady. They had a child and she wanted the child to be sprinkled by her *Presbyterian* minister. During the conversation Dr. Jeter agreed on one condition: that he hold the baby. She yielded to this for it pleased her very much. Dr. Jeter announced his intentions to his *church* and the Sunday morning of the baptism (sprinkling) he went with his wife to the *Presbyterian church*. He was careful to be the first when the ceremony took place after the regular service. When the pastor came to baptize the baby, Dr. Jeter said, "Brother, we have been good friends through the years, before you sprinkle my baby, I want you to give me 'thus saith the *Lord*'." Without any hesitation, the pastor said to his congregation, "Please rise for the benediction." Mrs. Jeter joined the *Baptist Church* the next Sunday morning, explaining, "If my pastor, whom I thought was a great *Bible*

scholar, could not give a reason for infant baptism, then it must not be valid."

New Testament churches are independent from the powers of others and are self-governing. In the earliest *churches*, the *church* was the highest court for the believers and it is that way in *Baptist Churches* today. There is no Scripture that gives the right to one or several men to head up some ecclesiastical organization. *Jesus* told the first *church Matthew 18:15-18* to "*tell it to the church*" when they could not settle their own differences. The problem concerning circumcision *Acts 15* was settled when "*it please the whole church*". The reception of members and their discipline was done by each local *church*. (See *Romans 14:1* and *I Corinthians 5:3-5*).

The apostles had some gifts and authority given to them by *Christ* that was not given to others, but they did not usurp authority over the *churches*. *Jesus* gave this principle in

Luke 22:25-26 - "And he said unto them, the kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not do so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

Peter followed this example when he declared we are not to be Lords over God's heritage. (*I Peter 5:3*). He never knew he was a pope, not did the other apostles. He was not. He was married and fallible. He did not appoint Judas' successor. He did not preside over the *church* in *Acts 15*; James did. Papal aggression began with Leo about the middle of the 5th century; culminated with Hildebrand in the middle

of the 11th century, and reached its climax at the Vatican Council in 1870 by the declaration of Papal infallibility.

The *Bible* describes these three - *pastors, elders, and bishops* - as one office with different services to be rendered toward the people. *Acts 20* is a good example of the three mentioned tasks as pertaining to the same men. The '*bishop*' is the overseer that superintends the activities. The '*elder*' is the president who presides in the business affairs. The '*pastor*' is the shepherd who feeds the flock. These men were not selected by the apostles nor some ruling body foreign to the *church*, but were chosen by the *particular church* in which they would serve. Even the apostle that took the place of Judas was selected by the *church* (*Acts 1:21-26*). The deacons were selected by the *church* (*Acts 6*). The money carriers (*II Corinthians 8:19*) were also selected by their *church*.

When the *local church* departs from this God given principle, it ceases to be the kind that *Jesus* established. The farther the *local church* departs from this principle, the farther it departs in other matters of belief and practice. The pastor and the *church* have a God given relationship between them and when either neglects or denies the other of that rightful position the *church* is in grave danger. When the pastor assumes the authority the *church* should have, he no longer has a right to be pastor. When the *church* limits the work of the pastor, either by the total assembly or by selected men within the body, they no longer have God's blessing and leadership.

The Lord And His Church

Jesus Promised A Church That Would Continue:

Christ established *His Church* during His earthly ministry. He established it for a specific purpose for this age: to be the custodian of Truth

I Timothy 3:14-15 - "These things I write unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth."

When He returned to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, He left this institution to carry on the work on earth until He returned. This entailed some specific tasks that are given in several places in the *New Testament*. None of those places are more forceful than

Matthew 28:18-20 - "... all power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (age)."

The establishment of *His church* began with the drawing together of men prepared by John the Baptist. The *church* became a reality with the selection of the twelve apostles

Luke 6:13 - "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles."

These twelve baptized believers became a body to carry out the wishes of **Christ**, and He was their Head (authority). Paul verifies this in

I Corinthians 12:28 - "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Jesus did not leave us in doubt as to his establishment of the **church**. In **Matthew 16:18**, He said, "**I will build** (or I am building) **my church**"; not, I will build it on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Spirit. He also said, "upon this rock" (a massive boulder, or foundation rock. "**Christ** himself being the chief cornerstone"); not: I am building it on Peter or his faith. **Christ** said, "**My church**"; not, Calvin's church, Luther's church, Rome's church, etc.

The Ephesian **church** was told they were built

Ephesians 2:20 - "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone."

The Corinthian **church** was told by Paul that he had laid the foundation and others built upon it, and that there was no other foundation other than **Christ** (**I Corinthians 3:10-11**).

In the promise of **Jesus** to build **His church**, He included a promise of its endurance. "**The gates of hell shall not prevail against it**" (**Matthew 16:18**). This promise of endurance

was because of His promise to never leave it nor forsake it (*Matthew 18-20*), "... lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." In other words, *Jesus* said, 'My church will exist throughout all this age'.

Has this promise of *Christ* failed in its fulfillment? Some people seem to think so. Some have the audacity to say that *His church* failed to continue as He said it would and that they had to reestablish it. When I examine the teaching of those who try to impose upon us such a lie, I see in their teachings the very opposite of truth. Instead of leading men to *Christ*, they turn men away to man made doctrines that lead to hell. Oh, they may talk about *Christ* and His grace, but their salvation is some strange combination of grace and works, which Paul says "*is not a gospel*" and the "*those who preach it should be accursed.*" (*Galatians 1:6-9*).

If the above words of *Christ* mean anything, they say that the kind of *churches* instituted by *Christ* and the apostles will never cease until he returns. They say that they would reproduce, multiply, and perpetuate themselves through the power of the Holy Spirit throughout all this age. They mean that there has never been a moment since the days of *Christ* when *His churches* did not exist. If there has been such a time, then *Christ* failed in the fulfillment of His promise to the apostles.

My position on this issue is positive: there has been a Christian society existing at all times since the apostles to the present time that has been characterized by the same doctrines and practices of the first *church*. All must either say this or say as some do: there were periods in the intervening history when apostolic faith and practice had absolutely no representative society upon the face of the

earth. If the last is true, then what became of the Saviour's promise?

From the statements of *Jesus* we must infer that there has been a continuous line of witnesses for the truth; not only as individuals, but as organized bodies, keeping the faith as originally delivered to the saints, and practicing the ordinances as instituted by *Christ*, the Head. An arrogant 'nay' is wrong. We owe a duty to the Master's words. We must make a careful and thorough investigation of all historical sources to find out who is this uninterrupted line of witnesses. They have existed. Let us find the right ones.

Baptists Verify Christ's Promise Of Perpetuity To His Church:

Those who have faithfully and carefully investigated the history of *Baptists* claim that their history is proof that the *church Jesus* built has continued to exist until the present time. If the continuous line of true witnesses from the apostles to the *Reformation* were not the people we now call '*Baptist*', who were they? Were they *Latins? Greeks? or Baptists?* It is certain they were none of the Protestant groups. It is also certain they were not the *Roman Catholic* nor the *Greek Orthodox*. If any of you who read this deny that the first *church* was not the same kind as the *Baptists*, I would like to insist that you tell me what kind it was. For one to know that it was not a *Baptist Church* implies he has sufficient knowledge to prove it was not and also enough knowledge to determine its character.

I even insist that there was a *Baptist* preacher before there was a *Baptist church*. If John was not a *Baptist*, then what was he? His name was John the Baptist, not John the baptizer. I learned from the Scripture that his name was John and that he was the *Baptist*. What does that make him, if he

was a preacher? Nothing short of a **Baptist** preacher. He was named 'John' before he was born and named 'John the Baptist' before he baptized.

All of the testimonies concerning the history of **Baptists** have not come from **Baptists**. Some men who have been violently opposed to **Baptists** and their doctrine have verified our history as an ancient one.

For example, Alexander Campbell, who helped start the **Christian Church, Disciples of Christ**, etc., said, "The sentiments of **Baptists** and their practices of baptism from the Apostolic age to the present, have had a continuous chain of advocates, and public monuments to their existence in every century can be produced."

John Clark Ridpath, a **Methodist** historian said: "I should not admit that there was a **Baptist Church** as far back as 100 AD, although without a doubt there were **Baptist Churches** then, as all Christians were then **Baptists**."

John L. Mosheim, a **Lutheran** historian said; "The origin of **Baptists** is lost in the remote depths of antiquity. The first century was a century of **Baptist**."

Dr. J. Dermout and Dr. Ypeij were appointed by the King of Holland in 1819 to prepare a history of the **Dutch Reformed Church** and to report the claims of the **Baptists** concerning their perpetuity from the time of **Christ**. Here is what they reported: "**Baptists** may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages."

Historian William C. King, who had associates such as Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, Bishop Vincent, and

Cardinal Gibbons, wrote in "Crossing the Centuries": "Of the *Baptists* it may be said that they are not *Reformers*. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely and distinct from the *Roman and Greek churches*, and have an unbroken continuity of existence from apostolic days down through the centuries. Throughout this long period, they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured, and slain by the thousands: yet they swerved not from their *New Testament* faith, doctrine, and adherence."

Baptists have been overlooked, ridiculed, and defamed. Their critics have violated the plainest rules of criticism and committed the grossest perversions against them. They have omitted points which could not have been developed without great benefit to the *Baptists*. Historians have ignored the real history of *Baptists*, either from ignorance or deliberate malice and have classed *Baptists* among the fanatics and heretics.

Baptists, themselves, have been too indifferent to the position they occupy. Many of them have no knowledge of their past, or in the case of some do not care about it. Many have been satisfied to take what the world says about them without any question. *Baptists* have neglected to know and promote their historical position as the *Lord's church* and have depended upon their known principles and how easy those principles are defended from the *Scriptures* as proof to their being the *Lord's churches*.

We owe it to *Christ*, as well as to ourselves, to show an adequate reason for the difference between us and other Christian societies. The doctrine we preach is the same as that

preached by the *early church* and our glorious history verifies we are the *Lord's churches*. Our accomplishments will also prove the *Lord's* presence among us. Dr. James P. Boyce wrote: "Trace our history back, either through the centuries that have long passed away, or in the workings of God during the last one hundred years, and it will be seen that the mass of the vineyard laborers have been from the ranks of fishermen and tax-gathers, cobblers and tinkers, weavers and ploughmen, to whom God has not disdained to impart gifts, and whom He has qualified as his ambassadors by the presence of that Spirit by which, and not by might, wisdom, or power, is the work of the *Lord* accomplished."

The Rise Of Other Denominations Has Not Destroyed Christ's Promise:

In the next few paragraphs I will deal with the origin of some of the leading societies of Christians. Space will not permit me to treat all the large denominations. These shown are some of the oldest groups of those who claim to be followers of *Christ*.

The *Roman Catholic Church* lays claim to being the oldest society that originated from *Christ*. They claim that Peter was the first pope and that their popes have succeeded from him and have the same kind of power that Peter had. They have not been able to prove that Peter was ever in Rome. Neither have they been able to prove that Peter was a pope. They claim Peter came to Rome in 42 AD and stayed 25 years. They claim he left Rome because of persecution. Is it not strange that Peter never wrote to those in Rome nor ever spoke of them in his other writings? Is it not strange that Peter claimed the very opposite to the claims of popery, when he wrote, "*be not Lords over God's heritage*" (*I Peter 5*). He called himself the apostle to the Hebrews rather than

to the Gentiles. It is very clear that he was not infallible as popes claim to be. Even Paul told Peter he was wrong. Paul was in Rome part of the time the *Catholics* claim Peter was there and he never mentioned Peter being there; neither does he give credit to Peter for starting the *church in Rome*.

The *Roman church*, at the earliest, began in 312 AD when Constantine took the *apostate churches* and made them *state churches*. They made a union with pagans and yet want to claim they belong to *Christ*. Their first pope was Leo II (440-448 AD). *Jesus* told his disciples to render unto Caesar that which belonged to Caesar and to God that which belonged to Him.

The beginning of the *Lutheran church* must be dated when Pope Leo X drove Luther from the Roman hierarchy by a sentence of excommunication in 1530 AD. J.W. Porter said, "It began to acquire a regular form, and a considerable degree of stability and consistence, from the year 1530, when the system of doctrine and morality which it had adopted was drawn up and presented to the Diet of Augsburg; and it was raised to the dignity of a lawful and complete hierarchy, totally independent of the laws and jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, in consequence of the treaty concluded at Passau, in 1552, between Charles V and Maurice, elector of Saxony, relating to the religious affairs of the empire."

Luther was the first reformer of the *Roman church* to succeed in carrying out his reform movement outside the *Roman church*. He was able to do this because the German princes backed him with their military strength. They too desired to be rid of the power of the Roman Pope over them. Very little changes were made in the doctrines; the most notable change was in the head of the *church*. Instead of the

pope as head, it became Luther and then the synod in later development of the denomination.

The origin of the *Church of England* (also known as the *Anglican and Episcopalian*) was under the ruler ship of King Henry VIII of England. He sought a divorce from his queen, Catherine, whom he disliked, for the purpose of marriage with Anne Boleyn; but the pope, after a long delay, refused to sanction it. He divorced Catherine and married Anne Boleyn with the sanction of his court. He then assumed supremacy over the *churches* in England in 1535.

At that time the only difference between the *churches* of *England* and the *Roman church* was who was supreme ruler over the affair of the *church*. Later there were some compromises between them and other *Reformers* because they needed each other in their battle for survival.

Those *churches* known as *Reformed* or *Presbyterian* began from the teachings of John Calvin, a *French Catholic*. He began the *Reformed churches* as separate from the *Roman church* in Geneva in the year 1541 AD. This group refused to recognize the pope as the head of their affairs and under the leadership of John Calvin established the *Reformed churches*.

John Knox, a disciple of John Calvin established the first *Presbyterian Church* in Scotland in 1560 and it became the *state church* of Scotland in 1592.

The *Congregational Churches* were first called "*Independent*" because they repudiated 'government by the clergy' preferring 'membership rule' and returning to the *New Testament* idea of democracy of the affairs of the *church*. They retained infant baptism, pouring and sprinkling for

baptism, along with other ***Roman Catholic*** beliefs. They also practiced the union of ***church*** and state when they were able to do so. Of course, this action brought persecution from other ***Reformers*** and the ***Catholics***.

The ***Methodist Church*** originated out of the methods of John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield. All were members of the clergy in the ***Church of England***. They were called ***Methodists*** before they left college because of their practices and their work began as early as 1729, but it was not until 1737 that they claimed God had called them for such a purpose. In 1784 it was organized in the United States as the ***Methodist Episcopal Church***.

The ***Church of Christ***, Disciples, and the ***Christian Church*** began in the early part of the nineteenth century mostly under the leadership of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell. The official date is 1832 and was started outside of Paris, Ky.

Stone began his succeeding from the ***Presbyterian Church*** as early as 1804. Campbell became a dissenter in the ***Presbyterian Church*** as early as 1811. Many of the ***Churches of Christ*** disassociate themselves from Campbell and company. Those who take this position were begun through the efforts of John Mulkey, pastor of Mill Creek Church near Tompkinsville, Ky. He started out as a ***Baptist*** there in 1798 but pulled away from them in 1809.

Baptist History From The Time Of Christ **Until The Reformation.**

Biblical Account Of The Early Church: **Jerusalem to Patmos:**

There are five accounts of the "Great Commission" given to the *early church* by *Christ*. I believe this "Commission" outlines the task given to the early *church* and that *Christ* intended for His *churches* of this age to carry it on. They are in chronological order:

1.

Luke 24:47 "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

This was given to two disciples the first Sunday evening of the resurrection.

2.

John 20:21 "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

This was given the same evening to the disciples who were assembled together from fear. Thomas was not present at this occasion. Others beside the ten apostles may have been present.

3.

Mark 15:16 "... Preach the gospel to every creature."

This was given one week later and Thomas was present at this time with the other ten apostles.

4.

Matt. 28:18-20 "... all authority is given to me ... go, teach, baptize, teach, and I will be with you always..."

This was given during the forty days of the post-resurrection ministry of **Jesus**; perhaps a very short time before His ascension. This was given to more than the eleven apostles and is the most complete outline of the task for the **church**. This was on a mountain in Galilee.

5.

Acts 1:8 "... witness in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the utter most parts..."

This was given to His disciples (probably the 120) just before He ascended up to the right hand of the Father.

The giving of this commission on these several occasions was not some mere incidental statements to be shrugged off by these disciples. It was the thrust of the forty days teaching of **Christ** after the resurrection. He did not tell them that it would happen all at once, although they were to get to it very quickly. He did not leave them with the impression that they must do it alone. He told them clearly they would have the Holy Spirit to guide and give them power.

Christ knew that their prejudices as **Jewish** people would hinder their doing the complete task. He also knew that the magnitude of the task would discourage them. That is the reason He so carefully instructed them in the days just before His ascension. He made sure they knew that their authority

was from heaven and that their power would come from there too. He had already demonstrated the power that was in the gospel itself and they had already experienced the power of it themselves. *Jesus* was careful to see that *His church* was equipped for the task He had established it for.

The *book of Acts* is a sacred history of the early movements of the *Lord's churches*. It describes their waiting for the power to come upon them. It tells how that power came and the results of the power given to the *Lord's churches* at Jerusalem. It shows that the *Jewish* people were not quick to obey the full command from *Christ* to preach to every creature. God's providence had to "work in" the willingness to go preaching everywhere to everyone. He raised up men who did not have so much prejudice against other nationalities, such as Paul, Barnabus, Silas, and others.

In the first 35 to 40 years the work of the *churches* spread rapidly over the entire Roman Empire. The work grew rapidly in spite of the many barriers that had to be overcome. The barriers of traditions and ritualism by both the *Jews* and *Gentiles* did not keep the gospel from its effective work. Neither did the racial barriers stop the flow of the gospel. During this time a sad thing happened to the Jewish people. They excluded themselves from participation in the greatest work on earth - the spreading of the gospel of *Jesus Christ*. Oh, yes, some were truly converted and were a part of the local *churches* that recognized the glory of the task of carrying the gospel to every creature. But the nation rejected the message of the *churches* as they had rejected *Jesus Christ* as their Messiah. Gradually the Christian faith became completely disassociated from the Jewish people and the work became the work of Gentiles who received *Christ* as their *Saviour and Lord*.

The next 30 years of the Biblical record shows the movement of the work of evangelization hindered by persecution from another source - the Roman government. The rise of Christianity and their worship of *Christ as Lord*, and the only *Lord* became a threat to the worship of the Caesar's as Lord. This resulted in sever punishment on many occasions to those faithful to the *Lord Jesus Christ*.

False *churches* began to appear. The symbols of the Christian faith began to be substituted for the truths they were symbols of in *churches* here and there. Some *churches* tried to win the favor of the Roman government. Bishops of some of the larger *churches* began to lord it over the bishops of smaller congregations. The work of taking the gospel to every creature was an urgent matter in the true *churches*, but their efforts could not be as free as during the first years of Christianity. Troublesome times were upon the faithful by the end of the first century and as a result the *Lord* inspired the Apostle John to write that great book of prophecy - *Revelation* - to encourage His people to continue to be faithful for eventually they would conquer every enemy.

Here is a brief survey of the *churches'* attitude about *Christ's* command to go into the world with the gospel: The *church* at Jerusalem, composed almost entirely of Jewish people, was slow to take the gospel to others who were not *Jewish*. The persecution of the saved (followers of *Christ*) by the *Sadducees* and *Pharisees* scattered them throughout Palestine and the surrounding countries. Where ever they went they preached the gospel. Some did not need this to be obedient to *Christ's* commands. For example, the deacon Philip became evangelist and went to the city of Samaria (*Acts 8:5-6*). That God's blessings were upon him is evident from the *Scriptures*. The *Jerusalem church* heard of his success and sent Peter and John to investigate his work. This

church felt they were responsible for the work *Christ* had given them and they wanted to know if what Philip was doing was right or not. Peter and John saw what was being done and bestowed gifts upon many of those who were saved under the preaching of Philip.

Several of the saints went as far as Antioch in Syria (*Acts 11:19-22*). When they began to testify of the saving grace of God through *Christ* many of the *Greeks* were saved. Again, the *church* at Jerusalem sent one (Barnabas) to investigate the matter. He saw the grace of God working mightily and he went to get Paul (then called Saul) to help him with the work at Antioch. While there the Holy Spirit called them to go into Asia to preach the gospel. The *church* at Antioch sent them on this mission endeavor.

There is a common idea that the saved in the *early church* went out preaching disorganized, orderless and churchless. But this is far from the truth. The *early churches* knew that it was their responsibility to preach the gospel to the whole world. For example, the Apostle Paul, the greatest missionary of all, amounted to very little until he was ordained and sent out by the *church* at Antioch. He felt his responsibility to this *church* because he reported to this *church* about his work at every opportunity he had.

During this time two great doctrines were settled - justification by faith, and the atonement of the *local church*. Members from Jerusalem took a false doctrine to Antioch - one must be circumcised before one could be saved. The *church* at Jerusalem, after deliberate consideration, determined that both *Jew* and *Gentile* were justified by faith. This issue was settled by the *Jerusalem Church* and they sent letters stating this and added that they nor any from them would exercise jurisdiction over the *Gentiles*. This is recorded in *Acts 15*.

The Primitive Churches Up To 250 AD:

There seems to be no dispute among *church* historians that the main body of Christian *churches* bore the apostolic character during the first 220 years of their existence. There were some who departed from the faith delivered by *Christ* and the apostles, but I believe it can be considered settled that most of the primitive *churches* possessed the *Bible* peculiarities until the middle of the 3rd century (250 AD). I think I have shown already that they possessed the same peculiarities that faithful *Baptist Churches* possess today.

When *Baptist* history is sought one must look for those distinguishing features which has made them different from all others through the ages since the time of *Christ* and the apostles. We must look for a people associated together in *church* capacity that held to the same views of the *churches* of the Apostolic age. We know that the *church* at Jerusalem was the first *church* that belonged to *Christ*. It was His because He began it and it was finally developed by the Apostles whom He had so carefully instructed. That first *church* was designed to serve as a pattern for all successive *churches*.

The book of Acts clearly shows that the other early *churches* looked to the *Jerusalem church* as their pattern. Though the Apostles had some powers none within the *churches* now possess, they were not the final authority; nor were the pastors (bishops, elders). The people themselves were the authority. The apostles, themselves, showed by their own example that nothing of importance was to be carried on or determined without the consent of the assembly.

Philip's work in Samaria came under the jurisdiction of the **Jerusalem church**. Even Peter had to give an account to the **church** for his actions at Cornelius' house. When the work began at Antioch, the **church** sent Barnabas there to investigate and assist. The dispute over circumcision in **Acts 15** was determined by the Jerusalem **church** from whence the problem arose. The historian Waddington says concerning this: "It is also true that in the earliest government of the first Christian society, that of Jerusalem, not the elders only, but the whole **church** was associated with the Apostles; and it is even certain that the term bishop and elder, or presbyter, were, in the first instance, and for a short time, sometimes used synonymously, and indiscriminately applied to the same order in the ministry."

Some persons seem to regard the form of **church government** a very trivial matter, and conclude that it matters very little whether the **church government** is a monarchy, aristocracy, or a democracy; and that a privileged class of men have a right to make, change, or abolish **church laws**, rites, and ceremonies at their pleasure. Such persons deny that **Jesus Christ** made any laws whatever for the government of **His churches**. As all **false churches** were set up and introduced by preachers, they have not failed to make provision for their own elevation and authority in those organizations; but the **Lord's churches** have no such kind of organization, for in them equality prevails.

The ordinance of **baptism** is another feature to observe. In the first century it was a burial in water of saved people only. The heretical doctrine of 'baptismal regeneration' was not prevalent until the third century. George Waddington, **Episcopal** historian, said of this corruption: "The original simplicity of the office of **baptism** had already undergone some corruption. The symbol had gradually been exalted at

the expense of the thing signified and the spirit of the ceremony was beginning to be lost in its form. Hence a belief was gaining ground among the converts, and was inculcated among the heathen, that the act of baptism gave remission of all sins committed previous to it." The historian Neander said (as a result of his corruption of the ordinance of baptism to wash away original sin in some magical act) that because baptism washed away original sin the theory of the 'unconditional necessity of infant baptism' developed; and "the introduction of effusion (pouring) for baptism only began to be practiced near the close of the 3rd century in some areas - in case of sick persons, etc."

The majority of *Bible* scholars agree that *baptism* was originally administered by immersion. Notice that the following men, who are were members of *churches* that practiced another mode than immersion have to say about the original mode of baptism:

Martin Luther "Baptism is a Greek word and may be translated 'immersion'."

John Wesley "The ancient mode of baptism was by immersion."

John Calvin "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the early *church*."

E.P. Gould (*Episcopalian*) - "The form of the rite of baptism was the immersion into the stream."

Cardinal Gibbons "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was

conferred by immersion, but since the 12th century the practice in the **Catholic** church has been by effusion as this is attained with less confusion."

There was a 'falling away' from many of the true doctrines of the **Lord's churches** during these less than 300 years. **False churches** who embraced doctrines contrary to the one taught by **Christ** and the Apostles began to appear. This was to be expected because the writers of the **New Testament** spoke of this 'falling away'. Paul said in

II Thessalonians 2:3; 7 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first..." "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work..."

John spoke of it in

II John 7 - "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh..."

These false doctrines came from many sources. From the engrafting of **Judaism** into the newly formed **church** to the invasion of heathen philosophy into the **churches** of Christianity came these heresies. False teachers crept in and led many away captive to their false ways.

There were **churches** and preachers who did not fall into these errors taught by false teachers. Instead of following the errors that crept into some of the **churches**, these men and **churches** became champions of the truth. Many paid with their lives to maintain the truths that were delivered to the saints. Among those in these early years of the **church** were

Montanus and Tertullian. These two were opposed to the Gnostic's worldliness which some of the *churches* had embraced. They demanded the old *church purity* of its members. There were many *New Testament churches* that followed this principle and demanded purity in their members. These *churches* were found in Asia, Africa, and Europe. As a result of their stand for truth they were called by their enemies "*Montanists*."

Eusebius writes about Montanus of Phrygia: "There is a certain village in Mysia, where first of all one Montanus, inflated with an immoderate desire of chieftainship, primacy, and being deranged and bereft of his wits, became furious, and published strange doctrines, and contrary to the customs of ancient traditions. There were a few of the Phrygians seduced, notwithstanding that bold and blind spirit instructed them to revile every church under heaven."

But Neander says of him: "Montanus belonged to the class of men in whom the first glow of conversion begat an unconquerable opposition to the world. We should remember that he lived in a country where the expectation of the *church* should finally enjoy on the theater of its sufferings - the earth itself, previous to the end of all things - a millennium of victorious dominion." Neander says of Tertullian: "While it was the custom to derive the power conceded to the bishops from the power to bind or loose, conferred on Peter, the Montanist, Tertullian, on the other hand, maintained that these words referred only to Peter personally, and to those who like Peter, were filled with the Holy Ghost directly."

These same *Montanists* were also against infant baptism which had begun to creep into some of the *churches*. Neander describes Tertullian's view on infant baptism "He is not only a zealous opponent of infant baptism, but one who

could not imagine any efficacy of baptism without the conscious participation of the person baptized and his own individual faith."

We have seen the Christian religion spread rapidly. Though there was a greater hindrance to the work after 70 AD the gospel spread everywhere. *Judaism* bitterly contested its growth and it was followed by a larger and stronger opposition from the pagans. In spite of the bitter persecution and the many martyred saints the movements went all over the *Roman Empire*. (Europe, England, and Wales) and it spread beyond the Empire's power in Asia and Africa. The *churches* greatly multiplied and saints were continuously being added.

While all this was taking place (the sowing of the gospel), the wicked one was sowing his tares (another gospel). As a result of this false gospel *churches* began to appear that were filled with unsaved people. This condition continued to get worse until there was a definite break between the two kinds of *churches* - those who possessed the *Bible* doctrines and those who denied some of the *Bible* doctrines. *Judaism* and *Paganism* was being reproduced in Christian language and under the guise of Christianity. The faithful Christians knew that Amos was right, when he under inspiration said, "*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" (*Amos 3:3*). Therefore the true *churches* issued a declaration of non-fellowship with the apostate *churches*.

From The Declaration Of Non-Fellowship In 251 AD To The Reformation:

As I have already stated, the *Scriptures* show that there would be those numbered among the Christians that would "fall away" from the truth. The *New Testament* writers tell of this and admonish those who had departed the faith during their time. Judas was the first to fall although many followers

of *Christ* had ceased to walk with Him before Judas betrayed Him. Paul said that many of the Galatians had "fallen from grace" (Not lost their salvation but had gone away from the teaching that men were saved by grace through faith.). One of the outstanding things about the book of Hebrews is its teaching concerning the danger of coming short of saving faith. The 'falling away' does not refer to saints losing a salvation they had (This cannot happen), but denial of vital truths concerning the faith. Surely a saved person who has enjoyed the sweetness of *Christ* would not deny the faith and go back to the beggarly elements of the world.

This declaration of non-fellowship with corrupt *churches* was not an overnight affair. Through the years of Christian advancement, Roman emperors has either caressed or persecuted the Christians. During those years when the emperors were favorable to Christians many people became a part of that faith. This was true of the mixed multitudes that came with Israel out of Egypt and many who get into our *churches* today. But when adversity came many denied the faith and went back into paganism; and then when the adversity left they came back into the Christian fold. Many bishops (pastors) were caught-up in this also.

When Decius became emperor in 249 AD he required all persons in the empire to conform to pagan worship. His edict rent asunder many *churches* who were full of unsaved ones. But this trial abated in two years and many wanted to return to the *churches* of the Christian faith. The center of the controversy as to whether these should be allowed to return was in Rome - some saying, "Let them return!" and others saying, "No, they should not be allowed to return."

One outstanding bishop in Rome, Cornelius, was in favor of their return to the *churches*; whereas another bishop, Nova-

tian, was against their return unless there were evident signs of true repentance. The rupture was so great and so wide spread that there was no reconciliation between the two different views. Those **churches** who believed in the purity of the members and would not take the pagan worshippers back declared non-fellowship with the others. Here began the great division among Christians (I use the name Christian here to designate all who claim **Christ** as their God, etc.). There had been isolated problems between the faithful and the unfaithful before this, but none with such great proportions.

Novatian was against taking these traitors back into the **churches**. He became the chief voice in Rome for the purity of the members. He believed these who had departed and wanted to return had shown signs that they were not born-again. Many took their cue from him and followed his example. All over the Roman Empire were **churches** which followed his position. As a result of this conflict those **churches** who remained true to the Biblical teachings were called **Novatians**, by those who had departed from this principle of purity.

These true **churches** were following the instruction given to Titus by Paul

Titus 3:10-11 - "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

George Waddington said of these: "And those rigid principles which had characterized and sanctified the **church** of the first century were abandoned to the profession of schismatic sectaries in the third century." This statement has

two important parts; First, the *Novatians* preserved the rigid principles of the first century, and second, the false *churches* had abandoned those principles.

Neander said of these *Novatians*: "As his principles are so clearly to be explained from the sternness of his Christian character, and as he was acting in this instance in the spirit of a whole party of the *church* existing at that time, there is the less need to resort to an explanation, deduced from an external course, which is supported by no historical proof ... As far as concerns this point of dispute the notion of the *church*. Novatian held the following opinion: as the mark of purity and holiness is one of the essential marks of a true *church*, every *church* which neglecting the right use of *church discipline*, suffers those who have violated their baptismal vow by great sins to remain in the midst of her, or receive them into her again, cease thereby to be a true *church*, and loses all the rights and advantages of such a *church*."

After this separation, the corrupt *churches* made fearful strides toward the fearful darkness and idolatry, which characterized the *Roman church* through the "dark ages."

Another group of *churches* and *Bible* teachers followed the same line of doctrine as the *Novatians*. These were the *Donatists* of Northern Africa. Both Augustine, who was one of the outstanding bishops of the apostate *churches*, and Constantine, the Roman emperor who made the apostate *churches* a government supported *church* and who was baptized (to wash away all his sins) on the day he died to was away all his sins, were bitter enemies of the *Donatists* in the 4th century.

Augustine who presided over a council of ninety-two clergy who met for the purpose of riding themselves of the

teachings of the *Donatists, Montanists, and Novatians* declared: "We will that whoever denies that little children are freed from perdition and eternally saved by baptism that they be accursed."

Durpin, another *Roman Catholic*, said of them: "The *Donatists* maintain that the true *church* ought to consist of none but holy and just men. They confessed the bad might be mixed with the good in the *church*, but only as secret sinners, not as open offenders."

One *Donatists*, Augustine Contra Petiliana said, "Did the Apostles ever persecute any one? Or did *Christ* ever deliver any one over to the secular powers? *Christ* commands us to flee persecutors (*Matthew 10:23*). Thou who callest thyself a disciple of *Christ* oughtest not to imitate the deeds of the heathen. Think you thus to serve God by destroying us with thy hands? Ye err, ye err, poor mortals, if ye believe this; for God hath not priests for His executioners."

Another *Donatists* said: "God made man free, after His own image. How am I to be deprived of that, by human *Lordship*, which God has bestowed upon me? What sacrilege, that human arrogance should take away what God has bestowed and idly boast of doing this in God's behalf!"

John Calvin identified the *Baptists* of his day (1509-1564) with the *Donatists* of the sixth century; "Such in the present day are our Catabaptist (those who push down into water) who deny we are truly baptized, because we were baptized in the Papacy by wicked men and idolaters; hence they furiously insist on anabaptism (re-baptizing)."

Here are glorious principles inscribed on the broad banner of those called *Donatists Churches*, made up of the willing,

active, converted believers, professing, obeying, and associating themselves together in *church capacity* of their own free wills; neither passively while infants, nor by constraint when adults, existed then and *Baptists* who profess the same kind of membership are like them in that respect.

Tracing the history of others who dared to be different than the apostate and persecuting *Roman church* we find those who were called *Paulicans* as offsprings of the *Donatists* so numerous in Armenia, Thrace, Bulgaria, and Bosnia that Coleman, the brother of the king of Hungary got permission to destroy them. Pope Gregory congratulated him for his success in their destruction, only to learn that they existed all over Europe, and even in Italy where the pope was supreme. This was in the seventh century.

Christianity came to Wales as early as the first century through Claudis and Pudens who were converted under the Apostle Paul's preaching. Christianity came to England soon after this. From the early centuries there existed two different factions among the Christians, - those following the ritualistic worship and those who clung to "the faith that was once delivered to the saints." Many are the traditions concerning one well known missionary Saint Patrick. History reveals that he was not an Irishman, but a Briton. A search into his preaching reveals he was not a *Roman Catholic* as it is commonly reported.

In the early part of the fifth century Briton was invaded by the Saxons. Many of the Christians fled to Wales because of the persecution placed on them by the Saxons and also because Wales did not have an established *church* and there was a certain amount of freedom for them. In the seventh century Pope Gregory sent a monk named Austin to convert the Saxons and the Christians to the Roman faith. He and his

persecuting monks made disciples of the Saxons by wholesale baptisms. He had less success with the apostolic *churches* and was not able to win them over to the **Roman church, popery, and infant baptism**. He tried to reach them and here is their reply, "We are willing to listen to what you have to say, but we will not obey you in your religious demands." He sent this reply to those we know as **Baptists**: "If you do not receive us as friends, you will have us as foes and experience the vengeance of the Saxons." He carried out his threat and thousands of Christians were killed by other Christians (?).

I believe these ancient Christians were **Baptists**. It is evident they did not originate from the **Roman church**. That they would not yield to Rome's heresy is clear. English history reveals that there were no 'infant baptism' in England and Wales until Austin brought it there. Facts show that they were **Baptists** in *church* government, in theology, in practice, uncompromising in their beliefs and ready to perish rather than yield to the wrong principles. Driven back by Austin and the Saxons, they continued their practices amid the Welsh mountains and became the ancestry of a great number of **American Baptists** after 1600 AD. In the tenth century the **Paulicans** were still in Italy. The **Catholic** historian, Gibbons, said of them: "It was in the southern provinces of France, that the **Paulicans** were the most deeply planted. In the practice, or at least in theory, the **Paulicans** were inclined to abolish all visible objects of worship; and the words of gospel were, in their judgment, the baptism and communion of the faithful."

The **Lutheran** historian, Mosheim, had this to say of their beliefs: "They reject the baptism of infants. They reject the **Lord's Supper** as a sacrament. They deny the *church* building as being sacred. They declare the alters in the **Roman**

church no more than stones and not worthy of veneration. They disapprove of the use of incense, etc. To them bells are nothing more than superstition. They deny the establishment of bishops over others. It matters not whether burial is in the *church* yard or the field. Doing penance is absurd. They deny that the sins of the dead can be atoned - forgiven. They condemn the teaching of *Catholic* marriages. They deny the worship of saints. They deny the cross on which *Christ* died as being sacred. They refuse images of *Christ*."

These statements just made are from enemies of the *Baptists*. That these *Paulicans* were *Baptists* is the united testimony of profane and ecclesiastical historians. Gibbons tells us that they flourished in Rome, the Alps, France, and all of Europe and England "where they lingered until the reformation." Mosheim said: "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe men who adhered tenaciously to the principles of modern *Baptists*."

In the 12th century men like Peter de Bruis (from whom the *Petrobussians* got their name) gave their lives for the principles that *Baptists* stand for today. The *Petrobussians* numbered in the hundreds of thousands in Southern France and the Swiss Alps. All that Peter de Bruis taught is not known, but we do know what the sect that got its name from him believed. They taught that no person was to be baptized before they came to the fullness of their reason. They believed it was superstition to build *church* buildings for the service of God, who will accept sincere worship where ever it is offered, and that crucifixes are also instruments of superstition. The real body and blood of *Jesus* was not in the offering of the eucharist, but were merely represented in the elements was another doctrine they believed. Peter was burned at St. Giles in 1130 AD by the people who were

incited to do it by the clergy whose profit was endangered by his teachings.

Another, Arnold of Brescia, was condemned to silence by the established clergy. He would not keep quiet and the power of Rome was directed toward his overthrow. One must admire Martin Luther at Worms (who would not keep quiet), yet Arnold, who is little known, showed the same courage, and he did not have the princes of Germany ready to defend him as did Luther.

Such men as the ones mentioned above must be admired. Those who are able to distinguish truth from error in an age of darkness, and to detect the cause of spiritual corruption in the thick atmosphere of ignorance and superstition, show a mind of more than ordinary strength.

The 13th century is full of the activities of the *Albigenes* and the *Waldenses*. They appeared mostly in France and Italy and came from the *Paulicans*. They received their name from the remote areas in the valleys of the Piedmonts where they had retreated from the oppression of the *Roman church*. They were not the followers of Peter Waldo and did not get their name from him. Peter Waldo did become one of them after his conversion. He was converted while serving as a Roman priest. All of the inhabitants in those valleys were not there for religious beliefs and therefore though they may have been called *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* they are not to be associated with the religious ones called by those two names. Some were in hiding for their political views and many things they did were not done by the Christians called by those names.

Theodore Beza, successor to Calvin, said: "As for the *Waldenses* I may be permitted to call them the seed of the primitive and pure Christian *church*. They have opposed the

abuses of the *church of Rome* and have been persecuted by every species of cruelty and have been compelled to disperse themselves wherever they could. And as to their religion, they never adhered to Papal superstition."

The Swiss ambassador in reporting to Oliver Cromwell about the *Waldenses* wrote: "The inhabitants of the valleys did not have the liberty to exercise in public their religion, though they had held the same position long before the princes over them. In as much that they had never had the same religion as their princes, it could not be said they had abandoned it, not be obligated to return to it."

Folks like these had to migrate from place to place. They went seeking freedom of religion but their hopes were never realized by themselves. We of the 20th century owe our freedom of religion to folks like these who never gave up hope that someday men would be able to worship God after the dictates of their own hearts. Thank God for such heroes of the faith.

It was Wickliffe and the *Lollards* of Britain in the 14th century that kept the faith of *Christ Jesus* alive in the hearts of men. The *Lollards* did not start with him. He was born in 1324 AD, finished Oxford, and was a clergy of the established *church* in England when the Word of God found entrance into his soul and in obedience to its teachings he tore away from the errors of the *church* and took his stand on the *Bible* alone and with the people (the *Lollards*) who stood as he stood. This stand caused him to reject infant baptism and deny that grace was communicated by baptism. He defined the '*church*' as an assembly of baptized believers. He did not stand alone, Thousands were around him who believed as he. That these *Lollards* were *Baptists* is evident from their history. They like their forefathers who stood for

the same beliefs were branded as heretics, burned, and driven from their homes. Neither pity nor regret was in the heart of those sanctimonious murderers as they destroyed the *Lollards* in the name of God.

Foxes' "Book of Martyrs" records: "Not satisfied with his (Wickliffe) death, the clergy induced the Parliament to make fresh statutes against the *Lollards*. It was enacted, among other things, that whosoever read the *Scriptures* in English, should forfeit their lands, chattels, goods, and life, and be condemned as heretics, should be hanged for treason against the king, and then burned for heresy against God. No sooner was this act passed than a violent persecution was raised against the *Lollards*." We cannot overlook the brutal murder of the *Lollards*. They were killed or burned by the 10's of thousands for over 200 years. The *Lollards'* tower at Lambert Place (where they were placed for the time previous to their murder) is a place of shame to the English people and should be for the *Anglican church* for the Bishop of Canterbury in 1414 had them slain on the banks of the Thames.

In the 15th century there were *churches* all over Europe and the British Isles like the 1st century *churches*. The strongest and the most independent of these *churches* were in Wales. They had been there since about 55 AD when Claudia and her husband Pudens were saved by Paul's preaching in Rome and they returned with the gospel of *Jesus Christ* to establish *churches* in Wales. As early as 180 AD Lucius, the Welsh king, was saved and immersed into that faith. They were persecuted by the Roman Dioclesian in 300 AD. Many British Christians fled to Wales when the Saxon's invaded England. They enjoyed the primitive *church* practices until Austin, from the *Roman church*, came with orders to convert them in the 7th century. Some were forced into the Roman fold, but the greater number refused to change their

practices and many were murdered. One thing the people of Wales never had - a state-**church** relationship. They never had a state **church** as most countries did have.

William Tyndale, who gave us the first whole English **Bible**, became a **Welsh Baptist**. He was born in Gloucestershire, England. He studied at Cambridge and it was there that he challenged his teacher: "Some day every plow-boy in England will have a **Bible** in his language and will know more of it than you." He translated the **New Testament** and then the **Old Testament**. He had to move from England because of this and he lived in Europe while translating and having them printed. An interesting incident took place concerning this printing and selling of the **Bibles**. The Bishop of the established **Church of England** approached the merchant who was handling the **Bibles** for Tyndale and offered to buy all he had so he could burn them. The merchant, knowing the financial strait of Tyndale agreed to sell them to the clergyman, but instead of selling all he sold only half of them, taking the money obtained to print more **Bibles**. Tyndale was burned at the stake at Antwerp, October 6, 1536. As he died he prayed, "**Lord**, open the king's eyes to see the need of the English **Bible**." In 1611 the King James Version of the **Bible** was printed.

True **Anabaptists** were the ones with the great evangelical spirit in Europe. There were many kinds of **Anabaptists** (the word means re-baptizers) then as there are many who rebaptize today. They did not all teach truth. For example, **Primitive Baptists** baptize all who come to them from another faith, yet, they do not believe the gospel should be preached; nor do they believe that people are saved through the preaching of the gospel. Another group baptizes those who join them from another faith - the **Church of Christ**, yet they

believe that baptism is a part of salvation; and they do not believe in the security of the believers.

Henry S. Burrage says of the true *Anabaptists*: "They believe that the *Scriptures* are the only authority in matters of faith and practice, that personal faith in *Jesus Christ* only secures salvation and therefore infant baptism is to be rejected, that a *church* is composed of believers who have been baptized upon a personal confession of faith, that each *church* has entire control of its own affairs without the interference from without, that the outward life must be in accordance with such a confession, that *church discipline* must be maintained, that while the state might properly demand obedience in all things not contrary to the law of God it has no right to set aside the dictates of the conscience and compel the humblest individual to set aside his views."

The true *Anabaptist* believed in freedom for everyone in religious matters; that children inherit moral depravity, but infants will not be damned; that faith is a miraculous gift from God; that the Holy *Scriptures* are the only means of leading men to *Christ*; in the doctrine of election; that *church discipline* should be strict; that each *church* choose their own pastors; that missionaries be sent from the *local church*; that sacramental salvation be rejected; that members coming from other *churches* be rebaptized upon their profession of faith; and that the *Lord's* Supper was for members of the *local church only*.

The Reformation

Martin Luther is credited as being the first *Reformer*. He was the first to have a national power behind him in the German princes who also desired to throw off the *Popish* yoke. He was not the first in the *Roman church* to protest for many before him had lost their lives when they disobeyed or disregarded the *Roman church* views. There were also before him reforms within the *Roman church* led by men who were not rebels against the *church's* authority and worked within the realms of its authority.

Within the *Roman church* most of the reforms never reached very far into the common populace. Generally they were for a purer life and many were concealed behind walls of convents and monasteries. The *Clunics* were begun by William I, the Pious, in 910 AD. The *Cistercians* were a monastic order founded by Robert de Molesme in 1111 AD and were for the strict observance of the rules of St. Benedict. They criticized the extravagances of the *church* buildings. The *Dominicans* were founded by St. Dominic in 1205 AD and were for the counteracting of heresies by preaching. They attempted to convert the *Anabaptists*. The *Franciscans* were founded in 1207 by St. Francis of Assisi and were for a devoted life of preaching, service, and poverty. But all of these still held to baptismal - regeneration, etc.

Within the *Roman church* were some *Reformers* who rebelled against the conditions within the *Roman church* to such an extent that they were excommunicated and killed. John Huss (Jan Huss) of Bohemia (1369-1415) was influenced by John Wycliffe and began to teach his doctrines. He was forbidden to preach by the *Roman church*, was excom-

municated in 1410, and because he would not recant was burned at the stake in 1415. Girolano (Jerome) Savonarola (1452-98) was an Italian priest who displayed a tendency toward asceticism. He denounced the sinfulness in the **church** including the pope and he was charged with heresy. Later he was offered a cardinal's hat if he would change. He would not and was strangled May 23, 1498. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) was a priest in Switzerland. He had doubts about the **church's** practices, became associated with Martin Luther (although they had many differences). He translated the *Scriptures* from the original languages and married Anna Reinhard (with whom he had lived openly) against the **church's** wishes. He argued with the *Anabaptists* and banished them from Zurich. He took the *Protestant* side in a civil war, was wounded and later put to death by the *Catholic* influence.

The *Reformation* came at a time when the *Roman church* was full of corruption. Had it not been so full of corruption, the *Reformers* may not have had such a huge success. During this time the only place the *Roman church* was strong and healthy was Spain and Portugal. They were the only two nations the pope could depend upon to back him militarily. Ambitious monarchs profited by their compromises with the *Roman church's* hierarchy, but the price became so high that they desired to get out from under the pope's oppression. Their freedom to rule was threatened when they did not comply to the pope's demands. Pragmatism prevailed in the administration of the **church's** affairs. If it was to the **church's** advantage for the monarch to rule the **church**, he did so; but if it was to their advantage for the **church** to rule the monarch this is what was done.

Universally the *Reformers* were against the power of the *Catholic* hierarchy rather than its dogmas. This is seen in that

almost all the *Reformers* only threw off the pope's power to rule. They kept the major heresies of the Roman *church*. A review of the monarch of the *Reformation* was they were nominal Christians (that is, members of the *Catholic church*); they were sensual and devout at the same time.

The cause behind the *Reformation* has been diverge. By some it is called a reformation; others called it a revolution; while others called it a revolt. From the *Catholic view* it was a revolt; from the *Protestant view* it was a reformation; but from the *Baptist view* it was a revolution.

Most people have missed the real cause of the *Reformation*. The majority think of it as a movement that was a result of a great spiritual awakening. A close examination of it shows it was far from that as a cause. It was the natural results in religion of the *Renaissance* that according to historian preceded it; really it was the religious part of the *Renaissance*.

The word '*Renaissance*' means '*rebirth*' and most people associate the *Renaissance* to the rebirth of the classical culture of antiquity from which they suppose the world had degenerated to during the 'dark ages.' Most usually, meant by this the rebirth of Greek classics. But was the Greco-Roman culture really reborn? Did that culture account for the remarkable productivity of the writer, painters, sculpturers, etc. of the *Renaissance*? Was the fall of Constanople to the Turks and the flight of Greek scholars to the west the cause of the *Renaissance*? Was the Christianity that the historian Gibbons knew the cause of the Roman Empire's decline? Gibbons hailed the return from Christian barbarism (He was referring to the *Roman Catholic* kind). to classical decencies, but in reality it was not a return. It was a transition from the medieval to the modern as a result of the prosperity made possible by trade between countries, etc. Great booms

in many areas of business (industry) began to be seen as a result of the economic condition's advancement because of trade. Medieval Europe began to prosper and trade with others as Rome and Byzantium had done before, In the "Dark Ages" there was some trade; in the *Renaissance* there was much commerce.

The apostate *Roman church* of the *Renaissance* had exhibited a low moral tone. Wealth was its goal. The spiritual leadership (if it can be called that) continued to decline. The ruler ship was under the control of worldly popes. These had accumulated the Vatican Library - the largest in the world. They had built the basilica of St. Peter. All these expensive things called for more and more revenue. That meant greater taxation from the nations, more gifts from the people; and more pay for their commodities. This immoral principle did not stop at the pope; it continued down to the priest of the local parish.

Lutherans:

Protestant beginning can be precisely dated. October 31, 1517 was the day that Luther nailed the 95 theses on the door of the court at Wittenbury, Saxony (Germany). Those theses were governed by the Augsburg Confession and not the *Bible*. They had nothing to do with justification by faith.

The actual term 'protestant' dates from April 19, 1529 when some German princes lodged a formal 'protest' at Diet of Spires concerning Luther's activities. The *Lutheran Church* began in 1530. This is the earliest date possible, for this was the year that Pope Leo X drove Luther from the Roman hierarchy by a sentence of excommunication. It then became the state *church* of Germany. Both Luther and the princes of Germany profited from this action.

There was more than theology and moral issues involved in Luther's revolt. His private life was involved - he had married a nun in 1524. Luther had ambitions to rule in his jurisdiction supremely. The princes of Germany stood to gain financially and politically if Luther could throw off the popish rule. Italy and the **Roman church** were exploiting Germany to enrich themselves, making reform from within the **Roman church** impossible. If this worked the princes would become sovereigns in their own land. The flow of money to Italy and Rome would cease. They could confiscate all the **Catholic** property for their own use; especially the things Luther could not use, such as the convents, monasteries, etc. Politics and economy explain Luther's success, not the clearing of spiritual decline as is generally supposed.

Although Luther is credited as the champion for the doctrine of "**justification by faith**" it is very doubtful if he understood the doctrine at all. He, like so many others within the Christian fold, had a curious mixture of grace and works for salvation. In the unabridged addition of his comments of

Galatians 3:27 - "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

he said "we get into **Christ** by baptism" and also said, concerning salvation, "this takes place in baptism." In the previous statements he had said many truthful things about **justification by faith**, but his final analysis was that it took place in baptism. In that same book in the preface he criticized the **Anabaptists** for believing that baptism was an empty thing if one being baptized was not a worthy candidate. He hated the **Anabaptists** with a passion. He was the cause of many being persecuted and put to death. In the

preface of his book on Galatians he said the *Anabaptists* "were devils possessed with devils."

Church of England:

The next country to get rid of the pope's power was England. The *Church of England* (known as the *Anglican Church* in England and the *Episcopal Church* in America) was the second *Protestant Church*. This religious group, along with King Henry VIII threw off the pope's power in 1530 and he became the head of the *church* by sanction of Parliament in 1534. Henry's private life was also involved. He wanted to a divorce from Catherine who was from Spain so he could marry Anne Boleyn. The pope delayed in his decision, but finally said "no" because he did not want to offend Spain who was his greatest ally. But Henry went ahead and put away Catherine and married Anne Boleyn. Henry would not have been able to do this had he not had the English people behind him. The English also had an anti-papal sentiments as the German princes. The only change made in this movement was the change of the head of the *English church*. Instead of the pope in Rome as the head, the King of England was the head along with the Bishop of Canterbury. Later there were some dogmas changed to satisfy other *Protestants*. Under "Bloody Mary" England returned to the *Catholic* fold, but got out again under Queen Elizabeth.

The *Anabaptist* fared no better under the change made in this *church* than they had under the *Catholic* authority. They were a hated people by the *church* and government of England. It is strange that the world as a whole should be so ignorant concerning the real facts about the changes made in religion by these so-called *Reformers*.

Reformers:

The next group under the name Christian were in Switzerland and Southern France and were led in their revolt against the pope by John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli. This took place in 1541 (10 years after Zwingli's death) under the authority of John Calvin. In Scotland this movement took place in 1592 under the leadership of John Knox. They were called **Reformers** in Europe and **Presbyterians** in Scotland. The same thing that troubled Germany and England also troubled these in France and Switzerland. They all believed that the **church** and state must be united. They could not vision a state or a **church** without either **church** control or a union of the two. Neither could they see a political unity with variations in religion. This is the reason for the persecution and eradication of those who differed religiously. The **Huguenots** of Southern France were Calvin's army power.

This movement had a puritanical reform more than the previous two mentioned. There was a revulsion against the worldliness and corruption in the **Roman church**. Just as the Augsburg Confession of the **Lutherans** and the prayer book of the **Anglicans** meant more to them than the **Bible**, so did the Westminster Confession of Faith mean more to the **Reformers** than the **Bible**.

There was severe persecutions against the **Anabaptists** also as well as against all others who disagreed with them religiously. Zwingli had Hubmeyer, his most intimate friend burned over the doctrine of infant baptism. Calvin had Servetus burned and he gave his sanction to countless other destruction's of his religious enemies.

Other Movements:

Beside the earlier reforms within the *Catholic church*, there were other reforms to counter the *protestant* movements. The best known of these was the *Jesuits* (Society of *Jesus*) who began under Ignatius of Loyola 1534. They established schools and colleges in every important city in Europe that they could. The original plan for this society was a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to convert the *Mohammedans*. Francis Xavier went to India and Japan. But there was much prejudice against this society from the other clergy in the *Roman church*.

Another *Protestant* group known as the *Congregationalists or Independents* became a separate society in 1602. They revolted also because of authority. They believed in congregational authority and this is the reason for their name. As early as 1563 they came out of the *Anglican church* because of the ritualistic services and the form of government. But these maintained the state and *church* relationship when ever it was possible. In the colonies (especially in Massachusetts.) they had some of the strictest laws against the worship of the *Baptists*.

Anabaptists:

There was another group of believers that existed during the time of the *Reformation*. The *Anabaptists* continued their quiet Christian lives in spite of the new areas of persecution. They continued to establish separate Christian communities in which they could practice what they thought was the practice of the primitive *churches*. They took heart when the *Reformers* dared buck the Roman *Church* only to find that they would get the same kind of treatment from them as they had from the *Roman church*. Whoever controlled the nation persecuted them.

There were many outstanding men among them during the rise of the **Reformers**. Among them was that great man, William Tyndale, a **Welsh Baptist** from Abergavenney, South Wales. As early as 1526 he had translated part of the **Bible** in the English language. By 1534 he had completed the translation of the whole **Bible**. The invention of the printing press made it possible for the **Bibles** to be printed in large quantities. My, what a blessing to the English speaking people. The greatest blessing that ever happened to them was when the **Bible** was put in their language. The greatest blessing that can happen to any nation is for them to have the Word of God in their language.

Summary:

Here are some of the distinguishing marks of the **Reformers**:

1. **Lutherans** Preserved much of the **Catholic** dogma, but had a hierarchy of its own.
2. **Anglicans** **Catholic** in dogma but no pope as their head; their king instead.
3. **Calvinists** Insisted that God was sovereign - all powerful; therefore everything under His control - nothing outside his will. When they murdered heretics, they were obeying God. Puritanism was an offspring against the immorality of the **Catholics**. They retained: baptismal regeneration in a modified form, centralized **church** government under clergy authority, and other doctrines of the **Roman church**.

Here is a summary of their religious beliefs:

1. ***Catholics*** Conformity, exile, or death to other religious beliefs.
2. ***Lutherans*** Submit to their confession or death.
3. ***Anglicans*** Submit to their Prayer Book or prison, exile, or death.
4. ***Puritans*** Submit to the meeting house or prison, exile, or death.
5. ***Anabaptists*** Freedom for all to worship or not worship. The ***Bible*** the sole basis for truth.

The Baptist After The Reformation

Those independent congregations of believers we know as *Baptists* took heart from those who dissented from the *Roman church*, but they found no relief from their persecutions, because the *Reformers* did the same thing to them that their mother the *harlot church* of Rome did. They drove them from their property, their homes, and their lands. They tortured them by starvation, with wild animals, and on the racks. They killed them by burning, running them through with spears, by drowning, and by cutting off their heads. The records are full of the crimes of Luther, Calvin, the English monarchs, and their followers against those people who we know as the ancient *Baptists*, though called by other names. In spite of all this they still possessed that missionary zeal that had carried them through the "Dark Ages."

These *Baptists* took on particular names in different countries, usually the name of an outstanding leader. One name began to be given all those who did not recognize either the *Roman church* nor the *Reformers* as belonging to the *Lord*. That name was *Anabaptists*, meaning those who rebaptized those who came from another faith. Not all that were called *Anabaptists* were *Baptists*, but the majority of them were recognized as having descended from the *Waldenses*, *Albigenes*, *Paulican*, etc. For example some of the *Mennonites* in the Netherlands were not *Baptists* in doctrine, yet they rebaptized those who came to them. The *Brownites* of England were not *Baptists* because they accepted the *Church of England* baptism. The *Anglican* bishop said to them, "Go on to Smyth or back to us" . The Smyth he was referring to was John Smyth who went to Europe to get *Baptist* baptism.

They were sometimes called *Catabaptist* from the fact they "put down" into the water.

Here is an example of the treatment given to the *Baptists* by their enemies: An edict by the English government in 1538 granted a general pardon to the enemies of the state. Thieves, robbers, and vagabonds received this royal pardon, but the *Baptist* were not included; instead they were banished. For 200 years after this they were persecuted in England - Henry VIII imprisoned them; Bloody Mary killed them; and Queen Elizabeth banished them. Why such a persecution? One reason was prevalent: they would not submit or recognize the *Reformers' baptism* as valid. This was the same reason the *Catholics* persecuted them - they (the *Baptists*) did not believe the Roman nor *Reformed churches* were the *Lord's*.

Enazmus, who sometimes is called the "intellectual father of the Reformation", though he remained a *Catholic* and was neither trusted by the *Catholics* nor *Reformers*, was very much in the thick of the battle between the *Catholics* and the Protestants. He was credited as a great Greek-Hebrew scholar and lived 1466- 1536. He interpreted the meaning of the *Renaissance* to the Northern Europeans. He was a humanist first; a theologian second. He received a letter concerning the *Anabaptists* and here are the contents of it:

1. They have no good opinion of the pope, cardinals, bishops, nor clergy of the *Roman church*.
2. They choose their own bishops.
3. They call one another brother or sister.
4. They have no authority but the *Bible*.
5. Their priests wear no priestly garments.
6. They do not believe in the sacraments of the *church*.
7. If any come to their sect they baptize them anew in water.
8. Their communion is only symbolic.
9. They do not pray to the saints.
10. They do not do penance nor observe feast days.

The records show that 40,000 of these *Anabaptist* were banished from Bohemia, losing all their property, etc. They had no place to go, so they wandered into those areas no one wanted to live. The *Catholics* and *Protestants* alike rejoiced over this predicament of these people we love as *Baptists*.

Baptists In America

Baptists began to come to America with the early settlers. There were some with the Pilgrims in 1620. The majority of the earlier settlers were **Congregationalists** and **Presbyterians** who came seeking relief from their persecutors. All that came were **Puritans**, but **Puritans** included all those who were for the purity of life. Persecution was not just upon the **Baptists** in Europe and Great Britain. Each religious sect persecuted other religious sects when ever they could. Only the **Baptists** sustained from persecuting others.

The early settlers of America established their own religious colonies and were given grants from the English government. **Baptists** were on every ship that came, but they were not permitted any land for a colony. **Presbyterians** and **Congregationalists** settled in the New England States; the **Church of England** possessed Virginia, North and South Carolina; the **Catholics** got Maryland; but the **Baptists** had no where to go until Rhode Island in 1663. Each religious group persecuted others when it was feasible; all persecuted the **Baptists**. Tolerance soon prevailed between those who persecuted each other, but very little tolerance was shown the **Baptists**.

Some historians credit Roger Williams as the beginning of **Baptists** in America, but the facts show quite differently. It is said that he started the first **Baptist Church** in 1639 at Providence, Rhode Island but it only lasted 4 months and another had been established 1 year earlier in Newport, Rhode Island by John Clarke; therefore, his was not the first. In reality it was not a **Baptist Church**. Roger Williams did have some proper views concerning **religious liberty** and he helped secure the charter for Rhode Island. He thought he had proper baptism, but **Baptists** do not believe so. He was a

Congregationalist minister, who saw the error of *infant baptism and sprinkling*, but he *did not receive Baptist baptism*. He and a friend of his baptized each other (That is, they immersed each other in water).

John Clarke established the first *Baptist Church* in America in 1638 at Newport, Rhode Island. The records, (minutes of the Philadelphia Association) and (inscription on his tomb), show his whole congregation came with him from Wales and they began to meet as a *church* in America after they arrived here. Many more *Baptists* came after he came. Some of them did as he did; bring their members with them; others came on different occasions. We do not have a record of all that came but we do have a record of some:

- 1663 - John Miles from Swansen, Wales to Massachusetts
- 1683 - William Screven with others from England to Maine.
- 1684 - John Emblems from England to Boston.
 - Thomas Dungan from Rhode Island to Pennsylvania.
- 1686 - Samuel Jones from Wales to Pennsylvania.
- 1701 - Thomas Griffith with 15 members from South Wales to Pennsylvania. Later 30 members went from there to Welsh Neck, South Carolina.
 - David Evans and Nathaniel Jenkins to New Jersey.
- 1705 - Valentine Wightman to Connecticut.

- 1710 - William Davis to Pennsylvania.
- 1711 - John Burrows from England to New Jersey.
 - Abel Morgan to Pennsylvania
- 1712 - Several from England to Pennsylvania.
- 1714 - Robert Nordin from London to Burley, Virginia.
- 1742 - Henry Saton to Maryland.
- 1751 - Georgia *Baptists* began.

John Adams (president of the colonies later) from Massachusetts was one of the bitter enemies of *Baptist*. In 1644 a law was passed in Massachusetts that any *Baptist* who practiced his religion there would be punished. In 1651 John Clarke visited one of his sick members just over the state line into Massachusetts along with Obadiah Holmes and a man named Crandell. They were jailed and fined for religious practice. Although their fines were provided by others, Brother Holmes would not accept it and was severely beaten with a whip in public. He had to lie on his stomach for days because of the lashes. Such was the fate of many *Baptists* who dared to worship God publicly.

The first charter for *religious freedom* (first of all ages) was granted to the colony of Rhode Island by England in 1663. This is the first time in the history of man that such a charter was granted. This was mainly the work of John Clarke. Roger Williams assisted him in this endeavor. Virginia was the next colony to have *religious freedom*, but that was over 100 years later.

The fight for *religious freedom* in America was a long and hard one, but eventually it was secured. *Baptists* within the northern colonies fought long and hard to secure both *civil and religious liberty*. During this fight, England was more favorable to *religious freedom* than the people in the colonies. The grandest and most successful conflicts were in Virginia. The fight was not with the English soldiers but with misguided and intolerant churchmen. *Baptist* growth in Virginia was rapid and great. This *growth* and strength encouraged them to entertain hope for *religious liberty* and overturn the *union of church and state*. *Baptists* did not want toleration; they wanted liberty. *Liberty* and *toleration* are not the same thing. *Liberty* means to worship or not to worship after the dictates of one's own conscience. *Toleration* means worship as we please and support the *state church* at the same time. (This is the best toleration can give.) At the present time in the U.S. we have toleration more than we have religious freedom. This toleration is from the anti-God section rather than from the religious section. Many cry, "*separation of church and state*," but they mean, "no *church* principle can be taught in public institutions." For example: We must support the public school system with our taxes while they teach against the doctrines that are vital to Christianity - creation, worship, and morals.

There may have been a time in *Baptist* societies they would have settled for toleration, but not in Virginia and the early colonies. They wanted *liberty - complete liberty*; they wanted to pay no tithes to the *established churches*. The following incidents show this was important to *Baptist* people:

May 1774

- Several *Baptist* ministers in a Virginia prison for their convictions wrote to the *Baptist* General As-

sociation: - "Pray and fast for our release and these poor blinded persecutors."

1715 - All the Baptists of Virginia united in circulating petitions to be signed by the people of Virginia to abolish the state church and also for resistance of Great Britain to obtain civil liberty.

May 1776

- The Virginia Convention framed the "bill of rights":
- The 16th article secured religious freedom.
- Its original language was , "all men should enjoy the fullest toleration of religion."
- James Madison said, "No! Write instead, 'all men are entitled to free exercise of their religion, according to the dictates of their consciences.'"

Later 1776

- An act by the Virginia Legislature to exempt Baptists and other dissenters from paying salaries of the Episcopalian clergy.

1779 - The clergy's salary was stopped.

1784 - Efforts were made to restore the tax. All were for it (leaders of the established church), but not the Baptists. Again Baptists circulated petitions. This time, both Madison and Jefferson were on the side of Baptists.

1789 - Baptist wrote to George Washington stating that the United States Constitution did not secure religious freedom. He replied that he would do all he could to amend it. The first amendment to the Constitution of the U.S. was the granting of

religious freedom. James Madison was most instrumental in this.

James Madison, though not a *Baptist*, was one of the best friends *Baptist* had in the young United States. During the formation of the laws of the U.S. it was necessary for a law to be acted upon three times before it could become law. During this time Patrick Henry introduced a bill before Congress that instead of *one state church* that there be three so men would have a choice. He did not understand '*religious freedom*' though a great exponent of freedom. James Madison opposed this bill, for he desired *no state church*. He was no match for the speaking ability of Henry and the bill passed the first time. Henry introduced it the 2nd time and it passed again, with Madison opposing it. The 3rd time it was before Congress, Mr. Henry was away for other business, but Madison was there. The bill failed to pass this third time. As a result we have the 1st amendment.

The first clause of the 1st amendment says, "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibit the free exercise thereof..." If this had not passed, Massachusetts could have a *state church*; Virginia could levy taxes to support the clergy; the U.S. could have done the same thing. This amendment should have ended all controversy, but it did not. In Barnstable, Massachusetts a *Baptist Church* was taxed to support a *Congregationalist* minister (\$150.00). In 1794 at Harwick, Massachusetts, a like tax of \$500.00 was imposed. It was 1833 before Massachusetts got rid of her laws forbidding religious freedom. Right now, this amendment is a place of strife and is getting worse. The incident at Louisville, Nebraska and the Supreme Court's decision against Bob Jones University is a violation of the 1st amendment.

Why did the *Baptist* fight with the colonies rather than the English in the American Revolution? England had shielded them from some religious persecutions of the colonists. Why then? It was a principle that *Baptist* have held since the time of *Christ* and the Apostles. **LIBERTY! LIBERTY! Civil Liberty** as well as religious liberty.

There are some things about these *Baptists* that help settle this country of ours that may help us understand them better. The first I want to deal with is *Baptist* cooperation. *Baptist* congregations have had some common causes throughout their history. The persecutions they suffered have united them to stand and cooperate together. Another thing that has been a big factor in their cooperation is their stand for the truth that God gave them. For example their act of declaring 'non fellowship' with the apostate *churches* in 251 AD. Many common causes have resulted in their congregating in specific areas as the *Waldenses*, *Paulicans*, and the *Albigeneses*.

Because of these common causes among *Baptists* they have formed fellowships, associations, and conventions. At times these organizations have tried to encroach upon the rights of the *churches*. When they do this, they become evil bodies. But as long as they are only servants of the *churches* they are of great help to the *Lord's churches*. These kind of organizations are not a new invention among *Baptists*. There was a large number of associations in Wales among the *Baptists*. This is also true of the English *Baptists*. There were early formation of associations of *Baptists in America*. They still exist in spite of some having usurped the authority of the *churches* they contain. Records show as early as 1650 both *General Baptists* and *Particular Baptist* had associations in England. The London Confession was formed in 1643 by eight *Baptist Churches*. The Somerset Confession of Faith

of the *Particular Baptists* was formed in 1656. The Somerset Confession of Faith of the *General Baptists* came into existence in 1691. The only difference between these two groups was the 'extent of the atonement.' The Midland Association was formed in 1655.

There have been divisions among *Baptist* too. Some of these divisions have been fundamental; while others have been temperamental. The *General Baptist* and *Particular Baptist* differences were not whether salvation was by grace or not, but the extent of the atonement - one saying the atonement was for particular people; the other saying it was a general atonement for all mankind. In the United States the first noticeable division was over the kind of invitation that should be given. This difference came from the Wesley - Whitfield revival campaigns held along the east coast of America. They were the first to extend an open invitation to sinners to come forward and repent in the services. The *Regular Baptists* took the position that it was good; whereas, the *Separatists* was against such methods. Again, the division was not over the doctrine of salvation by grace. Today, neither do all the *Separatists* nor the *Regulars* hold to the same doctrines they did when this division took place. Later, in Kentucky, these two groups united and became known as *United Baptists*. Today, many of the *United Baptists* are anti-missionary and many deny the security of the believer. This was not so when they were united.

The saddest divisions among *Baptists* came in the early 1800's. This took place just after what some have called "the greatest awakening"; others, the revival of 1800. Alexander Campbell, under the guise of the name *Baptist* began debating many issues in the lower Ohio valley. He debated the doctrine of immersion with the *Presbyterians*. With the *Baptists* he debated the security of believers and baptismal

regeneration. He was a very persuasive speaker with an excellent mind. Many of the **Baptist** preachers were unlearned men and many were no match for him. As a result of his debating and the paper he published and sent to people, many **Baptists** as well as **Presbyterians** followed him. Sometimes whole **churches** changed their name to Christian from **Baptist**.

Another sad division took place about the same time. This division was over missions. It began over the methods of missions, but ended over the doctrine of missions. The center of controversy was here in Kentucky. On one side **Luther Rice** was **organizing mission** societies to help finance foreign missions. On the other side was **Daniel Parker** who began to teach that the **gospel was not needed** to save sinners. **Baptist** divided over this three ways:

1. The **Missionary Baptists**, who took an active part in missions.
2. The **Primitive Baptists**, who denied the need for missionary endeavors among sinners.
3. The **indifferent ones**, who, though not denying the need for the preaching of the gospel, did very little to help the cause of missions.

Most of the **Missionary Baptists** became a part of the **Southern Baptist Convention** when it was organized in 1845. Many of the **United Baptist** of the early 1800's have become anti-missionary.

Here is a brief summary of some of the associations in the U.S.:

1707 - Philadelphia. (The Philadelphia Confession of Faith comes from this association).

1751 - Charleston in South Carolina.

1758 - Sandy Creek in North Carolina.

1767 - Warren in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

1812 - Boston.

In 1812 there were 2,633 known *Baptist Churches* and 204,185 members in the United States.

The World's Debt to Baptist.

Few things are more gratifying than to know the facts of those of our own flesh or faith who have accomplished something worth while. My great, great grandfather, Leonard Page, was a missionary in Western Kentucky under J.M. Pendleton and the *First Baptist Church* of Bowling Green, Kentucky. He started several *Baptist Churches* in Warren, Logan, and Todd Counties.

Those who care for their history are those who believe their history was eventful and fortunate. Why do people trace their family tree? They want to know where they came from. I learned I came from the House of Duncan in England.

Of all people, *Baptist* have suffered most from the lack of the world's knowledge of their history. No true *Baptist* can be indifferent to his history. No true *Baptist* can be content to hide the light of his people's history under a bushel or bury their deeds with their bodies. Whatever their contribution, justice to man and gratitude to God demands that their contribution be made known.

Here are a few accomplishments I wish to mention and will discuss all that I can:

1. The world's indebtedness to *Baptists* for the right of every individual to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.
2. The world's indebtedness to a regenerate *church* membership.
3. Also, the democracy of *New Testament* institutions.

4. The restoration of the Great Commission.
5. The Modern Sunday School.
6. Many *Bible* translations.
7. *Church* perpetuity.

Religious and Civil Liberty:

I know that these terms have various definitions. I also realize that neither can there be complete liberty. We are individuals who live in a society with others. They have a freedom too. "My liberty ends where your nose begins."

Our stand here is predicated upon the teachings of the *Bible*. The individual soul is responsible to God first and foremost. Neither civil court nor religious council has a right to interfere here. It is not religious tolerance I speak of, for there is a difference between the two. Toleration may compel men to support the state *church* as well as his own. Most nations grant religious tolerance, but withhold *religious liberty* and also *civil liberty*. *Religious liberty* means no laws be made to compel worship of any kind. Under this there is no state - *church* and men may worship or not worship as they please.

Baptists have sought for *religious liberty* for all men; not just the *Baptists*. They have won it in many places. This is now a blessing enjoyed by many people. It did not come by natural course of things. It cost somebody something! It is a blessing of inestimable worth; it can not be measured. To whom does credit belong for such a blessings? To the *Baptists* and it can be easily proven. The cost to *Baptists* for this blessing to all was in the form of heartaches, loss of possessions, tears, blood, and even their lives.

There are two things worth contending for. They are *liberty and religion*. Put these two things together and you have '*religious liberty*.' *Baptists* have procured liberty at the greatest price - their lives. They have preserved religion in its purity. These two things have brought blessings and joy to both the victor and the vanquished.

I wish to give you some examples of this glorious liberty *Baptists* have procured for us: One of the early heroes among *Baptists* for this freedom was Tertullian. He lived in the days when no liberty existed as far as laws were concerned. He said, "It is easily seen to be unjust to compel free people against their will to offer sacrifice, for in the acts of religious service a willing mind is required. It should be counted absurd for one man to compel another to do honor to the gods." From the time of *Christ* until the present there has never been a time when there have not been those willing to suffer and die for the imperishable principle of *religious liberty*.

The *Donatists*, as early as the 4th century, contended that the conscience should not be coerced. They contended that *state and church should be separate*. In spite of death being a threat to them, they contended for freedom of religion. Neander says of them, "For the first time the ideas which Christianity, as opposed to the pagan religion of state, had first made man distinctly conscious of, became an object of contention within the state itself - the idea concerning universal, inalienable human rights, concerning liberty of conscience, concerning the rights of free religious convictions." The *Donatists* later were known as the *Waldenses*. These contended for centuries for the right of conscience and the separation of *church* and state.

Other faiths (denominations) have sought to establish themselves by alliances with the state and to secure for themselves the right to worship, only to persecute others and deny them the right they obtained for themselves. All the *Reformers* held that the state under their religious affinity had the right to coerce others in the matters of religion, and that jointly the state and the *church* should rule all. *Baptist* have shunned such actions. In 1536 they declined the position of a *state church* when it was offered to them by the Netherlands.

Martin Luther preached and practiced the right to force men to hold to a certain faith (his). He said, "I am adverse to the shedding of blood. It is sufficient that they should be banished," but he gave his approval of killing those who would not submit to his German *church*. All historians who know and print the truth admit this about his guilt. In a letter to Minius in 1530 he said, "I am pleased you intend to publish a book against the *Anabaptists* as soon as possible. Since they are not only blasphemous, but also seditious men, let the sword exercise its rights over them." In the preface to his book on Galatians he said, "*Papists* are devils, and the *Anabaptists* devils possessed with devils." Luther cannot be freed of his complicity in the edict of Saxony to drown all *Anabaptist* and those who harbored them.

John Calvin preached and practiced the right to force men to believe and practice his body of doctrine. In vain have his friends tried to acquit him of the death of Servetus, but his own words condemn him; "It was by my persecution he was imprisoned, that they might condemn him to death, though not by the terrible one of being burned." There can be no apology for Calvin's actions concerning his putting to death those who would not submit to his doctrine.

Anabaptists had to conceal their whereabouts to worship in every land. Charles V of France commanded his whole empire to crusade against them, putting them to death without trial. Voltaire, the atheist, (1694-1778) said, "*Baptists* laid open that dangerous truth, which is implanted in every breast, that mankind are born equal." Beard said, "Their sins are easily counted. They do not baptize their babies, and they think it is sinful to take an oath." Gregory, an *Anglican*, says of their beliefs; "Baptism ought to be administered only to persons grown-up to years of understanding, and should be performed, not by sprinkling them with water, but dipping them in it." Heppe, a Calvinist, gives this analysis: "They are against all external *churchism*. They are against infant baptism. They are against any view of justification that does not include sanctification by the direct and essential indwelling of the Holy Spirit in their heart."

John Bunyan was imprisoned 12 years (1660-1672). The jail where he was imprisoned became the cradle of liberty in England. It was while there he wrote "Pilgrim's Progress." He had such an influence in England, the government would have given him an office, but he would not compromise his beliefs. Justice said of him, "A common upholder of several unlawful meetings to the disappointment of the *Church of England*. I am resolved to break the neck of such meetings of people who dare hold out of the *established church*." Thousands suffered in England and elsewhere as Bunyan, and many suffered much more than he.

Decree after decree was made by *Catholics* and Protestants alike to destroy (usually by drowning) the rebaptizers. In spite of this threat and action they persisted in their doctrines. *Reformers* and *Catholics* both were amazed at their number when they came out of hiding.

In America, they fared no better. In 1679 the *Baptists* built a meeting house in Boston. A law was made to take it away from them if they used it. The doors were nailed shut in 1680 by an order of the court. In 1723 Phillip Tabor and three other *Baptists* were imprisoned because they refused to tax their people for the support of a Congregational minister. They were kept in jail until a law came from England to set the Massachusetts law aside. In 1651 Obadiah Holmes was whipped in Boston and the 30 strokes made him sleep on his hands and knees. John Clarke was arrested at the same time and fined. All this for visiting a sick member and having prayer. In 1644 a law was made in Massachusetts to punish those who refused or opposed infant baptism. Morgan Evans said, "It would take a volume to contain an account of *Baptist* sufferings in those 10-12 years." Gervinius in his "History of the 19th Century" said, "From the state of Rhode Island are laws that make possible political and ecclesiastical liberty. This was about 1663 before it was ever taught at any school in Europe. They extended themselves throughout the U.S. and have gone to other continents ever shaking the nations."

In 1611 a law was passed in Virginia that all must comply with the religion of the parish minister. Those who did not were to be whipped every day until they did comply, this stayed in effect for years.. Among those thus treated were: John Waller, Lewis Craig, James Childs, William Webber, Joseph Anthony, Robert Ware, Richard Faulkner, James Greenwood, and Mr. Wofford. Even Henry Clay's father, John Clay, was imprisoned. James Ireland, a converted *Presbyterian*, was dragged through the streets. The incidents happened in the 18th century. James Madison said of these actions, "That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among us. Five or six well-meaning men are in jail now in adjacent counties. Patrick Henry, in defense

of some *Baptist* ministers, said, "What charges? Did I hear you say, 'for preaching the gospel'? My God.!"

Finally *religious freedom* came. *Baptists* had stood alone. No other religious society helped in this issue. Yes, they had the help of some men who were not *Baptists*, but they went against their own *church* to do so.

A Regenerated Church Membership Was Given to the World by Baptists:

Baptists have always contended for this truth. From this truth comes other truths of utmost value. The liberty of the soul is associated with this doctrine. Scriptural baptism has this truth as part of its administration. Congregational government can only be under the leadership of *Christ* because of this.

It once prevailed that being born in a country were a *state church* controlled religion one was automatically a Christian because he was made one by baptism when he was an infant.

There was a time when *Baptists* were the only people who stood for a regenerated membership. Regeneration was a required pre-requisite for membership in their *church* and theirs only. All others baptized (sprinkled) anyone. The *Methodists* considered themselves a converted society within a unconverted *church* when they were in the *Anglican church*, but when they came out they brought infant baptism along with them and they consider it sufficient for babies. The *Church of Christ*, etc. by their own statements hold views of baptismal regeneration. To them only a mental assent is needed for a baptism that washes away past sins. The people within their *churches* are taught they can not and

will not know if they are saved until the judgment day. At best, they have a reformed and baptized membership. Their founder, Alexander Campbell, ridiculed an experience of grace. All those *churches* who do not believe in the security of the believer reject a regenerated membership. What do they do with such *Scriptures* as: *I Corinthians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; and Acts 2:41,47* that call the members saints, elect, justified, believers, etc.?

Friends let us continue to guard this doctrine. We can do this through careful examination of new converts, by not having a craze for numbers, and by a proper *church discipline*. The world is in debt for the preservation of this wonderful truth.

The World Is In Debt To Baptist For The Preservation Of Democracy In New Testament Churches:

For centuries *Baptists* were the only ones who had a democratic government. Now there are several different religious societies who have a democratic body. The *Congregationalists* claim to have, but they baptize babies who can not have any part in it. The *Church of Christ* claims this kind of government, but the pastor is the one who makes the decision concerning who is to be baptized. They do not believe in voting members in or out. There are even some *Baptists* who do not have a democratic government. For example, those *churches* where the pastor, the pastor and his gang, or a body of men (usually deacons) make all the decisions. The only time the membership makes any decisions is receiving members (sometime, not then) or assuming a large debt, etc.

God has committed the keeping of His truths to his kind of *churches*. *II Timothy 3:15* says, "*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and*

ground of the truth." **Baptists** believe in the deathless democracy of *New Testament churches*. The **church** is of the saints, for the saints, and by the saints under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. There are no classes within (rich or poor; learned or unlearned). When we have them, we shame **Christ**. No one is to "**Lord** it over God's heritage." For this heaven-born truth of a blood-bought democracy **Baptists** have stood like a mighty oak tree. Because **Baptists** have kept this truth this lofty spirit has invaded the civil area too. Thomas Jefferson, having been in **Baptist** meetings, said that the newly formed U.S. would do well if they patterned their government after the democratic system of the **Baptists**.

Baptists Are The Ones Who Restored The Great Commission On A Worldwide Basis:

The only kind of *churches* that existed the first 100 years were **Baptist Churches**. During the first 35 years the gospel spread over the entire Roman Empire. From 100 AD to 1500 AD the spread of the gospel was hindered because the **Baptists** were not allowed to aggressively and openly carry the gospel. They never ceased to publish it where ever they went, but they could not do it as aggressively as they had earlier. Persecution moved them from place to place and they preached the gospel where they were. After the **Reformation**, **Baptists** grew and the gospel was spread because there was some freedom of religion.

The modern movement of missions as we know the spread of the gospel today was begun by a **Baptist**. I believe it could be dated to William Carey and his preaching. He became so concerned for the heathen that his preaching stirred the hearts of English speaking people to get a new vision of taking the gospel to the whole world. The Scripture, "Ask of me, and I

will give thee the heathen for an inheritance" took hold of his life and he claimed that promise from God. The society for preaching the gospel to the Heathen raised \$67.12 and he went to Calcutta, India in 1798. Through him Adoniram Judd became a **Baptist** on the foreign field. Luther Rice did likewise. From these men a fire was kindled and **Baptists** in the U.S. began to send missionaries to the world and today they have literally thousands there. Brother Carey saw in 1796 that only 23.8% of the world were nominal Christians (that included all denominations). 142 years later it was 35% as a result of the mission movement. Now, 42 years later it is back to 23%. We have an unfinished task as **Baptists**. There are about 3,000 different languages and dialects and only about 1,600 have any portion of the **Bible**. 95% of the preachers are preaching to 5% of the world. That means 5% of the preachers are preaching to 95% of the world. Yes, some languages are small and in very remote areas, but they must be reached. **Christ** is concerned about the least, the last, and the lost. Let us not let a contention about the how of missions destroy the go of missions.

The Modern Sunday School Movement Was By Baptists:

Robert Raikes began a school for young children in 1780. He held it on Sunday because the children worked during the week, but there was no **Bible** teaching. William Fox began teaching children in 1783. He held his daily and taught only the **Bible**. The time was moved to Sunday in 1785 and that was the beginning of our modern Sunday School. In September of 1785 it was submitted to a **Baptist** meeting and was organized into a society for teaching children the **Bible**. Even before this, the **Welsh Baptists** (in the 17th century) were taught to read the **Welsh Bible** on Sunday afternoons. Mor-

gan John wrote, "I began to learn to read the Welsh *Bible* in the reading room on Sunday afternoon in 1697 when I was 10 years old. In the same manner my father was taught to read before I was born. The Welsh claim they had a form of Sunday School 132 years before the English. That would mean in 1653. *Baptist* have been prominent in the Sunday School movement ever since. The International Sunday School Lessons were started by Benjamin Jacobs, a *Baptist*.

Bible Translations and Circulation's Were Begun By Baptists:

Others have learned from the *Baptists* the art of translating and circulating the *Bible*, It is a sad thing that the circulation of the *Bible* and those most deeply involved in *Bible* translations today are not *Baptists*. The first English translation was by Wycliffe, a *Welsh Baptist*. William Tyndale, also a *Welsh Baptist*, gave us the completed English *Bible*. Carey translated the *Bible* into 40 different dialects in India.

The Perpetuity Of The Lord's Church Is Found In The Baptist People:

The *Lord* made a promise that it would continue and He has done it. His faithful people have preserved the truth and have willingly died that His *church* may continue.

The Baptist Debt To The World.

Every person is a world asset or a world liability. He is either doing something to help the cause or something to hinder the cause. From the text I used (*Romans 1:14*) it appears that we are debtors to the world, when we ought to be creditors; which we will be when we pay our debt to the world.

First of all I am a debtor to *Christ* (*Romans 8:11-13*); therefore, I should be a creditor to His creation. The fact that *Christ* is our Creditor makes us debtors to a world dying in sin. Honest men pay their financial debts. A willful failure to pay such is a disgrace. A spiritual debt is more sacred than any financial obligation. Every Christian should pay his spiritual debt. A willful failure to pay this debt is doubly a disgrace.

At different times diverse subjects have proven divisive to *Baptists*. Some of these differences have been very fundamental; that is, they have been very vital to the faith that was once delivered to the saints. At other times the differences have been purely temperamental; that is, they are our own pet positions and may not be very important to the truth we have been given a charge to keep. No matter whether they have been fundamental or temperamental, they have often engendered unpleasantness; sometimes they have caused estrangements between brothers in *Christ* and those of the same persuasion.

Have these differences been worth it? The answer can be yes and no. If the differences have been fundamental then the answer is 'Yes'; if temperamental the answer may be 'No' because some have been tweedledee and some tweedledum. Yes, some differences are because of a real danger to our

faith, but the majority of the differences between *Baptists* have been temperamental.

There is a fundamental difference among *Baptists* that has been raging for some time, and in recent years has been greater in its intensity. *Baptists* are in the midst of it now: Which is true: Is the *church* of our *Lord* an invisible-universal body or is it a local-visible assembly?

The universal-invisible theory (and that is all it is - a theory) has infiltrated our *Baptists* ranks to such an extent that sometimes it is difficult to know who are *Baptists* and who are not. Sometimes this theory goes under the *church*-branch theory. By that is meant *Christ* is the vine and all the different denominations are the branches. If these theories be true then denominationalism has no meaning. Our contention for truth would be futile, and we are wasting our time to defend the faith that was once delivered to the saints. These theories are manifested in the present craze for union meetings, and the slogan, "Let us all get together." Usually these false theories end in a separation from those that are true, but this one seems to hold on to the true *churches* of our *Lord*. For example: the anti-missionary *Baptists* is a *Baptist* society that we know is wrong; the same is true about those *Baptists* who deny the security of the believer. But when the universal-invisible body is in our midst, we find that there are some who are not heretics who hold to it. Really they hold to both the invisible-universal body theory and the local-visible assembly truth at the same time. It is impossible for both to be true. *Ephesians 4* that tells of one faith, one baptism, one body, etc. has no meaning if the *local-visible church* is not true.

No matter what the difference between *Baptist*, we need to stay with the 'old paths.' I know that just because something

is old does not make it true; therefore I am speaking of the Biblical truths that *Jesus* and the Apostles taught. Today's tendency among *Baptists* is to break away from the old moorings; want something new; try something that is novel and exciting. I want to make progress, but I want to make progress in the God-appointed way.

Whatever our difference, we are agreed that *Baptist* owe a debt to the world. We have our differences, yet they are *Baptist* differences. As for my part, I will be a free man and differ with my brother if need be and not be forced into some ecclesiastical or temperamental bondage. But in our differences, let us not forget that we be brethren. Woe to him who continually contends with his brother.

Our Debt is specifically stated in the "great commission." This commission was given to the *Lord's churches*. If it was not then they are usurping His authority. If was not given to them, they pray tell me to whom it was given? It was not given to the *Greek's*. Neither was it given to the *Romans*; and most assuredly, it was not given to the *Reformers*.

Three things are specifically stated in it to do:

1. Make disciples by Gospel preaching.
2. Mark disciples by baptizing them properly.
3. Mature disciples by teaching and training them to truth.

Make Disciples:

The initial item is 'preach the gospel to every creature.' Nothing, not even the printed page can take its place. *I Corinthians 1:18* says, "... *the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish, but to us who are saved it is the*

*power of God." I Corinthians 1:21 says, "...it please God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe..." Romans 1:16 says, "... I am not ashamed...for it is the power of God to save them that believe..." I Thessalonians 1:5 says, "...came not in word only, but in power..." Christ is the substitute for our sins, but there is nothing that can substitute for the gospel of **Christ**. The pulpit loses its power when its occupants fail to preach the gospel.*

This debt is partially liquidated by preaching a pure gospel. That which we preach is either pure or impure - it cannot be both *Galatians 1 : 6-7 "...another gospel..."* which is not a gospel. They who preach another gospel are accursed. We are told by many, "It matters little what a man believes if he does right." It would be nearer the truth (this is not the truth either) to say, "It matters not what one does if he believes right." We are saved by believing and not by doing.

We may liquidate this debt by preaching a whole gospel. No, I do not mean the "full gospel" as some men who are charismatic. The disciples Paul found at Ephesus were a result of a partial gospel. Most of the preaching I hear on the radio and TV is a partial one. Repentance is missing from most I hear. It is some kind of easy- believism. It is a decision-making resolution on part of the recipient. May the God of all grace deliver us from a fractional gospel. Such preaching may be in harmony with the spirit of the age, but it is not in harmony with the Spirit of the Ages.

There is only one way of salvation. **Jesus** is the only way. "I am the way... ", "there is no other name." One must be born again. He must be regenerated. Those who do away with the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit offer some kind of substitute. But there is no substitute for the new birth. Education is no substitute. Character is no substitute. Not by

the deed of man or their works, but by what *Christ* has done and does rather than by what we have done or are doing. The *church* is no substitute. The ordinances are no substitute. No doctrine has been so responsible for destroying as many souls as the terrible doctrine of 'baptismal regeneration.'

Baptize Them:

This is a debt we owe to every saved person. It is not just any kind of baptism, but one according to the *Scriptures*. It is not just believer's baptism; it is *Baptist* baptism. To baptize right there must be a scriptural subject. The one being baptized must be saved (regenerated). It is far more sensible to baptize a man to cure consumption in the lungs than to cure the depravity of the soul. It comes nearer getting the physical dirt off the flesh, than the spiritual filth off the soul. We reach Jordan by the way of Calvary rather than Calvary by the way of Jordan. The only thing that will wash away sin is that "fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins."

There must be a Scriptural design in baptism - the answer of a good heart (conscience). Baptism is symbolic; it pictures something, and that something is the death, burial, and resurrection of *Christ*. It also pictures our death to sin and a resurrection to a new life. It also pictures the fact that we will die but will be raised in the resurrection. See *I Peter 3:18-22*.

We are commanded to 'baptize'; not to 'rantize', so there must be a Scriptural mode. Since it is a picture it must be a true picture of a real thing. Sprinkling a little sand on one's hand does not bury; neither does sprinkling water on one's head constitute a baptizing. Only immersion can picture a death and burial. The word 'baptize' is an untranslated word; a Greek word that has been anglicized. It originally meant to dip, sink, or plunge into.

There must be a Scriptural authority. *Jesus* thought the proper authority was necessary for his baptism, so He went to John the *Baptist*. *Jesus* left the authority to baptize with *His church*. He could not have left it with the Apostles only. He could not have left it with the *Catholics* nor the *Reformers* because they did not exist then.

Mature Disciples - Teach Them To Observe To Do:

Truth is taught; not caught. Christianity is a teaching religion. *Jesus* came teaching. It was a sad day when the priest supplanted the teacher.

Christian education, true to the *Bible* and to *Christ* is the imperative of our day. We need to know books, but let us learn the truth of the BOOK of all books - the *Bible*. We need to learn to be stewards of the doctrines as well as stewards of our dollars. It is more important to be right with our 'faith' than with our 'finances.'

We must contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. Let not a false conception of love prevent us from contending for the faith. I said, 'contending' not 'contentious.' Contending for the faith is the result of convictions. Where there is no convictions, there will be no contending. Sure, it must be in love. If we are begotten in love, we should be lovable. To win we must be winsome. But victory is no victory if it is not in truth.

When contending there are many doctrines to uphold. We must not limit our contending to a few pet ideas. It is easy to uphold those doctrines that others readily preach. There are many great truths that *Baptists* share with other denominations, such as:

1. The inspiration of the *Scriptures*.
2. Doctrine of the trinity.
3. Ruin wrought by sin.
4. Salvation only in *Christ*.
5. Future rewards for the faithful and punishment for the unbelieving.

The rub comes when we must preach contrary to others. It is even more difficult to preach that which our *fellow-Baptists* disdain. But there are times when this must be done. We must be sure this does not become our hobby. Out of a heart bursting with boundless love, and eyes blinded with unavailing tears, we must cling to the faith of our *Christ* and proclaim it even if it means forsaking father, mother, houses, and lands.

With this in mind, I would draw your attention to the great doctrines of grace. The first of which I wish to note is the final preservation of the saints. This is a doctrine taught and loved by *Baptists*; hated and not taught by most others. There are but two systems of theology: One given by God; the other manufactured by man. There are but two proposed plans of salvation; One is by grace only; the other is by a curious combination of grace and works. The first implies a final preservation; the other demands the doctrine of apostasy.

What does the security of the believer mean? Not that saints will not sin, for both experience and the *Scriptures* show they do. Not that saints will continue in the life of sin. There is a difference between backsliding and apostasy. How far a Christian can backslide is not known, except we do know he can never go so far as to cease to be a child of God. Apostasy

is a falling away from truth; not losing one's salvation. **Baptists** teach that if one is saved; is a child of God, he will always be one in spite of his sins, whether they be few or many.

There are some **Scriptures** that plainly teach the security of the believers. Here are some:

John 4:4 - "... springs up into eternal life."

John 10:28 - "... not pluck them out..."

Psalms 37:24 - "... though fall, not be utterly cast down..."

Romans 8:28 - "... all things work together for the good..."

Romans 8:35 - "... nothing can separate us from the love of God..."

If God saves, it must be by grace and eternal. Here are two **Scriptures** that are misused to teach a person may be lost after he is saved: **Galatians 5:4** - "... fallen from grace..." and **Hebrews 6:4-6** which teaches if a person became lost after being saved he could not be saved again.

These truths bring us to another great truth - election. Men's attitude toward this doctrine varies extensively. Some love it and from their preaching one would gather there are no other doctrines. Others, hate it so much they never use the word and even avoid reading the **Scriptures** that contain the word. Some, from their misunderstanding of it, think it is a dangerous doctrine and should be avoided. Others are afraid of it and what they have heard and stay away from the study of it. Some have tried to harmonize it with the freewill of man;

therefore, explaining it away. Some are awed by its splendor, knowing that such a truth is the only hope of salvation for any.

To say the least about it, it is not a popular doctrine with a great majority of Christians, and especially those who lean toward salvation being the activity of men. Personally, I have never thought I had the right to neglect any doctrine because it would not be graciously received. I remember being called to a *church*. I did not know the women were out of their place until I got there. The 2nd Sunday I was there I had to preach on the Woman's position in the *church*.

The question is not: "Is it popular?" but "Is it true?" If election is false we need to eliminate it; if it is true, we must preach it as the occasion demands. It is in the *Bible*; therefore, we need to learn all the truth about it we can. In some circles it is less acceptable because it is coupled with the name 'Calvin.' For that reason, I do not blame men, but it is more "*Paulism*" than it is "*Calvinism*." It did not originate with Calvin. He may have magnified the doctrine more than any of the other *Reformers*, but his understanding of it was not perfect.

It does not teach that God foreordains or predestines anyone to perdition. To the contrary, God takes no delight in the death of the wicked. He desires all men come to Him and live.

It does teach that God had a plan and purpose in creation, redemption, and preservation which will prevail. Certainly, someone must be sovereign. Which is best, man, Satan, or God? I have never known of anyone who desired to be saved and could not. The barrier is "they WILL not."

It means more than foresight.

A proper understanding of *Deuteronomy 29:29* will help. God's secret will (election belongs there) is not addressed to man; therefore, I am not responsible for His secret purpose. But I am responsible for what he has revealed - "He has commanded men everywhere to repent." The *Bible* plainly says, "we are chosen of God." The 'we', 'us', 'saints' are believers. It is also clear that it is not by the merits of men, but God's will. It is not because we are holy, but that we may become holy. It is not by works but by His grace.

The *Bible* is also clear that God did it (*Ephesians 1:4*) before the foundation of the world and in *Christ*. It is just as clear that it was unto salvation (*II Thessalonians 2:13*) and through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Our appeal to know and believe this doctrine must be to the *Scriptures* and not what man says about it. See *Matthew 24:22, 24; 25:34; John 15:16; 17; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29-33; Ephesians 2:5; I Thessalonians 5:9*. In all the *Scriptures*, election deals only with the good things about God's purpose.

We can rest assured that our God, who does all things well, does so in this. Let no sinner attempt to justify his rejection of *Christ*, the only way of salvation, by this great truth. Let this doctrine be an unspeakable consolation to the believer. It shows that his salvation is all of grace. It excludes all boating. It rids believers of their pride and humbles them under the gracious love of their Saviour.

This does not make "whosoever calls upon the name of the *Lord* shall be saved" untrue, nor does it cancel the command to 'preach the gospel to every creature.'

The Atonement:

There is another doctrine closely related to these just mentioned that is called, theological, the atonement. Because of the great controversy over the extent of the atonement I believe it is better to present it: the effects of *Christ's* death rather than trying to determine the purpose of His death. In this manner we can look at the *Scriptures* and what they say regards to *Christ's* death.

Biblically, the "atonement" is an *Old Testament* doctrine meaning "to cover." The "atonement" in the *Old Testament* anticipated the death of *Christ* (prophetically/typically) as the basis upon which sinners are reconciled to God; therefore, the "atonement" only covered sin until the death of *Christ* (pushed their sin forward to be placed upon *Christ*; *Isaiah 53:6* - " ... *hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all*" or perhaps a better rendering: "*hath made the iniquity of us all (Old Testament and New Testament saints) to meet on Him.*")

The one time "atonement" is used in the *New Testament* (*Romans 5:11*) it is translated from the word normally translated "reconciliation." Theologically, it deals with *Christ's* death as a saving deed for the souls of men. *Baptists* are divided over the 'extent of the atonement' as to whether it is only for the elect or for all men alike. Neither of these theories deal adequately with the whole scope of *Christ's* death.

Let us notice some *Scriptures* on this:

I Timothy 4:10 - "... *who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe.*"

This shows that *Christ* is not the Saviour of all men in the same manner. It does not tell us the difference but it indicates

that there is a "special way" - something different for believers.

Only believers are rid of condemnation

John 3:17-18 - "But God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world (cosmos); but that the world (cosmos) through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Only believers have a salvation that is called "eternal life"

John 3:14-16 - "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God loved the world (cosmos), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Only believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 1:13 - "In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in Whom also after that ye believed, ye are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

Only believers are a new creation in **Christ**

Ephesians 2:10; 4:24 - "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Only believers are justified

Romans 3:22, 24 - "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:" "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

There are some *Scriptures* that show His death has a relationship to all men:

I Timothy 2:6 - "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

I John 2:2 - "And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world (cosmos), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The resurrection of the unjust is a result of *Christ's* death and resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:22-24 - "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom of God... "

All of creation is affected by *Christ's* death and resurrection

Romans 8:19-22 - "All creation is waiting with a hopeful expectation when the sons of God are manifested. For all of creation which was made subject to judgment because of Adam shall also be delivered from the curse of sin in glorious freedom as are the children of God." (My paraphrase of these verses).

Restricted Communion:

Restricted communion is another area of differences among *Baptists*. The number of *churches* observing "*closed communion*" (restricted to members of the local *church* observing it) seem to get fewer and fewer as time progresses.

Baptist history reveals that until recent years *Baptist* differences over the participants has been whether communion should be "*closed*" or "*close*" (any *Baptist* in good standing in his own *church*). In recent years many *Baptist Churches* have opened their communion to all Christians.

When *Baptist* open the "*Lord's Table*" to every saved person regardless of their baptism, they deny some fundamental principles of the faith. Their action shows one of the following:

- Communion is a Christian ordinance rather than a *church* ordinance.
- The kind of *church Jesus* established is no different than the kind men have established.
- It does not matter if we carefully guard truth or not.
- Perhaps the greatest reason for "open communion" among *Baptist* is that they cannot bear the stigma Christianity puts upon those who observe "closed communion."

The differences *Baptist* have had in recent years (since the 18th amendment in the United States) over "*grape juice*" and "*wine*" has been mostly temperamental rather than fundamental. There are some very sincere men who express some correct views that are exponents of both views. I am one of those who believe that fellowship should not be broken between *churches* over the issue of "*wine*" and "*grape juice*."

Missions:

Missionary Baptist have had little argument among themselves as to the extent of the activity - into the whole world to every creature. But there have been some serious difference as to the methods of doing it and what things are involved in that activity. Many of these differences have been temperamental rather than fundamental too.

The greatest fundamental problem among *Baptists* concerns the authority of missions. Who has the right to do it - where does the authority lie? Along with this problem is the practical side: how is it best done / how do we get the best results,

etc. There are manifold ways **Baptists** do their **mission work**. Their methods fall into one of two categories:

- Under **church** authority.
- Some method that bypasses / counterfeits / usurps **church** authority.

The power / authority usually comes-down-to: whoever handles the money controls the mission work.

It is needless to say that among **Baptists** the great bulk of mission work is done through the **cooperative efforts** of **churches**. I believe the **Scriptures** approve of this cooperative work and show that the early **churches** did cooperate together in the **Lord's** work. I doubt if the majority of **Baptist Churches** could financially support mission projects alone.

It is in this cooperative endeavor wherein many have erred by circumventing the local **church's** authority.

Modern missions, as Christianity accepts the term, owes its growth and popularity to the efforts of men who have cooperated together to do mission work - at home or abroad. In the late 18th century mission societies were formed among leading denominations. Sometimes they were joint ventures of several denominations and these ignored local **church** authority. Almost in every instance these societies, though they relied heavily upon the local **church** for their support/money were independent of local **church** authority. They were either the results of men binding themselves together for a common cause or association of **churches** determining to do mission work in a particular area.

Among *Baptist* at this time foreign mission work can be traced to the *Baptist* association in Nottingham, England, October 2, 1792 when the "Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen" was organized and sent William Carey and Dr. John Thomas to India as missionaries.

At about the same time. "The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions" in Massachusetts sent Adrinom Judson and Luther Rice to India. This was an Interdenominational Board. Both of these men through their own independent study while going to India realized that baptism was only for believers and were baptized by the *Baptist* already in India.

Luther Rice returned to the United States to get money for their work in India. He began to organize missionary societies among *Baptists* in the United States. He had great success in his endeavors. Messengers from these societies formed "The General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions" in Philadelphia, April 1814.

In Kentucky, 6 associations appointed managers who became know as "The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions" in 1816 as a result of Rice's efforts. Many *Baptists* in Kentucky (not just the anti-missionary ones) objected that Rice and his societies were encroaching on *church* authority and independence. There were only 9 *Baptist* associations out of 43 that formed the "General Association of Baptist in Kentucky."

In 1838, "The China Mission Society" was organized to collect and appropriate money for that mission. Its board was located in Louisville, Kentucky. It employed 1 missionary. It was an auxiliary to the American Baptist Foreign Missions in Boston at the time. Later it became the Kentucky Foreign

Mission Society and a part of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board located at Richmond, Virginia.

Much of the mission work of different Christian societies is done in the manner I have just described - circumventing the authority of the local *church*. This is also true among *Baptist* who are exponents of the autonomy of the local *church*. Among many of them there exists a sort-of *church* authority (the missionary is ordained and given authority to go to the mission field) and a board/association/convention/ etc. (they collect the money and have the final authority as to who is sent, how much they are paid, and what and when they go) authority.

This same method exists in many instances where the missionary collects his own money. get authority from a *church* to go, and then does as he pleases without *church* approval. There is no difference in the principle.

God's methods must be followed. His way of doing things is an integral part of the commission. He gave His kind of *churches* the authority as well as the privilege to do His work on earth. When we bypass local *church* authority we do wrong no matter how good the results may be.

Let us guard this truth as well as all other truths of our faith!