

# Divine Omniscience: Its Universality and Minuteness

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*"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Matt. 10: 29-34.*

*"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." Luke 12:6, 7*

**W**e have here the Great Teacher employing a very humble illustration of his doctrine, for surely, if it was in Palestine as it is here with us, almost no bird is of less consideration than the sparrow. Observe, however, for it is worthy of your observation, that it is a creature of God; that fact gives it importance. God made it. Think of the conformation of its body: the little chirper has a heart which sends blood into every part of its body. It has organs of digestion as we have, a nervous system of its own - a quick discernment of danger, and wings to bear it instantly off to safety.

A principle, even the mysterious principle of life that lives within us, lives in the bird. But although its natural instinct leads it to build about our habitations, it is of no value or estimation. Neither was it in much esteem in Palestine, where five sparrows went at market for two farthings. But you wonder what use the Lord of Glory could make of this little creature in His spiritual teaching, or how He could find occasion to interweave somewhat of its history with religious instruction. The use he makes of it will appear as we proceed in the exposition of His words, when it will be obvious to us all, I hope, that there is no trifling in or about the text, but substantial instruction.

In these words, "not forgotten before God," there is much meaning. It did not come into being of itself or by chance; no, God made it just as He made us, and the wisdom and the power that were requisite to make the body of a man were requisite to form the body of a bird. Nor when brought into being was it left to shift for itself—no, God provided its food, and gave it the instinct to gather it, and superintended the mystery of its concoction and growth, the same as with us. The coming forth of the bird and the number of days it was to live, where it should build, where and when it should perish, were all in God's remembrance, just as it is with us. The bird cannot be sold without God, nor can it be put to death without Him, nor can any one creature of the countless myriads of creatures He has made ever be out of His recollection.

We may and we must wonder at this, but it is quite true; it cannot be otherwise with an infinite mind which embraces all possible existences that ever have been, or ever shall be, at one view; for infinitude does not creep along by reasoning, or by record, to assist memory, as we do. "Known to God," saith the Scripture, "are all His works from the very beginning to the end of time." There is no creature so minute, even such as can only be detected by the microscope, but its tiny history is in the Divine mind. Think, then, of a mind that can grasp all possible existence in all worlds at a glance, as easily as the human eye can see all that falls within its sphere of observation, in an instant.

And then He passes in the same breath from one of the least of its class in animated nature to the most insignificant of the inanimate; for what so inconsiderable, or, what so much below one's observation as the numbering of the hairs of the head. The most minute objects without life, and the least valuable possessed of life, are both taken by our Lord in illustration of the doctrine He inculcates.

*Doctrine.*—But what doctrine is that? It is this: ***If a Heavenly Father's care extends so universally and minutely over all the creatures He has made, then it must be a sinful and unbelieving heart which is alarmed at aught that threatens or befalls the lives and fortunes of His own children.***

It is not so put by the Divine Teacher, but it is impossible to gather anything less or more from His words. Now the application of this to the fears of want and the fear of death must be brought out. For instance, here is a disciple painfully addicted to a habit of looking forward, and whose contemplations in the future are always of a gloomy and desponding character. If he is an agriculturist, the prospect of temporary unpropitious weather brings certain omen of a defective harvest, and severe suffering, and heavy loss; or, if he is a commercial man, then the fluctuations of prices, the depression of markets, and the dullness of trade, keep up a morose and murmuring spirit; fear, the fear of bad times and corresponding inability to meet obligations, notwithstanding all past experience of divine goodness and providential care, eats out the life of the man's happiness.

A misery his, which overleaps present comforts and borrows all its gloom from a futurity in time which may not be his, or, being his, may be bright with unanticipated success. Or, let the party belong to neither of these classes, let her be a widow woman, or one who has never wanted for temporal good, but she is dreadfully afraid that she shall yet become the child of misfortune, and be thrown upon the benevolence of the charitable and humane. And who has not met with such cases hundreds of times?

Is it so, then, that the universal Provider cares not for you? Is it so, that He without whose permission a sparrow falls not, and He whose minute attention to events extends to one hair falling from the head, and who actually numbers the millions of such on the head of every one of us; is it so that you, Christian, and your affairs fall beyond the circle which He fills every instant with the exuberance of His benefits? Or, are you too insignificant for His notice, or too bad to be mended and cured of your miserable doubting and unkind suspicions?

"Fear not," therefore, is the word with which the gracious Master would drive away the apprehensions that would rob Him of His glory and His children of their happiness. It is very remarkable how much of His precious teaching is directed to this very matter. See his allusions to the ravens whom God feeds, and to the lilies that He clothes with beauty without our care or toil. And evermore the comparison is struck, "How much better are ye?" consequently, the impossibility of being overlooked by the Omniscient eye.

Creatures fearfully and wonderfully made, in their make the glory of creation, and endowed with immortality too,—yea more, the adopted into the family of the redeemed, inspired with the blessed hope and waiting, waiting for the coming of the Lord and the manifestation of the sons of God,—shall they indeed indulge in complaints and suspicions, or allow a fearfully dejected spirit to mar "the peace that passeth all understanding?" "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," and, in course, all necessary good below, that may minister to the spiritual well-being or real good of the individual and family. Another view may be taken of the subject, touching our removal from this world.

It is well known how many Christian people there are whose lives are in bondage to the fear, not so much of death, as of dying. Their minds are fortified by the faith of the Gospel against the fear of being lost. "They know in whom they have believed, and that He is able to keep that which they have committed to Him against that day." Still they are haunted with

anxiously painful thoughts about the dark and dismal passage replete with the terror of sick beds and incurable and torturing maladies.

It might be enough to say that if they are secure against the greater evil, the lesser might well be dismissed. But this does not satisfy. Well, I fall back on the text. "Five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God." The five birds are sold to die: they were not forgotten when alive and sold, neither are they forgotten in their death, for it has been shown that the Creator takes note of everything that lives, for it lives by Him; nor can its life perish without Him, i.e., it cannot cease to be one of His charge, out of His knowledge and sanction, little as the death of a whole covey of birds would be thought of by us. Now, is not the application of this obvious?

You are afraid of dying. What, of dying alone? That cannot be. If a worthless bird cannot die without its Creator, can you? If the shot cannot be fired which is the death of a bird without God, can Death's shaft strike you without Him? Not one of the five sparrows can fall but by the will of God, and can you die by chance, unguarded, uncared for, and, like a worthless thing, sink out of being, unattended or unregarded? What do I say? Angels are there, who are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation; God Himself is there, saith the inspired Shepherd of Israel. "Thou art with me in the valley of the shadow of death." If not one of the birds is forgotten before Him in its lifetime, and in its deathtime, no more shall you be?

O child of God! Yet timid and fearful of Jordan's dark wave, dismiss from this day forward all uneasiness about life's close; be deeply and devoutly concerned about living well and to the glory of God, but leave the disposition of affairs regarding the removal from the earthly house of this tabernacle in the hands of Him who built it, and who promises to rebuild it afresh, and to set it up in immortal beauty.

You shall scarce recognise yourself when dressed out in your Resurrection suit you will be ready to exclaim: "Surely this is not me!" For He shall change this vile body, and fashion it like to His own glorious body, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Neither poverty, nor pain, nor loathsomeness, that drive fellow-mortals from us, can at all affect the glorious One; it is the undying spirit that HE is taken up with; the other must pass through the process of disorganisation, dismemberment, and pulverisation, to prepare it for being built up an habitation for God in the Spirit.

Now, then, when you put all these things together, you will be prepared the better to appreciate the words of Jesus that even not one of the five sparrows is forgotten before God, and whether the tribulations of life, or the anxieties about departing out of the body, engage your attention, your calling to remembrance how the Almighty concerns himself about one hair of your head, or the falling of a worthless sparrow to the ground, you will be driven to the conclusion: Die when I may, or how I may, or by what unforeseen and unknowable means I may, this is clear—I am not only one of the highest rank of His creatures on earth, being human, but I am a child of the Adoption, purchased by Christ's blood, and destined to everlasting life; it follows from the sentiments breathed in the text, I may, and must, henceforth "FEAR NOT."

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, ye believe also in me. I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am ye may be also." (John 14: 1, 3) Thus saith the Lord: "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Yea; for in our nature the Lord Himself appears in the Heavenly world; He took it on in Time, but He wears it forever in Eternity.

"Nearest the throne, and first in song,  
Man shall his Hallelujahs raise,  
While wondering angels round Him throng,  
And swell the triumph of His praise."

Valuable lessons may be drawn out by us from these truths:

One of the first is the sin of cruelty to animals who can neither resist nor fly from the cruel hands of their tormentors. It is true that to man is given dominion over all the irrational tribes, for man's own benefit; but when beasts of burden are taxed beyond their strength, or urged forward by whip and spur into unnatural speed, we sin against the natural laws. And what shall be said of bull-baiting, and the fighting of lower animals? Can the Creator remain unmoved by such shameful infraction of natural law? Impossible.

What shall be said of stealing, and selling, and murdering fellow-creatures in the cursed lands of slavery, as a trade? This being the disgraceful violation of the rights of man given to all who are born of woman, the crime will to a certainty be punished by the Supreme Judge, at His appearing and kingdom. And how dreadful the execrations of slaves who have perished in ignorance and guilt, when meeting with the heartless and impenitent slave-owners, in the place of darkness, fire, and chains! All putting of dumb creatures to unnecessary pain wantonly is not only a crime to be punished by the Judges. Such exercises brutalise rational beings, and sink them beneath the creatures whom they abuse. "Not one of these is forgotten before God," and He will be the avenger of all such, beyond all doubt.

Secondly—our text was spoken to brace the hearts of disciples exposed to persecution. "Be not afraid of them," says the Lord, "who kill the body." Why not? Because their wrath can but strike against the poor body—a dying frame, at any rate; their rage cannot touch the immortal part. "Fear Him who, when He hath killed, has power to cast into hell." As if He had said, "He who, afraid of man's wrath, challenges God's anger, by suppressing his convictions and turning back from the Christian profession—he who does this is self-condemned, and will be dumb in the Judgment which commits apostates and hypocrites to everlasting perdition."

On the other hand, the faithful, who, in the face of all opposition, hold on their way until the end, having conquered by endurance, obtain the Crown of Righteousness that fadeth not away. If sparrows are not forgotten of God, can saints and martyrs be overlooked? Such is the substance of the instruction conveyed to us in these verses. Such as have "forsaken father and mother, houses or lands, for Christ's sake, are assured of an hundredfold in this present time,"—spiritual blessings outweighing all earthly good—"and in the world to come, eternal life."

Thirdly—this language was held by our Lord in the beginning of the Gospel, when persecution for Christ's sake was carried the length of taking away life, and that in many torturing forms.

But what shall be said of would-be Christians who, but for the sneer, or the laugh, or the curse of the ungodly (for further enmity in our day cannot go), dare not go without the camp? Surely the profession which is hindered and held back by shame, or the fear of it, the religion of such, must be a very superficial affair. It cannot be genuine heart work; it cannot be genuine love; it cannot be true faith: if it were, this would be its language, "I count all things loss for Christ; for Him I would suffer the loss of all, even life itself."

Do any half-hearted souls hear these words? Try yourselves, my friends; prove your own selves; step not out by one inch to confess Christ, if your heart is not with Him, and if you have not counted the cost, otherwise you will by-and-by turn back and walk no more with Jesus. "And better never to have known the way of righteousness than to have turned from the holy commandment. "But feel your need of Him, believe in Him truly, trust in Him thoroughly, obey him implicitly, and you shall walk at liberty, for you keep His commandments, and that is a liberty at once rational and Divine.

Fourthly—from the handling of this subject, any ordinary capacity may conclude how utterly absurd and abominable the doctrine that "the fixed laws of the universe negative the idea of prayer affecting the purposes, plans, and measures of the Almighty." The universality and minuteness of God's observation, and His living in the midst of all His creatures and all His works, filling all in all, and having all power in heaven and earth, prayer offered to Him must be one of the most rational exercises of minds acknowledging His Being and perfections.

The philosophic turn of modern freethinkers is no better than a modification of the old heathenism which held the Deity to be far above taking notice of mortals below. O, it is a first principle of true religion that God is the "hearer of prayer, to whom all flesh shall come." Fear not, children of God that your small affairs are below Him. When tempted to bottle up your anxieties and fears instead of spreading them before Him, remember the Royal Petitioner once said, "Put thou my tears in Thy bottle; are they not in Thy book?" And another to whom the prophet was commissioned to speak thus, "I have heard thy prayers, I have seen thy tears." And another who affirms, "Five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God, yea, the very hairs of your head are all numbered."



# The Baptism of John

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John T. Christian

From the book, *Immersion: The Act of Christian Baptism*, 1891

This baptism is graphically described by the Evangelist Mark: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." (*Comp. Matt.* 3:5, 6)

If we were to leave out of the question the meaning of the word *baptizo*, which I have demonstrated means to dip, the circumstances of this narrative would beyond all doubt point to immersion. John was baptizing "in the river of Jordan." He was not baptizing at the river but in the river. If the act John was performing was sprinkling or pouring, it will make good sense to substitute those words for baptize. Let us try it: "And were all sprinkled of him in the river Jordan." "Were all poured of him in the river Jordan." That is nonsense. The people were neither poured nor sprinkled into the river. Let us try once more: "And were all dipped of him in the river Jordan." That reading is perfectly correct, and is the very thing the Evangelist was saying.

The most competent authorities fully admit that the baptism of John was an immersion in water. Hear them. Dr. Isaac Wise, the learned Jewish Rabbi of Cincinnati, in answer to a pamphlet of Mr. Heaton, says in the *American Israelite*:

"Mr. Heaton confounds baptism with the sprinkling of the ashes of the red heifer, diluted in water, when the person or thing which had come in contact with a dead body...Any child, however, can see that there is also a sanitary clause involved in this law. There is no passage on record that John the Baptist thought of this case.

"The very fact that he went to the Jordan suggests that the case of Naaman with his leprosy, and the command of the prophet Elisha, was in the mind of the Baptist; and Naaman undoubtedly submerged his body seven times in the Jordan. If Mr. Heaton, instead of quibbling on words and consulting dictionaries, would have inquired after facts and would have looked up the matter in the Mishna, and other Jewish authors, he would have discovered that the Jews had no idea of sprinkling—they knew the bath and submersion. Consequently John the Baptist submerged his converts in the Jordan. We know exactly what John did at the Jordan, and all the dictionaries cannot change the fact."

This is unprejudiced testimony.

The scholarly Meyer says, *Com. Matt.* p. 77: "To this, however, the immersion of the whole of the baptized person, as the *metanoia*, was to purify the whole man, corresponded with profound significance, and to this the specially Christian view of the symbolical immersion and emersion afterwards connected itself by an ethical necessity."

Adam Clarke, the Methodist Commentator, at the end of his dissertation of Mark's Gospel, says, "The baptism of John was by plunging the body after this same manner as the washing of unclean persons was."

Dr. Bennett says, and his book is an authority in the Methodist Church and has the endorsement of Bishop Hurst:

"The customary mode was used by the apostles in the baptism of the first converts. They were familiar with the baptism of John's disciples and of the Jewish proselytes. This was ordinarily by dipping or immersion. This is indicated not only by the general signification of the words used in describing the rite; but the earliest testimony of the documents which have been preserved gives preference." (*Arch.* p. 396)

Geikie, an Episcopalian, in his popular *Life of Christ*, p. 276, says:

"It was, hence, impossible to see a convert go down into a stream, travel-worn, and soiled with dust, and, after disappearing for a moment, emerge pure and fresh, without feeling that the symbol suited and interpreted a strong craving of the human heart. It was no formal rite with John. Bathing in Jordan had been a sacred symbol, at least, since the days of Naaman, but immersion by one like John, with strict and humiliating confession of sin, sacred vows of amendment, and hope of forgiveness, if they proved lasting, and all of this preparation for the Messiah, was something wholly new to Israel."

Dr. Dollinger, the great Catholic historian, says, "At first Christian baptism commonly took place in the Jordan; of course, as the Church spread more widely, also in private houses; like that of St. John, it was by immersion of the whole person, which is the only meaning of the New Testament word. A mere pouring or sprinkling was never thought of." (*The First Age of Christ, and of the Church*, p. 318)

Archbishop Kenrick, Catholic, says, "As to the mode in which John baptized, many circumstances favor the opinion that it was by some kind of immersion." (*Bap.* p. 180)

The statement in John 3:23, is to the point,— "And John was also baptizing at Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized."

The reason given for choosing Ænon is that there was sufficient water for baptismal purposes. He was baptizing in Ænon because there was much water there. It is objected that *polla hudata*, much water, may be translated "many waters." I might grant the "many streams" desired and yet there is sufficient water for baptizing. I read in Ps. 93:4, "The Lord on high is mightier than many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the sea." Ps. 77:19, "Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters." The same phrase is applied to the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. The translation makes no difference as to the act of baptism. Stuart says any small stream would furnish water for immersion. (*On Bap.* p. 94)

This is freely admitted by scholars:

Olshausen, *Com.* vol. 2, p. 365, says, "John was also baptizing in the neighborhood, because the water there, being deep, afforded convenience for immersion."

Lightfoot, Presbyterian, *Works* vol. 2, p. 121, says: "That the baptism of John was by plunging the body seems to appear from those things related of him, namely, that he baptized in Jordan, that he baptized in Anon, because there was much water there; and that Christ being baptized came up out of the water; to which that seems to be parallel, Acts 8:38."

Dr. Doddridge says, *Epis.* vol. 1, p. 158: "But nothing can be more evident than that *polla hudata*, many waters, signifies a large quantity of water, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates."

But does not the record read, Math. 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water," but "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire"? The original Greek has, they shall be baptized "in water," "in the Holy Ghost," and "in fire."

The preposition "with" here, however, was not one of instrument. It represents the element into which the persons were to be dipped. They were to be baptized "with water," and not "with milk"; "with the Holy Spirit," and not "with honey"; "with fire," and not "with wine." Meyer takes this position. He says, p. 81, "It is, agreeably to the connection of *baptizo*, not to be taken in an instrumental, but as in the meaning of the element in which baptism takes place."

The literal meaning of the passage is in water and not with water. It is so translated by Dr. Bennett, Arch. p. 389: "So that while the baptism of John was complete in water, *en hudati*, the baptism instituted by Christ was not only in water, but in the Holy Spirit and in fire, *pneumati hagio kai puri*."

Bishop Henry C. Potter, Episcopal Bishop of New York, says:

"Now what was the drift of all of this, but at once to interpret and illustrate the meaning of his own baptizings. The outward act —that plunging in the Jordan—meant simply, get your bodies clean, and so it stood for that other call which rings through all of John the Baptist's preaching, "make your lives, so far as you can make them, white and clean." (*Met. Pul.*, April, 1877.)

Prof. Plumtre, in *Ellicott's Com.*, vol. 1, p. 12, says, "As heard and understood at the time, the baptism of the Holy Ghost would imply that the souls baptized would be plunged, as it were, in that creative and informing Spirit which was the source of hope and holiness and wisdom."

And in the parallel passage, Acts 1:5, vol. 1, p. 2, Prof. Plumtre also says, "Now they were told that their spirits were to be as fully baptized, i.e., plunged into the power of the divine Spirit, as their bodies had been plunged into the waters of the Jordan."

Neander, *Life of Christ*, p. 53, says: "He it was who should baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire; that is to say, that as his, John's, followers were evidently immersed in the water, so the Messiah would immerse the souls of believers in the Holy Ghost imparted by himself; so that it should entirely penetrate their being, and form within them a principle of life."

And the Greek father Cyril of Jerusalem, who lived upon the very spot where the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred, understood it as an immersion. He remarks, "For the Lord saith, ye shall be immersed in the Holy Spirit not many days after this. Not impart the grace, but all-sufficing the power. For as he who sinks down into the waters and is immersed is surrounded on all sides by the waters, so also they were completely immersed by the Spirit." (*Instruc.* VIII)



## The Value of Christ's Sacrifice \_\_\_\_\_

Robert Boyte C. Howell, D.D., Nashville, Tennessee  
From *The Baptist Preacher*, Volume 4, 1845

*"Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us. Heb. 10:11-15.*

**T**he value of Christ's sacrifice for sins is infinite. This is the proposition affirmed in the text, and which, in the present discourse, I shall attempt to sustain, and illustrate.

The sacrifices and offerings, which under the former economy, were of so frequent occurrence, could never lake away sins. Their design was not of themselves to purify, but simply, and alone, to direct the faith of the worshipers to Messiah, their true and great antitype. In his sacrifice only, true and inherent virtue was found; and from it all others derived whatever of efficacy they possessed. "It is [evidently] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins;" and yet, "without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

A sacrifice was required more efficacious than any of those prescribed in the formularies of the Levitical priesthood. But where can such a sacrifice be found? By whom can it be offered? Whence is to be obtained the victim? Whither, for an answer to these inquiries, shall we look, but to Christ? He, "by one offering, has perfected forever, them that are sanctified." He "has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

The provision is ample. Those who, by repentance and faith, become partakers of its rich blessings are thenceforward, "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Such is the excellency, the magnitude, and the power of Christ's sacrifice for sins. Nothing more is needed. It is perfect; it is effectual; it is sufficient.

The unspeakable value of Christ's sacrifice for sins, may especially be seen in the fact that God has appointed it especially to be the medium of our cleansing and salvation.

"It pleased the Lord to bruise him." He it was, who made "his soul an offering for sin." Although "with wicked hands he was crucified and slain," yet it was done "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." For this reason the Redeemer said to his followers, who were astonished that he did not overwhelm and crush his persecutors: "I lay down my life of myself; no man taketh it from me." Having been, therefore, previously ordained as the means of pardon by Jehovah, can he fail to accept it for that end, when its merits are pleaded by the guilty, but penitent offender.

But what is a sacrifice, properly so called? It is, I answer, the solemn infliction of death, by the shedding of blood, upon a living being, with the forms of religious worship, and the presentation of the victim, life, body and blood, to God as a supplication for pardon. All this occurred in the offering of Christ. Death was inflicted upon him; "his life was cut off from the earth;" the last drop of blood in his heart was poured forth; his body was exposed upon the cross. If, in this appalling deed, the scourge, the nail and the spear, were in the hands of sinners, who were moved to the infliction of his sufferings by malignant envy, this serves but the more plainly to set forth the grace which could impel him to bear the curse for his enemies, as well as for his friends. His life, his body, his blood, his soul and his divinity, by himself, our great High Priest, were offered to God, a supplication of boundless efficacy, for the remission of our sins.

Upon this sacrifice, so appointed by the Father, and so consummated by the Son, we lay hold, in every acceptable prayer we utter, and thus wield all its power. It is not, therefore, surprising, that "Prayer moves the hand that moves the world."

But let us also consider the dignity of the offerer, and we shall be able to perceive, still more fully, the value of the sacrifice. Whom do we now behold at the altar? Not the High Priest of an earthly lineage, with his glittering breastplate, and his flowing robes. Not the most exalted of the sons of men. It is God himself, incarnate. He it is (amazing condescension and grace!) who becomes our priest; and he, because no other victim of sufficient virtue could be found, on earth, or in heaven, offers himself, as the precious sacrifice! The sword of justice raised for our destruction, he receives into his own bosom, and bids us but love our deliverer, and live, and be happy!

Of this overwhelming scene, the sons of Aaron, in the tabernacle, and in the temple, exhibited but types and symbols. They "stood daily ministering, and offering, oftentimes, the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." We now behold the illustrious antitype! His character and work are shadowed forth to the eye of faith, not only in all the victims which bled in sacrifice upon Jewish altars, but also in the blood of Abel; in the offering up of Isaac; in the contumely received by Joseph from his brethren; and in the guidance which Moses gave to the children of Israel; and he it was who inspired the songs of the patriarchs, and the predictions of prophets, who through the dim vista of coming years saw the day of the Son of man and were glad.

The ministry of angels, fearful exhibitions of the power of God, and appalling expressions of the sympathy of nature, attested the dignity of Messiah in his humiliation. There hung the sacred victim upon the cross, quivering in every nerve with anguish, and bleeding from every gaping wound! Angels, aghast, hovered around in anxious suspense and astonishment. Fiendish men, in whose bosom fear and envy mingled with the spirit of revenge, scowled upon the scene.

Hark! The agonized sufferer "cries with a loud voice—it is finished!" Look! "He bows his head, he gives up the ghost!" Pale, mangled, all gory, he dies! The earth, as if seized with astonishment and fear, shook and trembled; the veil of the temple was torn asunder throughout, exposing the most holy place; as a flickering candle, the sun in mid-heaven went out, and the universe, from the sixth to the ninth hour, was shrouded in thick darkness. The multitude, although intoxicated with rage, as they groped their way from Calvary, exclaimed this, this is, he is the Son of God. Kind friends, with aching hearts, took him down from the cross, and laid him in the grave.

But he was not destined long to remain a prisoner there. The third morning came, and with it his glorious resurrection! Behold him, as he comes forth from the sepulchre, "leading captivity captive" at his chariot wheels, a triumphant conqueror! Again, the earth and the heavens trembled with agitation! Angels passed swiftly about the tomb; and many bodies of the saints arose, and were seen in the holy city!

And now joy and gladness mingled everywhere, with the amazement of his people. Forty days he conversed with his disciples, and having, at Olivet, given them his final commands, as he blessed them, he arose in their presence and ascended up into heaven. They gazed upon him until a cloud received him out of their sight. He is gone to take possession of the mansions of glory in our behalf, and "sits at the right hand of God, until his enemies are made his footstool." Thus, so great is his dignity and glory, that when he offers one sacrifice for sins, it is enough. He thereby "perfects forever them that are sanctified." All other sacrifices and priesthods are instantly abolished. His one offering is ample for all ages; and his priesthood is thenceforward perpetual.

When the infinitely glorious God descends to be the offerer, and at the same time, the victim, accompanying the sacrifice with events so illustrious, the value of the offering must correspond in magnitude to the grandeur of the transaction.

We will, however, if you please, look for a moment at the great object which it secures, and we shall be able to perceive, in a still more striking point of light, the value of Christ's sacrifice. We always estimate causes by their effects. They are considered of little consequence, except for the results they produce. Apply this rule of judgment in the case before us. What objects are secured by the sacrifice of Christ? Jehovah, I reply, was moved to pity by the woes of men, whose whole moral nature was poisoned and embittered by transgression. He loved us, and determined to institute means for the removal of human guilt. It was in pursuance of this gracious design, that he sent his Son into our world, the abode of wretchedness and woe. He "brought life and immortality to light, by the gospel." In consideration of his sacrifice, God the Father is reconciled, justice is appeased, and the way of salvation opened to men. We may now approach him with confidence, and obtain all our desires.

Another object secured is the mission of the Holy Spirit. Pardoned indeed, we might be, without his regenerating work. This, however, would avail us little, since, as our depraved nature would remain. Unchanged, we should still be unqualified for happiness, and incapable of the glory of heaven. Through the satisfaction offered by the Redeemer, the Spirit comes into our world, whose prerogative it is, in the individual application of his merits, to purify the soul. That "he by one offering, has perfected forever them that are sanctified," the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier, "is to us," the ever present and best "witness." Yes, blessed be his name-

"The Spirit answers to the blood,  
And tells me I am born of God."

Yet another object secured, is the all-powerful, ever successful, and perpetual mediation, and advocacy on high of Jesus Christ. He, our adorable High Priest, sympathizing with all our infirmities, has entered into heaven, with his own priceless blood, for us; thus establishing a glorious medium of communion in all our worship with the Father of our spirits, and through which we may receive continually, unceasing supplies of grace. Now, therefore, we may come boldly unto the throne of grace, and there obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need. Since, therefore, the objects secured by the sacrifice of Christ are, to speak of no others, the pardon of our sins, the sanctification of our natures, and the salvation of our souls, who, judging only by these, can fully comprehend the extent of its value?

Again, the value of this offering is shown in the fact, that from it all the forms and ordinances of religion, whether under the patriarchal, Mosaic, or Christian dispensations, receive their life and energy. The sacrifices of the fathers, as we have already seen, were efficacious only as the worshipers exercised faith in Christ, the great antitype. Take away the sacrifice of Christ, and the Mosaic priesthood, and all its offerings were destitute of significance, or energy to move the heart. They all pointed to Messiah, and told, in letters of blood, that "the wages of sin is death, but that the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What without Christ's sacrifice, could we accomplish by preaching the gospel? The callous heart of the sinner is untouched

by mere moral lessons, however sublime. Appeal to him in terms the warmest and most impassioned, to consult his spiritual safety and happiness, it passes by him all unnoticed as the idle wind. Take him to Sinai; show him the terrors of the law; let the thunders of divine vengeance burst, and the lightnings of his wrath flash and blaze along the gathering storm; he stands amid the fearful scene unmoved. Nothing, nothing, but the love of God as seen in the sufferings of Jesus Christ upon the cross, will, can subdue and melt the obdurate heart of the sinner. This is omnipotent. None can be so hard as to resist the power of the cross.

From the sacrifice of Christ, baptism derives its form and expressiveness. Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again for our justification. And "know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4)

The Lord's Supper also is an equally affecting representation of the same great scene. This bread, said the Redeemer, is his body, given for you; the cup is his blood, shed for you. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. 11:26) "This do in remembrance of me." (I Cor. 11:25) Thus it is seen, that the sacrifice of Christ is the great centre to which points every institution, doctrine and ordinance of religion, and from which they derive all their life and energy.

And yet more. The value of Christ's sacrifice for sins is seen in the instruction which it affords us for the formation of Christian character. "Brethren, if Christ so loved us, (that he died for us) we ought also to love one another." He is our illustrious example. To be like his, how pure should be that love; how disinterested; how expansive; how fervent! He has taught us, too, in his life, and in his death, with what freedom and cheerfulness we should forgive our enemies.

Heard you that prayer, solemn, devout, impassioned, which he uttered with his dying breath? And for whom? For the persecutors and murderers about him, whose garments were reeking with his blood. "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Here is "compassion like a God." So he endured the scoffs, and so he forgave his enemies. Can we do less? In our daily prayers he instructs us to say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." And how much more should we exercise the same spirit towards our brethren.

How beautifully falls  
From human lips, that blessed word, forgive!  
Forgiveness, 'tis the attribute of God;  
The sound which speaketh heaven; renews again  
On earth, lost Eden's faded bloom; and flings  
Hope's halcyon halo o'er the waste of life!"

Readily and cheerfully he suffered for us. Shall we then shrink from suffering, whenever the honor of the cause, the triumph of the truth, or the salvation of sinners demands it? God forbid! Let me bear the cross after my Redeemer. Come persecution, contumely, death,—come what will—blessed Saviour, I will follow thee.

In a word, what quality is there which gives excellency and perfection to Christian character, in relation to which we do not find ample instruction in his own illustrious example?

The sacrifice of Christ for our sins will, finally, constitute a theme to myriads for delightful contemplation, and a source of the purest enjoyment forever.

Heaven without Christ would lose its most radiant charms to the redeemed. And what is it, but his glorious sacrifice, which renders him so precious to, the hearts of all? His love fills every bosom with overflowing delight. The triumphal song of the glorified, which the bright inhabitants of paradise will sing unceasingly, has direct reference to his great sacrifice. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing." (Rev. 5:12) ALLELUIAH. For, he "hast redeemed us to God by [his] blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. 5:9)

Angels themselves learn, from his sacrifice, more of God than they before knew, or ever, otherwise, could have known. Its mysteries were to them most profound and amazing; but when they saw the benevolence which it evinced, they, the more readily, tuned their harps and swept the golden chords, in unison with the hosannas of the saints on high.

A perpetual flood of love, and grace, and glory, and happiness, pours forth from his sacrifice, which fills, and will continue to fill, all heaven, with delightful rapture, forever. This is the true river of life, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." (Psalm 46:6)

These are some of the considerations, feebly and very inadequately presented, which sustain and illustrate the value of Christ's sacrifice for sins. It is evinced by the fact that it was offered by the appointment of God; it is seen in the personal dignity of the offerer; it is proved by the magnitude of the objects which it secured; by the consideration that it gives, and ever has given, form and life to all the institutions, ordinances and doctrines of religion; by the instruction it affords us in the formation of Christian character; and by the joy which it gives, and will continue to give, to the countless myriads of heaven, forever. **The value of Christ's sacrifice for sins is therefore, infinite, inconceivable, boundless.**

It remains only, that a brief APPLICATION be made of our subject.

1. We cannot but perceive, unless we greatly err in our conceptions of the topics now brought in review, that in the sacrifice of Christ, we have a full and perfect antidote for sins.

Moral disease has indeed laid its withering hand upon us all. But there "is balm in Gilead; there is a physician there." The ransom price is paid. No man, now, need remain in his sins, and under the power of death. Infinite love invites you to repentance, to faith, to pardon, to salvation. Will you, can you resist the kind entreaty of him who died for sinners? What more can the inquirer ask, than is presented to him in Christ's satisfaction?

Here is fullness and freeness of redemption. Here alone the wretched backslider can find a cure for his miseries. Sinners, inquirers, backsliders, all, all—come to the Saviour. He asks but your love, your faith, your obedience. Can you possibly withhold them? Would you give him less? Why then do you thus waver, hesitate and delay? Come to this full fountain, drink of its purifying waters and live forever.

2. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ for sins, teaches us the unreasonableness of attempting to reach heaven by any other means. Philosophers may cavil, and waste their learning in metaphysical discussions as to the nature of God, of the soul, and of the relations that subsist between them; moralists may exhaust their powers of reason in speculations regarding their favorite theories; the legalist may watch, may study, may employ ceaseless diligence; the 11somer ascetic may afflict himself with woes innumerable; it is all, if relied upon for salvation, utterly in vain.

"There is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus. He himself has said, "I am the way, the true way, and the living way; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
can do helpless sinners good."

Deceive not yourselves, I entreat you, by indulging the supposition that you may possibly be saved in some other way. Salvation without an application to the soul, by the Holy Spirit, of the merits of Christ's sacrifice for sins, is and will remain forever impracticable.

3. This subject instructs us that the sacrifice of Christ for sins is entirely sufficient to accomplish all the purposes for which it was designed. Can the all-wise and omnipotent Gad fail in his purposes of love to us? This is his own expiation, appointed, executed and accepted by him. Is it adequate? How can it fail?

"A faithful and unchanging God,  
Lays the foundation of my hope,  
In oaths, and promises, and blood."

Nor can he who relies upon it be disappointed. Never, never. If I am upheld by his sacrifice, I am safe; I ask no more.

4. If such be the value of Christ's sacrifice for sins, it is infinitely important that we shall keep it continually before our minds, that upon our character and life as Christians, it may produce its full effect. Thence we derive alike, our hope of salvation; our strength to surmount the impediments that obstruct our spiritual progress; and exalted motives to the performance of every duty.

Let it hold upon our thoughts and our affections, not relax and become enfeebled, but grow daily more and more strong. The foundation upon which you, my brethren, stand is firm as eternity. The prospect before you is all bright and glorious. Courage, then, beloved brethren; it is Christ your Redeemer, who speaking from heaven, says to each of you, "Be thou faithful unto death; and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Amen.



## Statements of Historians

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Roy Mason

From the book, *The Church That Jesus Built*, 1923 (Chapter 10)

"No church or denomination that began this side of Christ's personal ministry has any Bible right to make claim to be a church of Christ. Therefore Christ's promise to the church He built was not made to Catholicism nor to the various sects of Protestantism that originated in and since the days of Luther's Reformation, but it was made to that church that no historian, friend or foe, has ever been able to find its origin this side of Christ's personal ministry, namely, the Baptist church. This is no new theory but a fact that is believed and taught by all loyal and informed Baptists the world over."

T. Moore, in *Why I Am A Baptist*

**W**e saw in the last chapter that from the days of Christ and the apostles there have existed churches that held to the New Testament way of salvation and baptism. These churches I have shown to be, on essential points, Baptist churches. I wish for us now to spend a few moments considering the statements of historians of different denominations concerning Baptist origin and perpetuity. Some of these statements have been much used and often quoted. This, however, has in no wise affected their truth. Indeed they should carry greater weight, having stood the test of time and criticism.

The charge is sometimes made that even Baptist historians do not believe in Baptist continuity. In reply to this it may be said that some Baptist historians do not. Some are too "broad" to risk the charge of narrowness that would be hurled at them if they laid claim to perpetuity. Some have pedobaptist and even modernistic tendencies, and hold to the "invisible" Church theory. But it can be truly said that most Baptist historians are firm believers in Baptist continuity. And it is interesting to note that those who seek to discredit it are careful not to assert that Baptist continuity cannot be traced.

For instance, Dr. Vedder says: "One cannot affirm that there was not a continuity in the outward and visible life of the church, founded by the apostles down to the Reformation. To affirm such a negative would be foolish, and such...could not be proved." (*S. Hist.*, p. 9) Vedder, however, takes the position that it was to the "invisible" Church that Christ promised perpetuity. He evidently expects the reader to accept this merely upon the authority of his word, without proof, biblical or otherwise. He offers no proof because none can be offered. As I have already shown, there is no such thing as an "invisible" Church. There has either been a continuity of visible churches, or else Christ's promise has failed.

The Baptist historian A. H. Newman disclaims belief in Baptist continuity, but he also is very careful not to assert that such continuity cannot be traced. Indeed, he goes so far as to admit that all did not go off into apostasy, for he says (*History of Antipedobaptism*, p. 28), "That there were hosts of true believers can by no means be doubted." I have shown that these

"hosts" were Baptists, gathered into New Testament churches!

The Baptist historian McGlothlin, like Vedder and Newman, does not venture to assert that there was not a continuity of Baptist churches. His statement is (*Guide*, p. 29), "Anabaptists may have had some connection with earlier sects."

Among the better known Baptist historians of the past who were believers in Baptist perpetuity, may be mentioned Robinson, Crosby, Irving, Orchard, Jones, Backus, Benedict and Cramp. Of these historians Dr. Armitage says: "In the main their leading facts and findings have not been proven untrustworthy, and no one has attempted to show their general conclusions untenable...Their historical acumen is quite equal to that of other church historians" (Armitage's *History*, p. 11).

I want that we shall consider a few statements from noted Baptists themselves concerning their origin and continuity, after which we shall consider what historians of other faiths have to say about them.

The Baptist historian that is regarded by many leading Baptists as their greatest historian is John T. Christian. Dr. Christian's new *Baptist History* (*Baptist S. S. Board*, 1922) presents unassailable proof of the continuity of Baptists. I quote from the preface to his great work this ringing statement: "I have no question in my own mind that there has been a historical succession of Baptists from the days of Christ to the present time."

Dr. Geo. Lorimer (*The Baptists in History*, p. 49), "That the Baptists are more likely the oldest, is generally conceded and grows more certain with the progress of scholarly investigation."

Dr. J. B. Moody (*My Church*), "Church perpetuity is scriptural, reasonable, credible, historical and conclusive."

Dr. J. L. Smith (*Baptist Law of Continuity*), "We have submitted the testimony of more than forty of the world's best historians—not one of them a Baptist—who expressly and clearly point out the movement of these Baptist people through the long centuries back to the apostolic days."

Dr. J. W. Porter, noted author and editor says, "If Baptists have not perpetuity, then Christ's prophecy and promise have failed. This is unthinkable."

H. B. Taylor (*Bible Briefs*), "Baptist churches are the only institutions that are divine on this earth. Without them Matthew 16:18 has failed of fulfillment."

Dr. T. T. Eaton, "Those who oppose Baptist succession have no logical ground to stand on in organizing a church out of material furnished by other churches, and with those baptized by regular ordained ministers."

Dr. R. B. Cook (*Story of the Baptists*):

"Baptists are able to trace their distinctive principles to the apostolic age...When from the union of the church and state Christianity became generally corrupt, there still remained, in obscure places, churches and sects which maintained the pure doctrines and ordinances of Christ, and hence it is certain that these churches and sects held substantially the same principles which are now held as the distinctive views of the Baptists."

Dr. D. B. Ray (*Baptist Succession*, p. 10), "Baptists have with one voice denied any connection with the Romish apostasy, and claimed their origin as a church from Jesus Christ and the apostles."

Dr. D. C. Haynes (*The Baptist Denomination*, p. 21), "The Baptist church is the primitive church—there has never been a time when it was not in being."

Dr. Geo. W. McDaniel (*Churches of the New Testament*), "There is no personality this side of Jesus Christ is a satisfactory explanation of their origin."

I could go on almost indefinitely with quotations from n Baptists, showing that great and representative men of faith, after

investigation and thought, have been firm belief in the perpetuity of Baptist churches. Some of these have ten books that offer conclusive proof on this point. I mention as examples:

- *Baptist Succession*, by Dr. D. B. Ray;
- *Baptist Church Perpetuity*, by Dr. W. A. Jarrell;
- *The World's Debt to the Baptists*, by Dr. J. W. Porter;
- *Fundamentals of the Faith*, by W. D. Nowlin;
- *The New Testament Church*, by T. T. Martin; and
- *My Church*, by J. B. Moody

To the books I referred to are to be added many historical works by men whose names I have made no mention of.

So much for the beliefs of Baptists relative to the continuity of their own churches. Let us now see what historians and great men of other faiths have to say about Baptist origin and perpetuity. I begin with those who have been the bitterest enemies and persecutors of Cardinal Hosius, the president of the Council of Trent. He says:

"If the truth of religion were to be judged by the readiness and boldness of which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer and surer than that of the Anabaptists, since there have been none for these twelve hundred years past that have been more generally punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to the most cruel punishment than these people." (Quoted from *Christian's History*)

Cardinal Hosius wrote in A. D. 1554. He dates the history of Baptists back twelve hundred years. This is an important concession. Date them back to 354 A. D. and we have little trouble following them the rest of the way.

Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, co-worker with Luther and Calvin in the Reformation of 1525 and bitter enemy of the Baptists says, "The institution of the Anabaptists is no novelty, but for thirteen hundred years has caused great trouble to the church."

This admits the existence of Baptists in the year 225 A. D. Mosheim, Lutheran historian of great note says, "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists." (*Inst. of Eccl. History*)

Robert Barclay, Quaker, says, "There are also reasons for believing that on the continent of Europe small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the time of the apostles." (*Inner life of the Societies of the Commonwealth*, pp. 11, 12)

John Clark Ridpath, Methodist, author of that monumental work, *Ridpath's History of the World*, in a letter to Dr. W. A. Jarrell (*Baptist Church Perpetuity*, p. 59), says, "I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A. D. 100, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists."

Alexander Campbell, founder of the Campbellite or "Christian" church says, "From the apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced." (*McCalla-Campbell Debate on Baptism*, pp. 378, 379)

Sir Isaac Newton, learned English philosopher, student of the Scriptures and of history, says, "The Modern Baptists, formerly called Anabaptists, are the only people who have never symbolized with the Papacy." (Quoted from *Baptist Law of Continuity*, p. 39)

*Edinburg Cyclopedia*, "It must have already occurred to our readers that the Baptists are the same sect of Christians that were formerly described under the appellation of Anabaptist. Indeed, this seems to have been their leading principle from the time of Tertullian to the present time." (From *N. T. Church*, p. 22) Tertullian was a Montanist. He was born about fifty

years after the death of John the apostle.

I quote next from *Crossing the Centuries*, by W. C. Kin having as associate editors some of the great men of America such as former President Roosevelt, President Wilson, Davis Starr Jordan, Lyman Abbott, and a number of presidents and professors of leading universities. Of the Baptists it has this to say:

"Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers, known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek Churches, have an unbroken continuity 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." (From *The N. T. Church*, p. 25)

The Dutch Baptist historians all claim apostolic origin for the Baptists, according to Dr. J. T. Christian, who has given much study and thought to this question. Such is the claim of Herman Schynn (*Historia Christianorum*), while Blaupont Ten Cate says (*Christian's History*, p. 95): "I am fully satisfied that Baptist principles have in all ages, from the times of the apostles to the present, prevailed over a greater or smaller portion of Christendom."

The claim of Dutch Baptists to apostolic origin was thoroughly investigated in the year 1819. The King of Holland appointed J. J. Dermout, his chaplain, a scholarly man, and Dr. Ypeij, professor of theology in Groningen, both members of the Dutch Reformed Church, to write a history of the Dutch Reformed Church and also investigate the claims of Dutch Baptists. They prepared the history, and in it they devote a chapter to the Baptists. A portion of what they have to say about the Baptists reads as follows:

"The Mennonites are descended from the tolerably pure evangelical Waldenses, who were driven by persecution into various countries; and who during the latter part of the twelfth century fled into Flanders; and into the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, where they lived simple and exemplary lives, in the villages as farmers (in towns by trades) free from the charge of any gross immoralities, and professing the most pure and simple principles, which they exemplified in a holy conversation. They were, therefore, in existence long before the Reformed Church of the Netherlands.

"We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have long in history received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages...

"The perfectly correct external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth, disputed by the Romish Church, that the Reformation brought about in the sixteenth century was in the highest degree necessary, and at the same time goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics that their denomination is the most ancient." (*History of the Dutch Reformed Church*, by A. Ypeij and J. J. Dermout, Vol. 1, p. 148)

Other authorities could be cited, and quotations could be multiplied, but it is unnecessary to go on indefinitely with these. I shall offer only two more ere I close the chapter. Enough has already been written, however, and sufficient proof has been produced to convince the open, unbiased, teachable mind that Jesus founded a Church, that that church was the local assembly; that He promised its perpetuity, and that His promise is seen fulfilled in the churches today known as Baptist churches. I submit the following from Dr. J. W. Porter's book, *Random Remarks*, concerning Dr. John Clark, who was pastor of the first Baptist church in America, located at Newport, R. I.

Dr. Porter says:

"Dr. John Clark received his baptism from Rev. Stillwell's church in London, and this church received the from Holland, and the Holland Baptists from the Waldenses, and the Waldenses from the Novatians, and the Novatians from the Donatists, and the Donatists receive their baptism from the apostolic church, and the apostolic church from John the Baptist, and John the Baptist from heaven."

In 1921 or 1922, I clipped an article that appeared in the *Oklahoma Baptist Messenger*, and simultaneously in several other denominational papers of the South. This article dealt with the ancestry of the Baptist church at Dyer, Tennessee. It shows a continuity of Baptist church life from the present to the days of Jesus. I am not informed as to the one who made the research, neither have I had at my command all the books necessary to enable me to verify each historical reference given. I give the article in full below for the consideration of the reader:

#### **BAPTIST SUCCESSION BACK TO CHRIST**

1. Link One: The Baptist church at Dyer, Tennessee, was organized by J. W. Jetter, who came from the Philadelphia Association.
2. Link Two: Hillcliff Church, Wales, England. H. Roller came to the Philadelphia Association from The Hillcliff Church. See minutes of Philadelphia Association, book 3, item 1.
3. Link Three: Hillcliff Church was organized by Aaron Arlington, A. D. 987. See Alex Munston's *Israel of the Alps*, p. 39.
4. Link Four: Lima Piedmont church ordained Aaron Arlington in 940. See Jones' *Church History*, p. 324.
5. Link Five: Lima Piedmont church was organized by Balcolao, A. D. 812. See Neander's *Church History*, vol. 2, p. 320.
6. Link Six: Balcolao came from the church at Timto, Asia Minor. See Neander's *Church History*, vol. 2, p. 320.
7. Link Seven: Timto church was organized by Archer Flavin, A. D. 738. See Mosheim's *History*, vol. 1, p. 394.
8. Link Eight: Archer Flavin came from the Darethea church, organized by Adromicus, A. D. 671, in Asia Minor. See Lambert's *Church History*, p. 47.
9. Link Nine: Adromicus came from Pontifossi, at the foot of the Alps in France. See Lambert's *Church History*, p. 47.
10. Link Ten: Pontifossi church was organized by Tellestman from Turan, Italy, A. D. 398. See Nowlin's *Church History*, vol. 2, p. 318.
11. Link Eleven: Turan church was organized by Tertullan from Bing Joy, Africa, A. D. 237. See Armitage's *Church History*, p. 182.
12. Link Twelve: Tertullan was a member of the Partus church at the foot of the Tiber, that was organized by Polycarp, A. D. 150. See Cyrus' *Commentary of Antiquity*, p. 924.
13. Link Thirteen: Polycarp was baptized by John the Beloved or Revelator, on the twenty-fifth of December, A. D. 95. See Neander's *Church History*, p. 285.
14. Link Fourteen: John was with Jesus on the Mount. Mark 3: 13-14; Luke 6: 12-13.



# First Convenient Baptist Church

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E. L. Bynum,  
From *The Plains Baptist Challenger*, 1995

It seems that many people are looking for a convenient church that will fit all of their needs. When you ask them what kind of church they are looking for, most of them are quite vague in their description. If you watch where they finally end up, or you question them more closely, you will find that they are looking for a church that is convenient in doctrine and practice.

With tongue in cheek we say maybe we can help these people by establishing just the kind of church that they are looking for. We shall call it the First Convenient Baptist Church.

## Convenient In Location

The children may have to go two miles to school, or ride a school bus for many miles, but the church must be nearby. The husband may drive 20 to 30 miles a day to get to work. Mother may shop at stores that are five to ten miles away, but the whole family wants a church that is only a few blocks away, even though they may only go one to three times a week.

The important thing is for the church to be convenient. Our church will be no further than ten blocks from your house. What it preaches, teaches, and stands for is not all that important. So we are going to call our church, the **First Convenient Baptist Church**. We don't think you will mind the word Baptist, but if it offends you, we will call it the **Convenient Community Church**. We shall just tell people it is Baptist.

## Convenient In Doctrine

Doctrine has been out of favor for a long time, so we are going to have the kind of doctrine that does not stand out in a manner that offends.

It will be best to preach on **salvation** in a way that does not offend. Therefore, this ideal church will emphasize an easy-believism. There will be no emphasis on repentance; therefore, it will not be necessary to preach on the evils of sin. People are turned off by preaching on human depravity and all that stuff.

Our stand on **baptism** should satisfy nearly everyone. We shall insist on immersion in water, but it won't matter where you get this done. Just as long as you are satisfied with your immersion, we are not going to complain. You may have been baptized by the Church of Christ, Assemblies of God, or some other group. We are not going to raise a fuss about your baptism. Of course if you are dissatisfied, we can do it over, but it is up to you.

The **Bible Version** issue has troubled a lot of churches. Since most people still prefer the KJV, we shall do most of our preaching out of it. Of course, we will correct it a little by quoting the New King James from time to time, and perhaps the NIV. Everyone can feel free to bring the Bible of their choice.

Now we are going to talk some about the local church, for that is where the preacher is going to get his salary. However, if you want to believe in the universal invisible church that so many say was started at Pentecost, you'll never be offended here at **First Convenient Baptist Church**.

Naturally, we are going to say that we believe in the **second coming of the Lord**, but we are not going to say when. You will never discover whether we believe in a pre-trib, post-trib, or a post-mill coming of the Lord. To be dogmatic about that might divide us.

The **Charismatic Movement** has created a lot of confusion in the religious world, and we don't intend to let that divide us. All opinions on this are tolerated at **First Convenient Baptist Church**. We will just ask you not to push your views on

everyone else.

The sermons will be short and sweet. We want people to feel good about themselves. We all know how much **self-esteem** is needed today.

We will have a lot of entertainment and social activities, with something that pleases every member of the family.

### **Convenient In Standards**

Some churches used to make a big deal about **separation**. It is our belief that this is legalistic. Our message is going to be positive, and we shall avoid being negative.

Here at **First Convenient Baptist Church**, we are not going to criticize anyone because of their doctrine and practice. If Billy Graham comes to town, we will support him. If Bill Gothard holds a seminar here, we will try to get everyone to go. Every once and a while, the pastor will be quoting from Norman Vincent Peale, and other popular religious leaders. After all, we need to love everybody.

Some of those old narrow independent Baptists used to require that women dress like women when they came to church. Here at **First Convenient Baptist Church**, we know that God looks on the heart, so we are not going to divide our membership over this issue. If the women want to wear jeans or pants suits, that is alright. A little later some will probably come in shorts, but that won't matter if it doesn't distract the service too much.

We are not going to make an issue out of cigarettes, dancing or other such things. The pastor does not drink beer, but if the members keep a few cold ones, that's up to them. After all, Jesus turned the water into wine.

### **Convenient In Service**

You will never be expected to be **faithful in attendance**. Families need to be together a lot, and the church ought not to interfere. After all there should be some time for sports, recreation, picnics, fishing, and the visiting of relatives.

We are not going to harp on money. Give what you can, when you can, and we will be satisfied.

### **Is This What You Want?**

I have never seen a church named the **First Convenient Baptist Church**, but some of them could wear that name quite well. They are trying to appeal to every point of view, in order to attract the largest number of people.

A lot of people are trying to sneak every Baptist church into the **First Convenient Baptist Church**. Each family might not want their church to compromise on every one of these issues, but they want some doctrine or practice to be changed. By the time you change some doctrine to fit one group, and another doctrine to fit another group, etc., you end up standing for nothing. By the time that you change various things on the doctrine of separation to fit various people, you have no stand left.

Sad to say, a lot of churches ought to change their name and add the word Convenient. This is what they are trying to do in practice. Why not advertise it by name?



# The Baptist Church Lineage Project \_\_\_\_\_

## Introducing an Online Project in Conjunction with our Church's 25th Anniversary

We have created a website to collect and share other Baptist churches' lineages, and to create, if you will, a **Baptist Lineage Family Tree.**



[www.baptistlineage.org](http://www.baptistlineage.org)

Baptist history in general, and the heritage of one's local Baptist church, are and should be, compulsory learning for every Baptist church member.

Our Baptist history is replete with a trail of blood of the faithful believers, who in obedience to our Lord, laid down their lives to carry out the Great Commission.

The history of true Baptists, while often recorded by our enemies and persecutors, is also a testimony of our Lord's faithfulness to be with us "always, even unto the end of the world."

## Bible Baptist Church's Lineage

The below is a work in progress. If you have any information that could help fill in the gaps or correct any errors, please feel free to contact us.

YEAR (A.D.)	CHURCH	MISSIONARY/PASTOR	COMMENTS
1999	Bible Baptist Church Brandon, Manitoba	John Reaves, Jr.	Sent out by authority of Brandon Bible Baptist Church as missionary to the Czech Republic
1988	Bible Baptist Church Brandon, Manitoba	John Reaves, Sr.	Organized by the authority of Grace Baptist Church, Dennis Norwood, Pastor
1969	Grace Baptist Church Springfield, Missouri	Raymond Sowards	Reorganized Temple Bible Baptist Church of Springfield, MO. Changed name to Grace Bible Baptist Church. Pastor from 1969-1980
1958	Temple Bible Baptist Church Springfield, Missouri	Lawrence Watts	First official service held on Dec. 14, 1958. Established by authority of West Atlantic St. Baptist Church???
1953	West Atlantic St. Baptist Church Springfield, MO	Pastor Mitchell	Lawrence Watts ordained
????	West Atlantic St. Baptist Church Springfield, MO	????	Started by ???? (Rose Hill Baptist Church????)
1933- 1936	High Street Baptist Church Springfield, MO	Charlie Dyer	Bro. Dyer established High Street Baptist Church in Springfield, MO. Established under the authority of Rose Hill Baptist Church
1876	Rose Hill Baptist Church Near Shady Grove/Willard, MO	George Long III	Established by authority of Providence Baptist Church of Providence, TN George Long III was the great-great-great-great-grandson of George Long
1795	Providence Baptist Church Providence, TN	George Long	Established by authority of Buck Mountain Baptist Church, Virginia George Long was the son of John Long
1760	Buck Mountain Baptist Church Virginia	John Long and Aaron Bledsoe	Sent from Philadelphia Association.
1701	Various churches in Pennsylvania	H. Roller and John Long	Sent from the Hillcliff church to Philadelphia to establish churches in Pennsylvania John Long married the daughter of Captain James Cook
????	Hillcliff Anabaptist Church Wales	Aaron Arlington	Sent out of Lime Piedmont church of Switzerland
812	Lime Piedmont church Switzerland	Balcoloa	Organized by the authority of the the Timpto church
738	Timpto church	Archer Flavin	Organized by authority of the Darathee church
617	Darathee Anabaptist Church	Andronicus	Organized by authority of the Pontafassi Church
398	Pontifassi Church	Tellestian	Organized by authority of the church at Turin
237	Turin Church	Tertullian	Organized by authority of the church of Partus at Tiber
150	Church of Partus	Polycarp	Organized by authority of the church at Ephesus
???	Church of Ephesus	Paul, Barnabus, Timothy	Organized by authority of the church at Antioch, Syria
??	Church of Antioch	???	Organized by authority of the church at Jerusalem
??	Church of Jerusalem	The Lord Jesus Christ	Founded by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry (prior to the events recorded in Acts 1&2) with his apostles who had been prepared by the preaching of John the Baptist.