

# Faith in Christ is the Duty of All Who Hear the Gospel

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In order to determine, whether faith in Christ be the duty of all men who have opportunity to hear the Gospel, it will be necessary to determine what it is or wherein it consists. Some have maintained that it consists in a persuasion of our interest in Christ, and in all the benefits and blessings of his mediation. Others, who would not be thought to go so far, for the sake of many Christians whom they cannot but observe upon this principle to be, generally speaking, unbelievers, yet maintain what fully implies it.

Though they will allow for the comfort of such Christians that assurance is not of the essence of faith, understanding by assurance, an assured persuasion of our salvation; but, that a reliance on Christ is sufficient; yet, in almost all other things, they speak as if they did not believe what, at those times, they say. It is common for such persons to call those fears which occupy the minds of Christians, lest they should miss of salvation at last, by the name of unbelief; and to reprove them for being guilty of this God-dishonoring sin, exhorting them to be strong in faith, like Abraham, giving glory to God; when all that is meant is, that they should, without doubting, believe the goodness of their state.

If this be saving faith, it must inevitably follow, that it is not the duty of unconverted sinners; for they are not interested in Christ, and it cannot possibly be their duty to believe a lie. But, if it can be proved that the proper object of saving faith is, not our being interested in Christ, but the glorious Gospel of the ever-blessed God, (which is

true, whether we believe it or not) a contrary inference must be drawn; for it is admitted on all hands, that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

By saving faith, we undoubtedly embrace Christ for ourselves, in the same sense as Jacob embraced Jehovah as his God, Gen. 28:21; that is, to a rejecting of every idol that stands in competition with him. Christ is all-sufficient and suited to save us as well as others; and it is for the forgiveness of our sins that we put our trust in him. But this is very different from a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation. My objections to this notion of faith are as follow:

Nothing can be an object of faith, except what God has revealed in his Word, but the interest that any individual has in Christ, and the blessings of the Gospel, more than another, is not revealed. God has nowhere declared concerning any one of us as individuals that we shall be saved - all that he has revealed on this subject respects us as characters.

He has abundantly promised that all who believe in him, love him, and obey him, shall be saved; and a persuasion that, if we sustain these characters, we shall be saved is, doubtless, an exercise of faith: but whether we do them or not, is an object not of faith, but of consciousness. "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth: hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." (1 John 2:3, 5; 3:18, 19)

If anyone imagine that God has revealed to him his interest in his love; and this in a special, immediate, and extraordinary manner, and not by exciting in him the holy exercises of grace, and thereby begetting a consciousness of his being a subject of grace, let him beware, lest he deceive his soul. The Jews were not wanting in what some would call the faith of assurance. "We have one Father," said they, "even God." But Jesus answered, "If God were your Father, ye would love me." (John 8:41, 42)

The Scriptures always represent faith as terminating on something without us; namely, on Christ, and the truths concerning him. But if it consist in a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation, it must terminate principally on something within us; namely, the work of grace in our hearts. For, to believe myself interested in Christ is the same thing as to believe myself a subject of special grace. And hence, as was said, it is common for many who entertain this notion of faith to consider its opposite, unbelief, as a doubting whether we have been really converted.

But, as it is the truth and excellence of the things to be interested in, and not his interest in them, that the sinner is apt to disbelieve; so it is these, and not that, on which the faith of the believer primarily terminates. Perhaps what relates to personal interest may, in general, more properly be called hope than faith, and its opposite, fear, than unbelief.

To believe ourselves in a state of salvation (however desirable, when grounded on evidence) is far inferior, in its object, to saving faith. The grand object on which faith fixes, is the glory of Christ, and not the happy condition we are in, as interested in him. The latter, doubtless, affords great consolation; and the more we discover of his excellence, the more ardently shall we desire an interest in him, and be the more disconsolate while it continues a matter of doubt. But if we be concerned only for our own security, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins.

As that repentance which fixes merely on the consequences of sin, as subjecting us to misery, is selfish and spurious, so that faith which fixes merely on the consequences of Christ's mediation, as raising us to happiness, is equally selfish and spurious. It is the peculiar property of true faith, to endear Christ. Unto you that believe, HE is precious. And, where this is the case, if there be no impediments, arising from constitutional dejection or other accidental causes, we shall not be in doubt about an interest in him. Consolation will accompany the faith of the Gospel: Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

All those exercises of faith which our Lord so highly commends in the New Testament—as that of the centurion, the woman of Canaan, and others—are represented as terminating on his all-sufficiency to heal them, and not as consisting in a persuasion that they were interested in the divine favor, and, therefore, should succeed. "Speak the word only," says the one, "and my servant shall be healed; for I am a man in authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

Such was the persuasion which the other entertained of his all-sufficiency to help her, that she judged it enough if she might but partake of the crumbs of his table—the scatterings, as it were, of mercy. Similar to this is the following language:—"If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." (Matt. 9:21)—"Believe ye that I am ABLE to do this?" They said unto him, "Yea, Lord". (Matt. 9:28)—"Lord, if thou wilt, thou CANST make me clean." (Matt. 8:2)—"If thou CANST do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." Jesus said, "If thou CANST believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:22, 23)

I allow that the case of these people, and that of a sinner applying for forgiveness, are not exactly the same. Christ had nowhere promised to heal all who came for healing, but he has graciously bound himself not to cast out any who come to

him for mercy. On this account, there is a greater ground for faith in the willingness of Christ to save, than there was in his willingness to heal, and there was less unbelief in the saying of the leper, "If THOU WILT, thou canst make me clean," than there would be in similar language from one who, convinced of his own utter insufficiency, applied to him for salvation.

But a persuasion of Christ being both able and willing to save all them that come unto God by him, and, consequently, to save us, if we so apply, is very different from a persuasion that we are the children of God, and interested in the blessings of the Gospel.

That the belief of the truth which God hath revealed in the Scriptures concerning Christ in saving faith, is evident from the following passages:

- "Go preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) Believing, here, manifestly refers to the Gospel to be preached, and the rejection of which would subject the unbeliever to certain damnation.
- "These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31) Believing unto life is here described as a persuasion of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God; and that on the ground of what was written in the Scriptures.
- Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe, and be saved." (Luke 8:12) This language plainly denotes that a real belief of the Word is connected with salvation.

Peter confessed, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 16:16, 17) Here it is plainly intimated that a belief of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God, is saving faith, and that no man can be strictly said to do this, unless he be the subject of a spiritual illumination from above. To the same purpose are those express declarations of Paul and John:

- If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him, from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Rom. 10:9)
- Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. (I John 5:1)
- Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (I John 5:5)
- Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. (I John 4:15)
- He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true. (John 3:33)
- No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 12:3)
- While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. (John 12:36) The light they then had was that of the Gospel and had they believed it, they would have been the children of light, or true Christians.
- Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth...These things I say, that ye might be saved. (John 5:33, 34) Our Lord could not mean less, by this language, than that, if they believed those things which John testified, and which he himself confirmed, they would be saved; which is the same thing as declaring it to be saving faith.

- When he [Christ] shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. (II Thess. 1:10) The words in a parenthesis are evidently intended to give the reason of the phrase them that believe, and intimate that it was the belief of the Gospel testimony that denominated them believers.

God hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. (II Thess. 2:13) It cannot be doubted, that, by the belief of the truth, is here meant faith in Christ; and its being connected with sanctification of the Spirit, and eternal salvation, proves it to be saving.

If the foregoing passages be admitted to prove the point (and if they do not, we may despair of learning any thing from the Scriptures) the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ cannot fairly be called in question; for, as before said, it is admitted on all hands that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

But to this statement it is objected that Christianity having at that time great opposition made to it, and its professors being consequently exposed to great persecution and reproach, the belief and acknowledgment of the Gospel was more a test of sincerity than it now is. Men are now taught the principles of the Christian religion from their youth, and believe them, and are not ashamed to acknowledge them, while yet they give no evidence of their being born of God, but of the contrary. There is some force in this objection, so far as it respects the confession of Christ's name, but I do not perceive that it affects the belief of the Gospel. It was no more difficult to believe the truth at that time than at this, though it might be much more so to avow it. With respect to that traditional assent which is given to Christianity in some nations, it is of the same nature as that which is given to Mohammedanism and Paganism in others.

It is no more than that of the Jewish nation, in the time of our Lord, towards the Mosaic Scriptures. They declared themselves to be Moses' disciples, and had no doubt that they believed him; yet our Lord did not allow that they believed his writings. "Had ye believed Moses," says he, "ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." (John 5:46)

The same is doubtless true of all others who assent to his Gospel, merely from having been educated in it. Had they believed it, they would be consistent, and embrace those things which are connected with it. It is worthy of remark that those professors of Christianity who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved are represented as not believing the truth, and as having pleasure in unrighteousness. (II Thess. 2:10, 12)

To admit the existence of a few facts without possessing any sense of their humiliating implication, their holy nature, their vast importance, or the practical consequences that attach to them, is to admit the body without the spirit. Paul, notwithstanding his knowledge of the law, and great zeal on its behalf, while blind to its spirituality, reckoned himself to be without the law. (Rom. 7:9) And such are those professing Christians, with respect to the Gospel, who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved.

It is further objected, that men are said to have believed the Gospel, who, notwithstanding, were destitute of true religion. Thus, some among the chief rulers are said to have "believed Jesus, but did not confess him; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." It is said of Simon, that he "believed also; yet he was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Agrippa is acknowledged, by Paul, to have "believed the prophets."

And faith is attributed even to the devils. The term belief, like almost every other term, is sometimes used in an improper sense. Judas is said to have repented, and hanged himself though nothing more is meant by it than his being smitten with remorse, wishing he had not done as he did on account of the consequences. Through the poverty of language, there is not a name for every thing that differs; and, therefore, where two things have the same visible appearance, and differ only in some circumstances which are invisible, it is common to call them by the same name.

Thus men are termed honest who are punctual in their dealings, though such conduct in many instances may arise merely from a regard to their own credit, interest, or safety. Thus the remorse of Judas is called repentance, and thus the convictions of the Jewish rulers, of Simon, and Agrippa, and the fearful apprehension of apostate angels, from what they

had already felt, is called faith. But as we do not infer from the application of the term repentance to the feelings of Judas that there is nothing spiritual in real repentance, so neither ought we to conclude from the foregoing applications of the term believing that there is nothing spiritual in a real belief of the Gospel.

Some writers have considered faith in Christ as a dependence on him, a receiving him, a coming to him, and trusting in him for salvation. There is no doubt but these terms are frequently used in the New Testament to express believing:

- As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. (John 1:12)
- He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)
- That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (Eph. 1:12)
- I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. (II Tim 1:12)

Whether these terms, however, strictly speaking, convey the same idea as believing, may admit of a question. They seem, rather, to be the immediate effects of faith, than faith itself. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews describes the order of these things, in what he says of the faith of Enoch:—He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Here are three different exercises of mind: First, believing that God is; second, believing that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; third, coming to him: and the last is represented as the effect of the former two. The same may be applied to Christ. He that cometh to Christ must believe the Gospel testimony that he is the Son of God and the Savior of sinners—the only name given under heaven and among men by which we must be saved. He must also believe the Gospel promise that he will bestow eternal salvation on all them that obey him; and under the influence of this persuasion, he comes to him, commits himself to him, or trusts the salvation of his soul in his hands. This process may be so quick as not to admit of the mind being conscious of it; and especially as, at such a time, it is otherwise employed than in speculating upon its own operations.

Let it but be granted that a real belief of the Gospel is not merely a matter presupposed in saving faith, but that it enters into the essence of it, and the writer of these pages will be far from contending for the exclusion of trust or dependence.

The term trust appears to be most appropriate, or best adapted of any, to express the confidence which the soul reposes in Christ for the fulfillment of his promises. We may credit a report of evil tidings as well as one of good; but we cannot be said to trust it. We may also credit a report, the truth or falsehood of which does not at all concern us; but that in which we place trust must be something in which our well-being is involved.

The relinquishment of false confidences which the Gospel requires, and the risk which is made in embracing it, are likewise better expressed by this term than by any other. A true belief of the record which God has given of his Son, is not accompanied with all this; but the term belief does not, of itself, necessarily convey it. When Jacob's sons brought the coat of many colors to him, he credited their story; he believed Joseph to be torn in pieces; but he could not be said to trust that he was. When the same persons, on their return from Egypt, declared that Joseph was yet alive, Jacob, at first, believed them not. But, on seeing the wagons, he was satisfied of the truth of their declaration, and trusted in it too—leaving all behind him on the ground of it.

But, whatever difference there may be between credit and trust, they agree in those particulars which affect the point at issue: the one no less than the other has relation to revealed truth as its foundation. In some cases, it directly refers to the divine veracity, as in Ps. 119: 42, "I trust in thy word." And where the immediate reference is to the power, the wisdom, or the mercy of God, or to the righteousness of Christ, there is a remote relation to veracity; for neither the one nor the other

would be objects of trust, were they not revealed in a way of promise. And from hence it will follow, that, trusting in Christ, no less than crediting his testimony, is the duty of every sinner to whom the revelation is made.

If it be asked, what ground could a sinner who shall at last prove to have no interest in the salvation of Christ ever possess for trusting in him? Let it be considered what it was for which he was warranted or obliged to trust. Was it that Christ would save him, whether he believed in him or not? No—there is no such promise; but an explicit declaration of the contrary. To trust in this, therefore, would be to trust in a falsehood. That for which he ought to have trusted in him was the obtaining of mercy, in case he applied for it. For this there was a complete warrant in the Gospel declarations. I may add, if any man distrust either the power or willingness of Christ to save those that come to him, and so continue to stand at a distance, relying upon his own righteousness, or some false ground of confidence, to the rejection of him, it is criminal and inexcusable unbelief.



## Churches Should Labor Incessantly \_\_\_\_\_

J. L. Diggs

From *The Manual of Theology- Second Part: A Treatise on Church Order, 1859*

**T**he spirit of unity pervades Christianity, and tends to bring the disciples of Christ into association with one another. Under the influence of this tendency, churches are formed; and in them an opportunity is given for the display of brotherly love. By the display, Christ is honored, and the world becomes convinced that his religion is divine. For the sake of Christ, therefore, and for the sake of the world, every church should labor to promote brotherly love.

The churches are the glory of Christ, not only in the brotherly love which they exhibit, but in their purity and devotion to the service of God. They are but small and temporary associations; yet they may reflect the glory of Christ to the view of an admiring world, as pure dew-drops reflect the brightness of the sun. So to honor Christ, should be the constant effort of the churches; and to affect this, care should be exercised over the spirituality of every member. The pastor should devote himself, with incessant toil and prayer, to the spiritual good of his flock and the members should watch over one another, exhort one another, and provoke one another to love and good works.

God has given the Christian ministry for the edification of his people; and every church ought to avail itself of this divine gift, and use it to the best advantage. For this purpose, the minister should be supported by cheerful contributions from the members of the church, that he may devote himself to the promotion of their spiritual interests. He should be encouraged in every possible way to diligence and fidelity in his duties. His imperfections should be treated with tenderness; and if, at any time, he should become remiss in his work, or turn aside from it to secular pursuits, the church ought, in gentleness and love, to address him with such language as Paul directed to be used to Archippus.

But such an address cannot be made with good effect by a church which does not sustain its minister, and free him from the necessity of worldly care.

Punctual attendance on the ministrations of the Word is necessary to the spiritual improvement of the church. It is necessary to encourage the heart of the minister. He cannot be expected to preach with earnestness and persevering zeal, if his people manifest no pleasure in listening to the truth which he proclaims. Let him know that they drink in the word with delight, that their souls are refreshed by it, and that it greatly increases their fruitfulness in holiness; with this knowledge, he will be stimulated to go forward in his work with boldness, and to endure all his toils with the sustaining assurance that his labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Regular attendance on the ministrations of the word is necessary that the hearers may grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Food is not more necessary to the body, than spiritual nourishment is to the soul; and the word is the appointed

means of spiritual nourishment. It is the sincere milk, which babes in Christ desire, and by which they are nourished; and it is the strong meat, which they can use profitably who have attained to mature age in the divine life.

Nor can spiritual health be expected, if the spiritual nourishment which God has provided be received at far distant and irregular intervals. A regular return of one day in seven has been wisely appointed by the great Author of our being, who knows our frame, and perfectly understands what is best for the promotion of our highest interests. They who neglect this provision of his benevolence, reject the counsel of God against themselves, and bring spiritual leanness on their souls.

It is not enough to receive the spiritual food, but it ought to be inwardly digested. The truth which is heard on the Sabbath, ought to be a subject of meditation through the week; and its influence should bring the actions, the words, the thoughts, even the very imaginations into obedience to the gospel of Christ. Thus the process of spiritual nutrition will be carried on, until the next Sabbath brings another supply of the heavenly food. Thus the soul will grow in strength, and attain the stature of spiritual manhood.

Besides the public ministrations of the word, other means of promoting religious knowledge ought to receive the attention and support of the churches. The study of the Bible ought to be encouraged, whether by individuals, by Bible classes, or by Sunday schools. It is a great fault if the work of instructing is entirely given up to the young. Let the heads which have grown gray in the service of the Lord bow with pleasure to impart instruction to the opening minds of the rising generation, and sow in this promising soil the seed which will produce a rich harvest, when the gray-haired instructor shall have gone to his eternal reward. Let the circulation of good religious books and periodical publications be promoted, and a spirit of religious inquiry be fostered in every proper way. Let men be taught, both by the words and the deeds of those who claim to be Christ's, that religion is the chief concern.

The health of the body requires exercise as well as food; so spiritual action is necessary for the health of the soul. Churches should exhort their members to be diligent in every good work, not only for the benefit of those around them, but also for their own spiritual improvement. In this course of active service, their own souls will become strong in the Lord, and their personal experience will verify the words of Christ, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The great work which demands the energy of all God's people is the spread of religion. Every church-member should labor for this by his personal efforts within the sphere of his individual influence, and, by co-operating with others, to extend the blessings of the gospel to every part of the earth. The precise mode of co-operating, the word of God does not prescribe; as it does not prescribe the precise mode in which the church-members shall travel to their place of public worship. But the thing to be done is prescribed; and, if the heart is in the Lord's work, it will employ its energies in devising the best method of accomplishing it, and in laboring to affect the object with prayerful reliance on the divine blessing. The gospel is to be preached to every creature; and he who loves Christ ought to feel a holy pleasure in helping those to execute the will of Christ who are willing, at his command, to bear the word of salvation to the perishing.

Union in religious effort, not only promotes the spiritual growth of individual Christians, but it also conduces greatly to the harmony of churches. When coldness in religion prevails, the members of a church are like pieces of metal, which are not only separate from each other, but may be employed to inflict blows on each other; but when spiritual warmth has melted them, they flow together and become one. Feuds and unprofitable controversies cease when men are actively engaged in the service of God, and when they strive to provoke one another to nothing but love and good works.

Prayer meetings are an important means of spiritual improvement. It has been said that the prayer meeting of a church is the thermometer by which its spiritual temperature may be known. When Christians love to meet, that they may pour forth their united supplications to the throne of grace, the Saviour, in fulfillment of his promise, meets with them, and bestows blessings which infinitely transcend all earthly good, and are a beginning of heavenly bliss.



# The Baptist and the Catholic

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Norman H. Wells

From *The Church That Jesus Loved*, 1973 (Chapter 7)

Recently, I watched a half hour program on the television that had been produced to give its viewers a better understanding of the Roman Catholic Church. It is my desire to give a better understanding of the Baptist's position concerning the Roman Catholic Church.

There are some things that Baptists and Catholics of conviction have in definite agreement:

1. Baptists and Catholics believe that an individual's religion is the most important thing in his life and that it permeates every facet of his being.
2. Baptists and Catholics believe that an individual's religion determines his immortal destiny, that is, where he will spend an eternity.
3. Baptists and Catholics believe that Christ established one church and gave one way of salvation.
4. Baptists and Catholics believe that the church was commissioned to go into all the world carrying the gospel to every creature.

With these things in mind let us consider another obvious fact. Baptists and Catholics stand at opposite ends of so-called Christianity. They are so far apart there can be no compromise. ONE IS RIGHT AND THE OTHER IS WRONG. ONE IS TRUTH AND THE OTHER IS ERROR.

It is just as simple as that! There are only three alternatives:

1. IF BAPTISTS HAVE THE TRUTH THEN CATHOLICISM IS GROSS ERROR.
2. IF CATHOLICS HAVE THE TRUTH THEN THE BAPTISTS ARE IN GROSS ERROR.
3. There is, by the world's standard, one other alternative. The world's reason says that BOTH BAPTISTS AND CATHOLICS COULD BE WRONG. The absolute certainty is THAT BOTH OF THEM CANNOT BE RIGHT!

Baptists are absolutely certain that they are right and that they have the truth. Catholics are certain they have the truth. BOTH CAN'T be right.

1. Baptists and Catholics disagree as to the final authority in religion. Baptists accept the Bible and the Bible only. Catholics accept the Bible plus tradition and their church as final authority.
2. Baptists believe that their church is the true church. The Catholics believe their church is the true church.
3. Baptists and Catholics disagree about the problem of sin and man's need of salvation.
4. BAPTISTS AND CATHOLICS DISAGREE ON THE WAY OF SALVATION.
5. Baptists and Catholics disagree about what constitutes a church, church government, officers, the way of worship, etc.



6. Baptists and Catholics disagree about Christian liberty and the relation of the church and the state.
7. Baptists stand vigorously opposed to confirmation, auricular confession, infant baptism, extreme unction, the celibacy of the clergy, the immaculate conception of Mary, the perpetual virginity of Mary, the assumption into heaven of Mary, the infallibility of the Pope, the observance of special days and seasons, indulgences, the use and worship of images, the invocation of saints and angels, etc.

In order to show the Baptist position concerning the Catholic, we are going to disregard all the differences except one. Actually all the rest are relatively unimportant in comparison with this one.

#### **BAPTISTS AND CATHOLICS DISAGREE ON THE WAY OF SALVATION.**

"What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30) The answer to this question is of absolute, supreme importance. About this there must be no mistake. It means the difference between condemnation and salvation, heaven and hell, lost and saved, right and wrong, true and false, etc.

It is not our purpose here to enter into a discussion of the two ways of salvation that are presented. The Baptists present one way and the Catholics another. BOTH CANNOT BE RIGHT!

Catholics and Baptists both agree that God gave one way of salvation. Both claim to have that way. Both cannot be right!

#### **Does it make any difference?**

If what Baptists believe will save a soul then that which Catholics believe will not save a soul. If what Catholics believe will save a soul then what Baptists believe will not save a soul. THIS IS THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DIFFERENCE THAT COULD EXIST.

#### **What then, is the Baptist position concerning the Catholic?**

1. The Baptist believes that the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are false. We accept the fact that the Roman Catholic Church believes that the teachings of the Baptist Church are false.
2. Baptists believe that immortal souls of men hang in the balance. It is our desire to carry the truth of the Gospel to all men, including Roman Catholics. We accept the fact that the Catholic Church desires all men to accept their teachings.
3. The Baptists seek to make use of all legitimate means to propagate their faith and accept the fact that Catholics do the same.
4. The Baptist looks at the Catholic with love and compassion and a desire to bring him to the truth.
5. We believe all the Bible warnings against false prophets, false teachers, damnable doctrines, traditions of men, etc. apply to Catholicism and yet accept the fact that the Catholic applied the same Scriptures to the Baptist.
6. Baptists feel that it is a God-given duty to expose error and those things contrary to the faith and we accept the fact that Catholicism feels the same responsibility.
7. BAPTISTS THANK GOD FOR THE FREEDOM OF RELIGION THAT EXISTS IN THESE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. We are thankful that two opposites such as Baptists and Catholics can both enjoy the freedom to pursue the worship of God as they think is right.

(1) Baptists believe that each denomination should have the right to establish and support their own schools. Baptists believe that the strength of Catholicism rests in its schools. We could wish that Baptists were as well advanced in this field. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BAPTISTS EVER EXPECT CATHOLICS TO HAVE TO GIVE OF THEIR MONEY OR THEIR TAXES IN ANY WAY TO SUPPORT BAPTIST SCHOOLS, CHURCHES OR INSTITUTIONS OF ANY KIND. BAPTISTS STAND UNALTERABLY OPPOSED TO ANY OF THEIR MONEY OR TAXES IN ANY WAY GOING TO SUPPORT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OR INSTITUTIONS OF ANY KIND.

(2) It would be a violation of religious freedom to compel the Catholic, in any way, to support the Baptist or to compel the Baptist to support the Catholic. It would be forcing the Baptist or the Catholic to financially support that which he considers a fatal heresy and opposed to God.

In these United States both Baptist and Catholic (and all other religions) have prospered in freedom. This is a freedom for all men to proclaim religious truth as they see it and to expose error as they see it. It is a freedom that finds the government and the law of the land refusing to favor one religion over another. It is a freedom that has no law that compels anyone to support any religion.

UNDER GOD, LET US KEEP IT THAT WAY!



## Felix Mantz

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J. Newton Brown  
From *Memorials of Baptist Martyrs*, 1854

This distinguished man, a leader in the Reformation in Germany, was a native of Zurich, and was educated in all the learning of the age, his father being a canon of the great minster in the place of his birth. In 1519 we find him studying the Hebrew language with Zuingle [Huldrych Zwingli], under the tuition of Carlstadt, and to have been on terms of intimacy with that Reformer, as well as with Myconius, Capito, and other leaders of the Swiss Reformation.

About the year 1522, he began to doubt as to the scriptural character of infant baptism, having many conversations on that subject with Zuingle, who was at first inclined to embrace the same views. The progress of his investigations led him further to object to tithes and usury, and to desire to lay aside the peculiarities of Rome more rapidly than was consistent with the opinions of Zuingle. This led to a separation, and to a final adoption, on the part of Mantz, of the sentiments of the Baptists.

In 1523, he began to preach publicly on the subject of baptism, and to urge the necessity of a church constituted in accordance with the word of God. "He wished," says Zuingle, "to form a church free from sin." In this way did the reformer express the sentiment of Mantz—that a church of Christ should consist of believers baptized into Christ, and of them only. Mantz likewise objected to the presence and use of secular power in the church of God.

In the three disputes held at Zurich during the year 1525, Mantz appears to have taken part, and after that of March, to have been thrown into prison, from which, however, he escaped. His pious reference to the escape of Peter by the assistance of an angel, as in some measure applicable to his own, gave his enemies occasion to assert, that he said an angelic being had likewise opened to him the gates of his prison-house.

He now diligently proclaimed the freeness of the gospel in different parts of Switzerland, and taught the true constitution of the church. He was baptized by Blaurock, a companion in suffering; and in the fields and woods, as occasion offered, with

the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures in his hand, he expounded the word of God to the people who flocked to him. As this was contrary to the prohibitory command of the magistrates of Zurich, he was deemed a rebel against legitimate authority, and an exciter of the people to sedition.

Towards the end of 1526, he was seized and imprisoned in the tower of Wellenberg. He confessed that he had baptized contrary to the edict. It was right, he said, to obey God rather than man. Exhibiting no sign of repentance, he was at last judged, and on the 5th of January, 1527, was drowned.

Bullinger thus writes, "As he came down from the Wellenberg to the fishmarket, and was led through the shambles to the boat, he praised God that he was about to die for his truth; for anabaptism was right, and founded on the word of God, and Christ had foretold that his followers would suffer for the truth's sake. And the like discourse he urged much, contradicting the preacher who attended him. On the way, his mother and brother came to him, and exhorted him to be steadfast; and he persevered in his folly, even to the end. When he was bound upon the hurdle, and was about to be thrown into the stream by the executioner, he sung with a loud voice, 'Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.' And herewith was he drawn into the water by the executioner, and drowned. His body was then taken to the Place and buried at St. Jacob's."

"It is reported here," says Capito, writing to Zuingli, near the end of the same month, "that your Felix Mantz hath suffered punishment, and died gloriously; by which the cause of truth and piety, which you sustain, is weighed down exceedingly."

Mantz left behind him a paper, written in his last days, with a view to encourage his companions in their sorrows, which the reader will be glad to see:

"My heart rejoiceth in God, who giveth me much understanding, and "guideth me that I may escape eternal and endless death. Wherefore I praise thee, O Christ, Lord of heaven that thou succorest me in my affliction and sorrow; which Saviour God hath sent me for an example and a light, who hath called me before my end is come, to his heavenly kingdom, that I might have eternal joy with him, and love him in all his judgments, which shall endure both here and hereafter in eternity, without which nothing avails or subsists. Therefore are there so many, who not having this are deceived with a vain opinion.

"But, alas! Nowadays, we find men who boast themselves of the gospel, speak much of it, teach and publish it, to be full of hatred and envy; who have in them no divine love, whose deceit is known of all the world, even as we have been told, that in these last days, they that come to us in sheep's clothing are ravening wolves, who hate the godly in the earth, and hinder the way of life and to the true sheepfold.

"Thus do the false prophets and hypocrites of this world; with the mouth they curse and with the same mouth likewise pray, whose life is bad; these call upon the magistrates to put us to death, and herewith they destroy the body of Christ. But I will praise the Lord Christ, who hath all patience with us. He instructeth us with his divine grace; he showeth, after the nature of God, his heavenly Father's love to all men, which none of the false prophets can do.

"Herein must we observe the difference; the sheep of Christ seek the honor of God. This they choose. They suffer not themselves to be hindered by gain or temporal good, for they are in the keeping of Christ. The Lord Christ forces no man into his glory; but the willing and ready alone enter, who come thereto by true faith and baptism.

"When a man bringeth forth the true fruits of repentance, for him is purchased and procured, by Christ, through grace, the heaven of everlasting joy, by the shedding of his innocent blood, which he so willingly poured out. Thereby he showeth us his love, and endueth us with the might of his Spirit; and he who receiveth and exerciseth this, groweth and becometh perfect in God.

"Love to God, through Christ, will alone endure and profit; no boasting, railing, or threatening. There is nothing but love with which God is pleased. He who can show no love shall find no place with God. The true love of Christ shall cast off the enemy. It is set before him who will be an heir with Christ, that he must be merciful, even as his

heavenly Father is merciful. Christ never accused any one, as the false teachers now do; whence it appears that they have not the love of Christ, nor understand his word. Yet they will be shepherds and teachers. But at last they must tremble, when they find that eternal pain will be their reward, if they do not amend.

"Christ never hated any, and his true servants likewise hate no one, continuing thus to follow Christ in the right way, as he has gone before them. This light of life they have before them, and rejoice to walk therein; but those who are full of hatred and envy, who thus wickedly betray, accuse, smite, and wrangle, cannot be Christians. These are they who as thieves and murderers run before Christ, and under a false show shed innocent blood. Thereby may men know them, they take no part with Christ; for through malice, as the children of Belial, they annul the command of Jesus Christ; as Cain slew his brother Abel when God accepted his offering.

"Herewith I will finish my discourse, and request all the pious to meditate on the fall of Adam, who followed the serpent's counsel; and being disobedient to God, death followed him. So shall it also befall those who receive not Christ, but oppose him;—who love this world, and have no love to God. With this I conclude. I will abide close to Christ and confide in him; he knoweth all my distresses, and can help me out of them. Amen."



## Druidism

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H. S. A.

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**A**t a time when knowledge is more generally diffused than at any former period, it may not be unprofitable to compare the present state of society with that which the earliest records of our history present. The taste for researches into antiquity has recently greatly prevailed, and, if indulged in inquiries of importance, it is truly laudable.

The early history of our favoured isle is confessedly involved in obscurity, and it is not intended to attempt a critical investigation of its aborigines; nor could such an investigation gratify the interesting class of readers, which it will be the design of these papers to please and benefit.

As religion and morality are the great objects we desire to recommend, these sketches will tend to illustrate and prove their importance, and the reader, however young, is affectionately invited earnestly to supplicate the blessing of Him, who alone can render effectual human exertion.

With this view, Druidism, which about fifty years before Christ, so generally prevailed in this country, seems first to invite our attention; and, if we endeavour to contrast it with Christianity, which is now so happily exemplified and extended, it may at least excite gratitude for the superior blessings it hath pleased our sovereign Benefactor to vouchsafe unto us, and animate our zeal, that those countries that are still enslaved by superstition, and sit in darkness, may, through our instrumentality, see the light, and enjoy the liberty, that have long distinguished Britain.

Julius Caesar, Pliny, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus, afford the best accounts of this species of superstition. The frequent Roman invasions gave the intruders opportunities of witnessing its amazing influence.

The Druids were necessarily men of ability, of fortitude, perseverance, and self-denial; for although this supposed sacred profession was open to everyone, few could endure the labour and privations of fifteen or twenty years, in committing to memory their tedious regulations and maxims. For on no account was it permitted that their doctrines should be

committed to writing, lest the vulgar should read and judge for themselves - so congenial, so inseparable, are superstition and ignorance.

They were the instructors of youth, but very little did they deem it right to teach. A reverence, therefore, of this delusion was early infused into the mind. Their influence was not confined to the young, nor to the concerns of religion, but they were judges of right and wrong, not only among individuals, but irritated states.

The terrible punishment of excommunication succeeded their displeasure—a punishment by some more dreaded than death itself. Cut off from all intercourse with his friends and neighbours, forbid the consolations of their religion, and denied even the protection of the laws, the individual was an outcast from society. And the awful refuge from misery, to which the irreligious so frequently flee, could not but be terrific to him who believed in the perpetual transmigration of souls. The power of these priests was therefore boundless, and it may be questioned whether even the Romish clergy ever obtained a more complete dominion over the minds of their votaries.

It is only real religion and virtue that will bear the light. The darkest groves, and most solitary retreats, particularly where spreading oaks were found, to which tree they ever paid an idolatrous regard, were the places selected for their ceremonies. Woods and forests were the depositaries of the spoils of war, which were generally consecrated to their gods, and sad was the fate of him who was tempted to secrete or purloin any part of such offerings.

Such booty required no other guardian than the terrors of this superstition. They had their sacrifices, nor did they scruple to immolate their fellow-creatures. Anglesey was the very nursery of this religion, being the residence of the grand Druid, and the most learned of their priests.

Suetonius Paulinus having observed the immense influence of these men on the inhabitants in general, with great policy concluded, the most effectual way to subdue the Britons would be to attack this druidical retreat, and destroy or disperse the Druids themselves.

This attempt and his singular reception, is most animatedly described by Tacitus, which passage also tends to illustrate the manners of the people at that period:

"On the shore stood a motley army, in close array, and well-armed, with women running wildly about, in black attire, with dishevelled hair, and like the furies brandishing their torches. They were surrounded by the Druids, lifting up their hands to heaven, and pouring forth the most dreadful imprecations. The soldier stood astonished with the novelty of the sight. His limbs grew torpid, and his body remaining motionless, resigned to every wound.

"At length, animated by their leader, and exhorting each other not to be intimidated with a womanly and fanatic band, they displayed their ensigns, overthrew all who opposed them, and flung them into their own fires. After the battle, they placed garrisons in the towns, and cut down the groves, consecrated to the most horrible superstitions. For, they held it right to sacrifice on their altars with the blood of their enemies, and to consult the gods by the inspection of their entrails."

While such was the religion of a people, we cannot be surprised to find them in a state of barbarism - not unlike the untutored Indians or Africans of our times, allowing for the diversities local circumstances were calculated to produce. Their towns were confused groups of huts, concealed in the bosom of some woods, the avenues to which were guarded by trees or mounds of earth.

They were in the habit of painting their bodies, rather than clothing them. They were very fond of divination- running waters, the flight of birds, and the neighing of horses, were regarded with ominous attention. The following lines well describe the ancient Briton:

"Rude as the wilds around his sylvan home,  
 In savage grandeur see the Briton roam:  
 Bare were his limbs, and strong with toil and cold,  
 By untam'd nature cast in giant mould.  
 O'er his broad brawny shoulders loosely flung,  
 Shaggy and long, his yellow ringlets hung  
 His waist an iron-belted falchion bore,  
 Massy, and purpl'd deep with human gore;  
 His scarr'd and rudely painted limbs around,  
 Fantastic horror-striking figures frown'd,  
 Which, monster-like, ev'n to the confines ran  
 Of Nature's work, and left him hardly man."

It would be needless to state, that courage and strength distinguished these early inhabitants; qualities for which their descendants have ever been deservedly famed to the present hour. The characters of Caractacus and Boadicea will never be forgotten.

Does the serious British youth contemplate such a state of society, and such superstition, with mingled emotions of surprise and horror? Let gratitude fill his heart that though such was the condition of his forefathers, their children's children enjoy the advantages of civilization, heightened by the blessing of the gospel.

Instead of intolerant priests, the humble ministers of Christ; instead of a false religion, known only to its interested priests, a real religion, made known by the pages of inspiration, which he who runs may read, and in which the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err; instead of the gloom of a forest, in which to perform worship, the assurance of the divine presence where but two or three are met together to seek the Saviour, even though a barn or closet were the sequestered spot: instead of the degraded or merciless heroine, taught to delight in war, the affectionate, modest, and tender female, delighting in mercy.

Oh! Thou infinitely gracious God! What shall we render to thee for thy benefits? Take thou our hearts, and make us wholly thine!



## Death by Adam; Life by Christ

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From *The Baptist Manual*, 1849

**O**ur state by nature makes us tremble; but the grace of God, in Christ Jesus, gives us consolation. Oh! How precious and sweet must the gift of Jesus Christ unto eternal life be to us; when we rightly consider the sin of Adam, which bath reigned unto death! (Rom. 5:14) Let us, with faith and repentance, embrace our Saviour, who came to deliver us from the consequences of the fall, and from sin and death, to destroy the works of the devil, and to bruise the Serpent's head.

Adam, by his fall, plunged us into misery; let us now fly to Jesus, who bath redeemed and saved us. Let us cast ourselves into His arms. He will sprinkle us with the blood of atonement for our sins, and bestow on us grace sufficient to change our hearts, and to establish them; a covenant firmer than that of nature; a happiness more lasting than that of the state of innocence.

