

From Our E-mail & Mailbox

Date: 08/16/05

I found a link that explained how to get a hard copy of *The Baptist Pillar*. I would be delighted to send the \$7 postage. Do you want to send me a subscription and bill me or give me your address and I'll mail you a check? Please e-mail me back. My address: ... M.E., Burkeville, TX

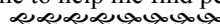


Date: 07/18/05; Subject: website

Hello, I apologize for writing to you out of the blue. Thank you for reading my email.

I am writing to you because I was just at your website and read what was there about repentance. I am praying for true repentance and for the Holy Spirit. I am a guilty sinner and going to hell. I read what you wrote about legal repentance and it really describes what I am feeling right now. I don't want to be afraid of God but I am. And I want to hate sin, but I don't hate it. I'm afraid of it. I'm trying to do Biblical repentance but I am falling short.

Is there any information or wisdom or insight you can share with me to help me find peace with God?



Date: 12/13/05; Subject: Thank You!
To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your website. I found it while searching on Legalism. I serve in a church that once was a "fundamental Bible thumping church." I am sad to say I am on the verge of leaving due to poor leadership and I have been labeled a legalist. Your article on this topic was encouraging to me. Thank you very much! M.K.



Date: 12/08/05; Subject: AMEN!
Dear Brother John,

"Amen!" & "Amen!" You know, after I read your memo on "Wanted, Baptist Pastors...."; I thought to myself "It sounds like Brother Reaves has been a fly on the wall listening to many of my conversations, not to mention thoughts." I will surely lift your name up in prayer John. I trust that in doing so, much fruit will come from "agreeing" with your application in "boldly proclaiming" the truth of God's Word as you have so clearly done in this matter.

I say "HALLELUIAH!" and may God Bless you in what you are doing to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ!!! Evangelist C. W. S.



Date: 10/06/05; Subject: request

I would like to receive *The Baptist Pillar*. Will be sending a check to help defray the expense. ... Have always enjoyed your paper and the fellowship. ... Take care. In His Love, Bro T.R.

In His Love, Bro T.R.

THE BIBLE AND THE BAPTIST

By Richard B. Cook, "The Story of the Baptist," 1887

The Bible is God's book. It contains his revealed will to man. Prophets and apostles wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the son of God, "Hear ye him." Christ is the head over the church and its Law-giver, and the New Testament contains his law, which is our only infallible guide, and the supreme standard by which all churches and doctrines and rites are to be tried. Those are Christian churches, strictly speaking, that correspond with the New Testament pattern, and the Baptists have ever appealed to the New Testament, as furnishing the only true authority for the faith and practices of the churches.

There are some who regard the church of the first three centuries succeeding the apostolic age, as being the model of what the Christian church ought to be. But they have not the slightest authority. The doctrines and practices of those times are not to be accepted, unless they can be verified by the word of God. The great Erasmus says;—"It is not from human reservoirs, fetid with stagnant waters, that we should draw the doctrine of salvation, but from the pure and abundant streams that flow from the heart of God." So we say it is not from the corrupt pools of early tradition that we receive the doctrines and ordinances of the church, but from the pure fountain of God's word.

It is their adherence to the Bible alone that distinguishes the Baptists from the Roman Catholics, and in a less degree from Protestants. The Papal Church claims the right to change the ordinances, and though this right is questioned by, Protestants, generally, yet, practically, they endorse it. □

(Why Baptist Cannot Unionize continued from page 11)

A church is more than fellowship in experience, it is a fellowship in doctrine and practice. It may be that we may find Christian fellowship on the basis of experience, but when we enter the realm of the church, we must require fellowship in doctrine and practice. Christians cannot differ on experience, but they may differ on the interpretation of that experience.

I cannot sit with another brother in the realm of church relationships without endorsing what he is preaching unless I am there to oppose it. So I said to the brother referred to above: "Here in my study, you can say you have been born again. If so, I can talk with you in the spirit of a Christian and feel that attitude in you. This is Christian fellowship. But when I go over to your church and, by my presence and support of your meeting, acquiesce in what you are doing, I undeniably tell the public that I am supporting your views and recognizing your work to be according to the Word of God, This I cannot do. I must meet you, if at all, on the common ground of experience alone, not on the ground of church expression."

Summarizing, no man has any business joining any church unless he believes it to be identified with the churches found in the New Testament. If he has done this, there is no honest ground anywhere in the world where he can give approval of any kind to any other and be logical. □

"... The church of the living God,
the pillar and ground of the truth."

1 Timothy 3:15



BAPTIST APOSTASY

By Gordon Silcox

The Word of God clearly teaches that in the last days just before the return of Christ for the saints there will be a falling away from the Truth. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

Here we see the apostle Paul writing to the church at Thessalonica and exhorting them to remain faithful in spite of all their persecutions. He tells them that the day of Christ is at hand and an apostasy will take place before Christ returns for the saints. The words "falling away" in this text are old English words for an abandonment, a defection, a desertion or a departure from one's faith. It is a forsaking of something once believed. An apostasy or falling away is leaving the principles of one's faith as set forth in the Word of God and either compromising them or clearly abandoning them. In the Word of God, the words "falling away" is the same in the Greek text, the Textus Receptus. We get the word apostasy from that word and the Authorized Version of the Word of God uses the term falling away. The apostle Paul tells the church in Thessalonica that in the last days, preceding Christ's return for the saints, there will be a great falling away from the Truth

once believed. Many will be affected by that apostasy.

An apostate is one who has rejected God's Word and no longer accepts it. A truly saved person cannot become a full blown apostate. According to Romans Chapter One, one who continues to reject the Truth can become a reprobate. A reprobate is one who has been rejected by God. In 2 Timothy 3:8, we see an example of those who did reject the Truth and were finally rejected by God and became reprobate with no hope. In Titus 1:16, we see an example of some who professed to know God but whose works denied Him. A reprobate is one who has rejected the Truth and continued to fall away to a place of no return. The apostate or reprobate is then abandoned by God with no possible chance of ever being saved. In 2 Timothy 3, the Word of God describes last day apostate conditions. Only the unsaved can fall away to a place of no return. The saved can backslide; they can, and do sin, and they are often affected by apostate conditions around them. It is possible for a truly redeemed person to lose the power of God on their lives because of their acceptance of apostate conditions around them. There must be a clear conviction that the Word of God is the sole authority in all matters of faith and practice. This is the only safeguard against apostasy. Whatsoever the Word of God says is Truth. Now, in the last days before Christ's return, the majority of this world's population will be caught up in a rejection and falling away from the Word of God. In the parable of Luke 18:1-8, our Lord makes

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PERSECUTION OF THE BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND

Taken from the book entitled, "Bye-Paths in Baptist History", 1871

Baptists enjoy the enviable distinction of having excited the hostility and suffered from the oppression of every dominant religious party in England, from the days of Henry the Eighth to the days of the Revolution in 1688. It is not difficult to understand how this has happened. The Baptists argued that the Church of God should be a community of godly men; that faith is the gift of God, and not to be compelled by force of arms; that only those rites sanctioned or commanded by Christ and His Apostles are binding upon His people; and that the only Lawgiver of the Church is Christ Himself. Each party had, therefore, its own reason for hating the Baptists; and as each had yet to learn the true nature of religious freedom, each oppressed and persecuted in turn. Believers in national State Churches, in the power of the secular magistrates to punish heresies, in the authority of bishops or synods to decree rites and ceremonies, and in the supremacy of the Sovereign as Head of the Church, all had their own ground for repugnance to the Baptists. We see this in their persecution by

Henry the Eighth (1509-1547)

Bitterly as he hated the Papist party, after he had broken with Rome, he was not long before he revealed a still more bitter hatred of all Baptists, English and Continental. The year in which he became supreme head of the Established Church in England, two proclamations were published against Baptists and the followers of Zwingle. Many of the King's subjects, we are told, "had been induced and encouraged, arrogantly and superstitiously (?) to argue and dispute in open places, taverns, and ale-houses, not only upon baptism, but also upon the sacrament of the altar;" and, to put a stop to these "pestilent fellows," the King declares that, "like a godly and Catholic prince, he abhorreth and detesteth the same sects, and their wicked and abominable errors and opinions, and intendeth to proceed against such of them as be already apprehended, according to their merits, and the laws of the realm." Ten days only were allowed to all who held these "pestilent heresies" to leave the country. Close upon the heels of this followed a second proclamation still more severe. Many strangers in England, "who had been baptized in infancy, but had contemned that holy sacrament, and had presumptuously re-baptized themselves, were spreading everywhere their heresies against God and His Holy Scriptures to the great unquietness of Christendom, and perdition of innumerable Christian souls;" and the King, forsooth, "daily studying and

mindings above all things to save his loving subjects from falling into any erroneous opinions," warns them to depart from England within twelve days, reminds them that some of their company are already convicted, and will presently "suffer the pains of death," and threatens all other Anabaptists and Zwinglians with the same fate, if they are caught. The following year ten were put to death, and ten saved their lives by recantation. Besides these, fourteen Hollanders were burnt for holding "damnable errors drawn from an indiscreet use of the Scriptures."

Four years past away, when a third proclamation was issued, this time appointing Cranmer and eight others to make diligent search for Anabaptist men, books, and letters. Full power was given to Cranmer and his party to deal capitally with each obstinate heretic. Books and men were, "at their pleasure," to be committed to the flames. Little seems to have come of this; since a month later a fifth proclamation was issued, forbidding unlicensed books from being imported or printed, and singling out for special condemnation the works of Baptists and Zwinglians. The same month, November 1538, some of these hated and persecuted people were burnt in Smithfield; and the following month, in consequence of the King's letter to the justices of the peace throughout the country, in which increased rigour was enjoined against the unfortunate Baptists, numbers fled to Holland, where they were betrayed. On the 7th of January, 1539, fifteen women were drowned, and sixteen men beheaded. The King, still failing in his efforts, now adopts a milder course. He is pleased to speak of himself, as "like a most loving parent much moved with pity" for the "many simple persons" who have been seduced by Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and offers "all and singular such persons" his royal forgiveness. This parental feeling did not last many months, since in July, 1540, those who declared "that infants ought not to be baptized," were specially exempted from all benefit in a general pardon. But neither threats nor cajolery prevented the spread of Baptist opinions. Like the Israelites in Egypt, "the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew." Nor did the position of Baptists much improve under the reign of

Edward the Sixth (1547-1553)

In the first year of Edward's reign, Ridley and Gardiner united together in a commission to deal with two Baptists in Kent. A Protestant Inquisition was established, with Cranmer at its head. They were to pull up "the noxious weeds of heresy." Their work was to be done with the forms of justice and in secret. They might fine, imprison, torture, and, in all cases of

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Denby was condemned and burnt at Uxbridge. He gave expression to his joy, even in suffering; but a fanatical persecutor, urged by Dr. Story, hurled a faggot at his face: "wherewith, being so burnt that his face bled, he left singing, and clapt both his hands upon his face." "Truly," said the inhuman doctor to the man who obeyed his malicious command, "Truly thou halt marred a good song." The brutal jest was only half true. Denby recovered himself; and "stretching his hands abroad, whilst the flames were licking off the skin and flesh, he burst into another song, and then resigned his soul into the hands of God, through Jesus Christ." Newman did not long survive his friend. He was burnt at the end of the same month at Saffron Walden.

Many of the Baptists who perished during this reign are purposely hidden by Fox in the crowd of other sufferers. Either from a desire to please the ruling party in his day, or from dislike to the men who could not sound his shibboleth, the Martyrologist has slighted the Baptists. He commonly omits all reference to their sufferings, or suppresses the particulars by which we could identify them as belonging to the "sect everywhere spoken against."

The last of the Tudors treated the Baptists with very little pity.

Elizabeth (1558-1603)

had scarcely been on the throne four years, before Baptists, "natural born people of the land and foreigners," were ordered to depart within twenty days, upon pain of imprisonment and loss of goods. This was a terrible blow, since many exiles, full of hope for future liberty and peace in their own land, had returned from their places of sojourn abroad. The "bright occidental star," whose rising had been hailed at home and abroad, heralded nothing but evil to the much-defamed Anabaptists. They crept out of their numerous hiding-places "an exceeding great army," * but only to find themselves in the presence of peril and suffering from Protestant persecutors. The virulent misrepresentations of the trimming Cranmer, the sturdy Latimer, the gentle Hooper, and the able Ridley of earlier days, were now repeated, with variations, by the judicious Hooker, the vehement and impetuous Knox, and many men of inferior reputation. The Queen's proclamation against Anabaptists was seconded by her obsequious bishops, although Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich, forms an honourable exception. He was still regarded as "winking at heretics and Anabaptists," and special inquiry was therefore ordered to be made in his diocese.

In 1568 the Queen ordered a general visitation to be made in every parish through England, wherever strangers congregated, to hunt out Anabaptists and

other teachers of what she deemed "evil doctrine." Many Germans and Flemings suffered in consequence of these repressive measures. Numbers of English Baptists also fled to the Continent for safety. About seven years after this visitation, two Dutchmen were burnt in Smithfield-Hendrick Terwoort and Jan Pieters - with the story of whose end everyone is familiar. The old and barbarous writ against heretics (de haeretico comburendo), which had been passed at a Parliament held in Leicester a century and a half before, had been hung up by the Queen as a menace, but it was now put into execution. Terwoort and Pieters were the only two victims who perished at the stake; but many languished in loathsome dungeons, and more Baptists were expelled from England during Elizabeth's reign, than during the reign of an other sovereign that ever sat on the throne of these real

The Baptists fared but badly under the Tudors little better under the Stuarts.

* The remorseless butcheries of Alva had driven many Dutch Baptists into England. "The realm," said Dr. Parker, "was full of Anabaptists, Arians," &c. Many Anglican divines of the same period give similar testimony. Aylmer speaks of "Anabaptists, with infinite swarms of other Satanists;" Jewel, of "large and inauspicious crops of Arians and Anabaptists;" and Some, of "Anabaptist conventicles in London, and elsewhere." □

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(Why Baptist Cannot Unionize continued from page 9)

as I was. But he differs with me on the interpretation of how he was saved. Granted that we have had a common experience, he or I one has erred in the directions we give to others of how to be saved. Whichever of us is wrong will doubtless lead many others astray and deceive them. *It matters what a church preaches just as much as what the church is.*

Now, if I am preaching that I was saved without baptism and he says he was saved by it, and each of us contends that his preachment is Scriptural, can I endorse his preaching and be faithful to what I believe the Bible teaches? *Certainly not!* I can no more endorse an heretical doctrine than I can an heretical experience. Baptists will disdain the heretical experience of the Pentecostals who claim to speak in tongues. They have no more right to endorse a heresy in doctrine than they do a heresy in experience.

But you say, "You don't have to endorse what they preach in other denominations, they just want you to have Christian fellowship with them." *I reply that Christian fellowship is one thing, church fellowship is another.* I can have Christian fellowship with anyone who has been born again and who is earnestly seeking the truth, but this fellowship is wholly on the ground of experience, not of interpretation and expression.

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(Persecution of the Baptists continued from page 2)

obstinate heretics, hand them over to the civil power to be burnt. Four years later this commission was renewed, and in the same year Baptists were a second time excluded from a general pardon. It was this Inquisition that condemned Joan Bocher, and scattered, or tried to scatter, the congregations of Baptists gathered in Kent. Still their numbers increased. Stripe tells us that "their opinions were believed by many honest meaning people;" and another writer affirms, that the articles of religion, issued just before the King's death, "were principally designed to vindicate the English Reformation from that slur and disgrace which the Anabaptists' tenets had brought upon it," a clear proof that the Baptists were, at that period, neither few nor unimportant.

The sour bigot, who next occupied the English throne, made matters worse, although Baptists were now partly lost in the common ranks of Protestants.

Mary (1553-1558)

regarded herself as a "virgin sent from heaven to rule and tame the people of England." How faithfully she executed her pretended mission, a long array of martyrs too surely testifies. Essex had the honour of yielding scores of Baptist martyrs during this gloomy reign. Humphrey Middleton, and three others, were burnt at Canterbury in 1535. "Would to God," wrote the Commissioners who visited Essex, and especially the district around Colchester, to find fresh victims for the martyr's stake—"Would to God the Honourable Council saw the face of Essex as we do see it. We have such obstinate heretics, Anabaptists, and other unruly persons here as never was heard of. If we should give it off in the midst" [that is, cease their disgraceful work], "we should set the country in such a roar, that my estimation, [reputation] and that of the Commissioners, shall ever be lost."

That some who avowed their belief in the doctrines commonly held by the Baptists recanted, when the rack dislocated their limbs, and the shadow of the stake fell upon them, is no more than one might expect. It is not every woman that can bear to have her joints racked, "and lie still and not cry," as Ann Askew did; and "even suffer her bones and joints to be plucked asunder in such sort that she was nigh unto death," without breathing a single syllable of recantation. It is not every man who can face his scowling judges, when they were athirst for his blood, and extort the declaration from one of them, "that he was the most unshamefaced heretic he ever saw;" and then, after being "baited," now by one inquisitor, and now by another, go back to his prison cell, and write cheery notes to his wife, sending therewith "a threepenny token and comfits for little Katherine; two nutmegs, "a poor prisoner's gift," to some friends;"

two pieces of Spanish money, and a key-log for a token to his wife, wishing "she could make means for her money to send a cheese to Peter;" and in the midst of these touching traits of human affection and home feeling, bursting out into a passionate petition, "Be fervent in prayer. Pray, pray, pray! that God would, of His mercy, put up His sword, and look on His people!" But though some could not endure the ordeal of fire, many showed, like Robert Smith, a yeoman of the guard at Windsor, the heroism of their faith.

Another instance may be given. Robert Smith had declared to Bonner, that "it was a shameful blasphemy to use such mingle-mangle" as holy oil, salt, and other things, "in baptizing young infants." John Denby shook the nerves of the same irate bishop by assuring him "that the christening of children, as then used in the Church of England, was not good, nor allowable by God's Word, but against it; likewise confirming children, giving of orders, saying of matins and evensongs, anointing of persons, making of holy bread and holy water." Denby, and his friend Newman, both of Maidstone, were pounced upon by an arch and bitter enemy of the Baptists. The persecutor had just returned from the burning of some heretics either at Raleigh or Rochford, when he fell in with these friends, then visiting in Essex. "Even as I saw them I suspected them," says this sleuth-hound of Bonner. "And when I did examine and search them, and found about them certain letters, which I have sent you, and also a certain writing in paper what their faith is. And they confessed to me that they had forsaken and fled out of their country for religion's sake." Denby and his friend were hurried off to Bonner's palace, where both remain firm to their faith. "As touching the christening, the sacrament of baptism, which is christening of children," said Denby, "it is altered and changed. For St. John used nothing but the preaching of the Word and water, as it doth appear when Christ required to be baptized of him, and others also, who came to John to be baptized of him, as it appeareth in Matt. 3, Mark 1, Luke 3 and Acts 1. The chamberlain said, 'See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?' It appeareth here, that Philip had preached to him; for he said, 'Here is water.' We do not read that he asked for any cream, oil, or spittle, or conjured water, or conjured wax, no croysom, no salt, for it seemeth that Philip had preached no such things to him; for he would as well have asked for them as water; and the water was not conjured, but even as it was before. Also Acts 10 'Then answered Peter, Can any forbid water, that these should not be baptized?' Acts 16., 'And Paul and Silas preached unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house; and he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds; and so was he baptized, and all them of his household straightway.' where you see nothing but preaching and the Word."

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN SECTS

Taken from the book entitled, "The Story of the Baptists"

In the next place consider the various bodies of Christians who arose between the age of the apostles and that of the Reformation. Many of them, who, during those times, were stamped as heretics, were noble reformers who sought to resist the progress of apostasy and tried to bring the church back to the simplicity and purity of the Scriptures, or failing in this they separated from that church which had finally become hopelessly corrupt, and established churches of their own, after the gospel pattern. These Christian people furnished the material for the rack, the dungeon, and the stake, during those dark days in which the apostate church took up the bloody sword of persecution, which had been wrenched from the cruel hand of Paganism. Some of these early sects held the divine truths which now characterize us as Baptists. They were not free from error. Some of them had their features greatly marred, but yet, in many respects, they bear a striking resemblance to the Baptists of our day.

They exalted the Scriptures above tradition and church authority; held to the doctrine that the church should be composed only of regenerate persons; believed that Christ is the only Head of the church; baptized believers only; rejected infant baptism; considered immersion as the baptism of the New Testament; and denounced the union of church and state.

Immersion was not the distinguishing principle of the true churches of those early times, for all the early churches practiced immersion; nor is it the most important doctrine of the Baptists of the present day. None of the early sects are to be claimed as Baptists, except those who held baptism as an ordinance binding on all believers and refusing it to all others.

The first of these early Christian sects, of which we have any distinct account, is the Montanists. They arose about the year 150 A. D., in Phrygia, and continued for five centuries. They were numerous in different parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe. They looked upon themselves, alone, as the genuine Christians.

According to Neander, Tertullian is called "the Montanist," and is said to have belonged to that sect. He is described not only as a zealous opponent of infant baptism, but as one who could not imagine any efficacy of baptism without the conscious participation of the person baptized and his own individual faith.

The Novatians next invite our attention. They

derived their origin as well as their name from Novatian of Rome, who lived about the middle of the third century, A. D. 250. He was a man of superior talents, of great excellence of character, and became a bold reformer. He was called the first Anti-pope, and the author of Puritanism, yet we know that Tertullian had quitted the church nearly fifty years before, for the same reason. He and his friends set themselves to work to reform the abuses of the church, but finding their efforts unsuccessful, they separated themselves and organized a new party. They grew rapidly in numbers and strength, and Novatian churches were formed all over the Roman Empire. They were the Puritans of their day, because they contended for a pure church; that is, a church composed only of converted persons. Neander says that they regarded "purity and holiness as the essential marks of a true church." And Mosheim; "They consider the Christian Church as a society where virtue and innocence reigned universally." They flourished for about 300 years, and then, probably, became absorbed into other sects holding the same principles, but bearing different names.

The Donatists and Novatians very nearly resembled each other in doctrine and discipline, and indeed were charged by Crispin, a French historian, with holding, in common, the following things:

First. For purity of church members, by asserting that no one ought to be admitted into the church but such as are, visibly, true believers and true saints.

Secondly. For purity of church discipline.

Thirdly. For the independency of each church; and,

Fourthly. They baptized, again, those whose first baptism they had reason to doubt.

They were, consequently, termed rebaptizers and Anabaptists.

The Donatists arose about fifty years later than the Novatians, and continued for many centuries until absorbed into other churches, and lost under other names. They multiplied rapidly in Africa, in the northern part of which, at that time, there were civilized nations; and nearly equaled in number the so-called Catholic Church. Orchard describes them as correct in morals, simple in spiritual worship, scriptural in faith and practice. They were professed Anabaptists. Some of them were distinguished for great learning and talents. One of their peculiar principles was the separation of church and state. When they were called upon to unite with the Catholic Church, and to submit the difference between them and their opponents, to the Roman emperor, they

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it clear that at the time of His return, it will be difficult to find anyone still in the faith.

Luke 18:8: "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?" The reference here is not to personal faith, but to belief in the whole revealed Truth. It means that as we get closer to the coming of Christ and the time of the Rapture, it will be difficult to find the faith once delivered to the saints. There will be changes, abandonments and alterings in various doctrines. If some of the apostles were alive today, they would be shocked at the apostasy in Baptist churches. Many of these churches and pastors are not even aware of their altered teachings. Instead of basing what they believe entirely on the Word of God, they have believed something from someone's book, school or philosophy. Colossians 2:8 warns us about that possibility. The apostasy of the last days will be a great one. Many will be affected by it. The falling away will be subtle, yet it will be great.

Now, it is obvious that no one can fall away from something they never possessed. Most of the major denominations, conventions, and cults never had the Truth in the first place. They were false prophets from the beginning, so they cannot fall away. They are already there. They were, and still are, preaching another gospel (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Take, for example, those who teach that baptism saves and who usually add to that communion, confirmation, works, etc. That is a false gospel. That is another gospel. If they had, at one time, believed the true Gospel and now believe another, they are apostate. However, a modernist or a liberal who never believed the Bible may preach and teach some things the apostate teaches and preaches, but they are false prophets, not apostates. An apostate is one who fell from the Truth, one who once did hear the Truth and has now denied or altered that Truth. So, who are the apostates of these last days? Those who once held the Truth. That is why the Word of God tells us to practice separation from those who are falling away from the Truth (2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:6-8; Titus 3:9-10; Jude 3-4).

In light of what we have already discussed, let us look at the abandonment, the rejection, the falling away from the Truth, by those who call themselves Baptist. Those who once believed certain doctrines, but now either have denied those doctrines or altered them to fit the age. Those who have lowered their standards or compromised their earlier convictions and beliefs. Let's take a look at some of those doctrinal changes and see if there is an apostasy among some of our Baptist churches.

Baptist Apostasy and The Word of God

When this writer attended Bible college, he was greatly moved when he saw the founder of that school hold up an Authorized Version of God's Word and call it The Word of God. That King James Bible to him and most of us present was God's preserved Word. That great old preacher said, "This does not contain the Word of God. This is the Word of God." I heard him say many times, "The Revised Standard Bible is not the Word of God. It is a perversion." Now today, I hear Baptist preachers preaching from those new versions which have come out of the Revised Standard Text. Men who once believed that the King James Bible is the Word of God, without error, have now abandoned it for the new perversions. They are now leaning on scholarship to interpret where the so-called errors are. Those of us who believe God has preserved His Word, without error, are accused of worshipping the King James Bible. We are not. It is a translation and God led in that translation. God has preserved His infallible, inerrant Word in the King James Version. Even if we were worshipping it, at least we would be worshipping something we can see. Those who are always talking about the originals are worshipping something they have never seen. God has placed in the hands of English speaking people an inerrant copy of this final revelation to man. We do not rest our understanding of that dear old Bible on some man's scholarship. We rest it on the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 John 2:27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

Many Baptists have abandoned their faith in an inerrant book and now rest their faith on scholarship. Baptists need to return to the faith of our fathers, in the Word of God. Our forefathers believed it and so should we. The apostasy concerning the Word of God is now among the Baptists. May God help us to resist that apostasy. The attack of the day in which we live is upon the authority of God's Word.

Baptist Apostasy and the Church

The church that Jesus built is alive and well. It has never failed and never will fail (Matthew 16:18). We have an eternal promise from our Lord that the perpetuity of this divine church would continue. It did not start on the day of Pentecost. Jesus built the first one during His own personal ministry in Jerusa-

WHY BAPTISTS CANNOT UNIONIZE WITH OTHERS

By B. H. Kazee

"...Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" 1 Pet 3:15

In the first place, Baptists are unique, or they are nothing. That is, they are different. There is no point to their being just another denomination. If they can possibly unite with any other religious body, and still remain true to the Bible, they ought to do it. A man ought not to be a Baptist unless the Word of God impels him to be. There is no point to our being separate, calling ourselves by another name, if we are not called of God to stand as no other people do.

God is not the author of this present confusion of denominations, and, if Baptists did not exist long before there were any denominations, they have no right to their claim.

To be honest, then, and consistent with our claims, we originated with John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, or we arose along with modern denominations. If the latter, then we cannot claim to be Scriptural, for the Lord had New Testament churches long before that. I do not mean that there has to be Apostolic succession. But I do insist that there must be Apostolic identity in experience, doctrine and practice. No religious group has any right to call itself a Scriptural church if it cannot identify itself with the apostles in experience, doctrine and practice.

Baptists take the position that they can do this. If they can, logically, all who disagree with them are wrong.

We assume, therefore, that Baptists are right and can so identify themselves. Logically, then, all who disagreed with them in experience, fundamental doctrine and practice are wrong. (All who disagree with us ought to have this conviction about their position or give it up).

I would not say that others are not saved. There are, doubtless, in many denominations, those who are saved. But I definitely declare that all those who are saved were saved as Baptists were, and as they preach. In many cases they are saved in spite of their doctrine instead of by it. They are saved by the truth which Baptists teach.

Now, here comes a brother into my study, a pastor of another denomination who believes that we all ought to "get together." He insists that I ought to attend his revival meeting and help them; that he would be glad to attend ours and help us. Why couldn't we all get together?

I said, "Do you mean that?" "Yes," he replied, "I certainly do."

I said, "Would you accept me as a member of your church?" To which he replied, "Certainly." "Just as I am?" I insisted. "Exactly!" he said. "Would you accept all the people in our church who are like me just as they are?" I continued. "Yes siree!" he answered. He was enthusiastic. Then I said, "Well, what is wrong with us?" "Why, nothing," he replied, "except that you hold yourselves aloof and won't join in with the rest of us."

Then I hit him the body blow. I said, "if there is nothing wrong with us as we are, and you would accept us as we are, why don't you just bring your folks down and join us?"

"Yes, but," he replied, "you would insist on our being baptized again." "But you say you would accept us even though we hold to that belief," I said. He was embarrassed. I continued, "We were here long before you were. You cannot date back more than a hundred years or so. We've established positive proof of apostolic antiquity. Why don't you join us, if there is nothing wrong with us other than that we do not join you?"

He became a bit heated. "Yes, but you are unfair; you are trying to shut us out," he said. "Not on your life," I answered. "The door of our church is open to all who come professing faith in Jesus as Saviour and who will submit to baptism as a confession of that faith."

That closed the door. Then he said, "But why can't we come and take the Lord's Supper with you?" I replied with the question: "Do you believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are church ordinances?" "Yes," was the reply. Then said I, "Why do you want one of our ordinances while you refuse the other?" This brought an end to the discussion.

I have recorded this conversation to show my reader where such logic leads to. The utter silliness of a man clinging to another denomination, contending that they are right and we are wrong, but at the same time wanted to have church fellowship with us! Why doesn't he give up the idea that he is right if he thinks we are all right? And if he doesn't think we are right, why does he want to join us or have us join him?

Right here is all the reason Baptists need to keep them from unionizing with other denominations. The silly idea of telling somebody he is wrong but that just the same you will endorse him and fellowship him! Nobody has a right to claim allegiance to a denomination or church, then at the same time prostitute that allegiance by fellowshiping others. He ought to get in or get out.

The argument comes: "But we do not mean to have you Baptists join us. We just want you to come over and attend our services occasionally and join us in revival efforts." To which I answer in the words of a good brother and friend of mine, "if I could fellowship with another denomination or 'church' for one hour, I could, and ought to, for life. If I can justify a heresy for an hour, I ought to be willing to stick to it longer."

Well, so much for the logic of the matter. It just will not stand. But there is something more. Christians are made by experience. Churches are composed of Christians associated in *experience*; yes, but more, in *expression*. A church is not only to be something, it must also preach something.

Our common experience is our salvation, the fact is in our souls. But in a church there must be *common expression* in doctrine and teaching about that salvation. We may have received a common experience from the Lord, but our interpretation of that experience may differ.

At least it seems so: I say I was *saved through faith in Christ*. The Campbellite says he was *saved by faith and baptism*. Fact is, if he is saved at all, he was saved exactly

(Why Baptist Cannot Unionize continued on page 11)

church has the authority to preach, baptize, teach, and send. The mission board concept is not found in Scripture. The only mission sending agency in the Scripture was a local church (Acts 13:1-4). There are a lot of Baptist churches falling away from the Biblical pattern in spreading the Good News. Church authority rests on Scripture. The Great Commission was given to the New Testament church, not to any board, agency, fellowship, or convention. It is time for present day Baptists to evaluate their present missionary efforts and return to the Biblical pattern of carrying out the Great Commission by sending their workers directly from the local church. Apostasy is deepening in the area of local church authority in the spreading of the Gospel. Let us return to the Biblical pattern, which is an indigenous pattern where the local body of believers is self-financing, self-governing, and self-propagating.

The Conclusion

Many true believers are being effected by the apostasy of these last days. It is true they are not apostates, but they are being neutralized by apostate tendencies. They are being swept along in the flood tide of the denials of the age. They are no longer the "salt of the earth." They have lost their savor. Many have developed a system of compromise and denial, which sounds very convincing. But apostasy is apostasy. Our forefathers stood by the Truth, and so should we. We must not abandon it for convenience or for temporary peace with the world.

It is time for those who hold to the faith of the Book to stand up, speak up, and proclaim it. (Jude 3-4). □

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(The Early Christian Sects continued from page 3)

asked, "What has the emperor to do with the church?" "What have we Christians to do with kings, or what have bishops to do at courts?"

At times they were greatly reduced by fierce and bloody persecutions, waged against them by Mitre and Crown. A law was enacted that the person rebaptizing, and the person rebaptized, should be punished with death, in consequence of which, hundreds of bishops, and thousands of inferior clergy, were deprived of churches, while rights of citizenship and the exercise of religious worship were taken from them, Benedict truthfully says; "For a thousand years after the rise of the Donatists, we find them spread along in all parts of Europe, under different names, but recognized by friends and foes, as substantially the same people, and in the middle of the seventeenth century, Fuller, the English ecclesiastical historian, says of the English Baptists, that they were Donatists, new dipped."

Before the Donatist name disappears from the page of history, another large and important sect makes its appearance, called the Paulicians, probably because they gave such prominence to the writings of Paul. About the year 653, Constantine, a young man living in an obscure town in Armenia, received from a traveling stranger, returning from captivity in Syria, whom he had entertained as a guest, the gift of two manuscripts, which were the four Gospels, and the Epistles of Paul. This rare and costly treasure, was highly prized by Constantine, who studied it with great diligence, especially the letters of Paul. Being a man of talent, he taught others the truths which he drew from this pure fountain, and gathered a church founded on New Testament principles. But at length he was arrested by an officer of the Greek emperor, Simon by name, and the members of his church were offered pardon on condition that they would stone their pastor to death. They stood by silent; silent with horror at the thought of such an act, when an apostate among them, called Justus, like another Judas, became the bloody-handed executioner of his spiritual friend and guide. But the seed had been sown broadcast, and Paulician churches became very numerous, and existed for a long time, notwithstanding the efforts made to exterminate them.

One of the most distinguished Paulicians was Sergius, a young man of intelligence and education, but without religion, until met by a Paulician woman, in 810, who recommended to him the reading of Paul's writings. He, with others, deemed the reading of the Holy Scriptures not lawful for a layman, but only for the priests. Being convinced by her that he was mistaken, he applied himself to the reading, was converted and spent thirty-four years in preaching the gospel. He traveled all over Western Asia, calling upon the people to abandon a corrupt church and turn to the spiritual worship of God. Multitudes were converted, and to stop the spread of God's work, the severest measures were used. In the reign of Theodore, over one hundred thousand were put to death. Nevertheless, untiring in their zeal, they penetrated into the very heart of Europe with the word. □

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Editor's Note

In The Baptist Pillar we use articles taken from many different publications and written by many different authors. Please realize that this does not necessarily mean we agree with the doctrinal position of the publication or the author of the article, but that the particular article presents a scriptural truth we do agree with.

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lem. On the day of Pentecost, an existing assembly of one hundred twenty (120) members were empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:15: "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty)."

Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Yet, today we are seeing Baptist churches and pastors teaching the universal, invisible day of Pentecost theory of the church. Our early Baptist forefathers in the first century did not believe such apostate doctrine. The universal theory came from Rome and the invisible theory from the Protestants. Genuine Baptists do not believe either of those false theories. Baptists are not Protestants and never have been. Even the Protestants admit to our early existence. Listen to what they said:

Alexander Campbell in the Campbell-McCalla Debate, "The church at Jerusalem was a Baptist church, and the church at Samaria was a Baptist church."

Moshiem, Lutheran historian, "The first century was a history of the Baptists."

John Ridpath, Methodist historian, "I should not readily admit that there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists." We now are seeing many Baptists forsaking their Biblical heritage and teaching and preaching the ecumenical doctrine of the universal, invisible church theory. It is time to resist the apostate trend of our day which will eventually lead to a one world visible church.

Baptist Apostasy and the Ordinances

1 Corinthians 11:2: "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." Many Baptist churches have abandoned the scriptural practice of the ordinances. There is a falling away from scriptural baptism and closed Lord's Supper. The practice of the Lord's Supper is open in many Baptist churches and close in others. No longer do they practice and teach that only the redeemed and scripturally baptized saint, who is right with his church, can participate in the Supper. In many of our Baptist churches, members are now allowed to participate in a close Supper practice. The Lord's Supper is to be a time of remembering our Saviour, a time of heart searching, and a time of revival among the Members

of the church. It is not to be a time of ecumenical associations. It is done in remembrance of our Lord. How can the unsaved remember Christ? How can a backsliding saint safely attend the supper? (1 Corinthians 11:23-34).

In the matter of Baptism, there is a falling away from the Biblical practice of believer's baptism. Baptism in many Baptist churches has become a community affair. Many Baptist churches are accepting baptism from other churches, as long as it is by immersion. Even non-Baptist baptism is accepted. Some of these churches would not accept the doctrine of Pentecostal, Protestant, or cultic churches, yet they are accepting their baptism, which is just as alien as their doctrine. Many of these false churches preach another gospel. Baptist baptism is to fit our Gospel — the death, the burial and the resurrection. Baptist baptism is the proper candidate (one who is saved), immersed into a scriptural church, declaring the design of that baptism (the resurrection to a new life), and done under the authority of a scriptural church. Christ only gave baptism to His true churches. And the Protestant churches, the Catholic churches, and the cults do not have authority to baptize (Matthew 28:16-20). There is a deepening apostasy in many Baptist churches concerning the practice of the ordinances. It is time to return to the faith of our fathers.

Baptist Apostasy and Separation

We are seeing in our day a great falling away in the Bible doctrine of separation. Many of our Baptist churches do not practice Bible separation. We see a great truth concerning separation in 1 John 1:5-6: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." We are to separate from darkness. Whatever is contrary to the will and nature of God is darkness. God's will for every saint is found in 1 Peter 1:15-16: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

It is God's will that we perfect holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1). We are to have no fellowship with the works of darkness.

Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

Baptists who fellowship, follow, or feast at the fountain of those who call the Pope a great Christian are walking in darkness. I would not trust any man or school to teach me anything, if he cannot discern the difference between Bible doctrine and Roman Catholic doctrine. Baptists who fellowship, follow, or feast

with those who have evidence of disobedience to the Word of God in the area of separation are in danger of apostatizing themselves. We are to separate from everything contrary to God's will and nature. Baptists who are now falling away from Truth have started, in a small, subtle way, to lower their standards of separation (1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:5; Amos 3:3). We can only maintain purity and holiness by the practice of scriptural separation. We are commanded to practice holiness. Baptists who use the New Evangelicals, the modernists, the Protestants and the psychologists for their teaching are flirting with the works of darkness. Baptists will soon lose their testimony and identity and become another fish in the pond of the ecumenical age we are in, if they do not maintain Biblical separation. The command is to come out from among them and be ye separate. (2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Romans 16:17).

Baptist Apostasy and Divorce and Remarriage

Another doctrine that has suffered greatly and has been abandoned much in these last days is the Bible teaching on divorce and remarriage. Our age is being greatly affected by the environmental trends of the age. Many influences are changing a correct exegesis of Scripture in this present age. Present day Baptists should remember that in the first five centuries, all Greek writers and all Latin writers, except one, agreed that remarriage following divorce was adulterous. The marriage bond, to these writers, was only to be broken by death. If a partner was guilty of adultery, they taught separation from that partner, but never did they teach divorce and remarriage. Even though these early church writers had many variations of their view, they all agreed (except one writer) that remarriage was unscriptural. Even in the case of 1 Corinthians 7:15, which was called the Pauline privilege, the early church fathers said that the deserted spouse had no right to remarry. The Roman Catholics said a believer deserted by an unbeliever could remarry. But what saith the Scripture:

Matthew 19:8b: "...but from the beginning it was not so."

It has been this writer's observation that many Baptist pastors and churches are altering their position on this doctrine to accommodate the age. The New Evangelical writers, pressure of members, electronic ministers, seminars, etc., are having a great effect on many Baptists. Yet, the Bible is clear and has not changed. An example is false teaching concerning the so-called "exception clause" and what they call the bondage issue. Who determines what is the exception? Man or the Scripture? Moses granted an exception, because of the hardness of their heart,

but the Scripture says that from the beginning it was not so. Baptist preachers are sitting at the confessional booth in the Baptist churches, determining who has an exception and can remarry. What is the difference between that and a confessional booth in the Catholic church? What is the difference between that and some so-called scholar telling us what is God's Word and what is not? Even such early writers as Origen, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, etc., refused to compromise on this doctrine, yet modern Baptists are. Clement went so far as to say that the marriage of those who had separated, while either spouse was alive, was not marriage but fornication. Evidently, he felt the first marriage partner is the only one God recognizes. We can be sure of one thing. The modern trend of divorce and remarriage is not based on a careful study of Scripture. It is based on compromise and convenience. Nearly all early writers on the subject believed that marriage was an indissoluble union. Where are the Baptists of today, who still believe this? Baptist apostasy is deepening. It is time to return to the faith of our fathers on this very important doctrine

Baptist Apostasy and Repentance and Faith

Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." There are some very unusual things being said by Baptist preachers these days on the subject of repentance and faith. The trumpet is giving an uncertain sound in some Baptist pulpits on the matter of salvation. Many have abandoned the doctrine of repentance. One well known Baptist preacher called the preaching of repentance heresy. John the Baptist did not think it was heresy. Our Lord preached repentance, as did all of the early apostles. Yet, we have some today who say repentance is not necessary. But according to Acts 3:19, it is. 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 teaches Godly sorrow and repentance. The doctrines of grace are a thing of the past in some Baptist churches. Now we are being inundated with an easy believism that is filling churches with unregenerate members, who know nothing of the Grace of God. The inner witness of the Spirit of God in the heart is an unknown factor in many Baptist churches these days. These must then prove to themselves that they are really saved by their religious efforts. According to 1 John 5:9-13, the truly saved know it. Repentance and faith produce a knowledgeable faith. Repentance is not a work. It is the gift of God, brought about by the Spirit of God. Without it no man will be saved. Baptist apostasy on the doctrine of repentance and faith is deepening and Baptists must not fall away from this very important doctrine.

Baptist Apostasy and the Lordship of Christ

The proverb that says, "Either Christ is Lord of all or He is not Lord at all" is still true. Many Baptists claim that those who preach the Lordship of Christ have no scriptural basis. My answer to that is, "Is there any other kind of lordship?" Lordship is in salvation. When a person sees himself as a sinner, under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, realizes his only hope is in Christ, and then turns to Christ, what is he receiving? Not just a Saviour, but also a Master. To receive Christ is to receive Him as Lord. The seeking sinner may not understand all of the theological terms, but he will be saved, if he repents and puts his faith in Christ. The Spirit of God indwells, seals, and places the repenting sinner in Christ. That same Spirit will continue to purify him and every day of his life, he will be confronted with Who is the Lord of his life. The new birth produces a new creature, who is under the Lordship of Christ (Acts 4:12; Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 1:15-22). Does not Christ become the Lord of those He saves? Yes, some do rebel, but He is still the Lord of His creation. Our Lord often does correct those He has redeemed. Jesus Christ is Lord and all men need Him. Baptists need to preach, as they once did, on the Lordship of Christ. Baptists, of all people, should follow the first Baptist's example:

John 3:30: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Baptist Apostasy and Preaching

2 Timothy 4:2-4: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Here we see another passage of exhortation to Timothy to remain faithful in the time of great apostasy. Paul tells Timothy to preach the Word. Preaching today has become a thing of the past in many of our Baptist churches. The Biblical emphasis is on preaching. 1 Corinthians 1:18, 21: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Here we see again the Biblical emphasis on preaching. Many of our Baptist churches have replaced much of their preaching with videos, TV, satellites, seminars, etc. There is less preaching today in the majority of our Baptist churches than at any other time in history. It appears that many churches are trying to compete with all of the media

to hold and motivate their members. Yet, nothing motivates people better than hearing the Word as it is presented in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible emphasis is on preaching and hearing.

Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This has made those churches who stick to preaching and teaching strong Baptist churches. Those churches who do not place the emphasis on preaching and put more on videos, etc., have become entertainment centers. Television has created a generation of watchers, not listeners. People are so entertained by TV, videos, etc., outside the church, that they are fascinated by pictures and not by words. God's method, however, is by words, preaching and teaching. Some of our members sit in the services like zombies, just waiting for something sensational to entertain them. We cannot, nor should we, compete with the entertainment world in our churches. Preaching is God's method. The TV or video screen emphasized seeing rather than hearing. Let's get back to the old fashioned preaching method, which is a Biblical command. The use of celebrities to bring in a crowd creates hero worship. Good sound Holy Spirit preaching will do more to build a church and keep it pure until Christ returns than any other method. The use of overhead projectors, films, slides, videos, etc., are only minor aids to the major method of preaching. One can teach the Truth with some of those methods, but the greatest fruit is produced through preaching. It's time to pull the plug on TV, videos, seminars, etc., and get back to preaching. The less preaching we have, the deeper the apostasy!

Baptist Apostasy and The Great Commission

In Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15 and several other passages of Scripture, we see our Lord's command to preach the Gospel to the regions beyond. This is commonly called the Great Commission. Most would agree that we are to spread the Gospel to the entire world. The real difference comes when we discuss how it is to be done. Modern methods like the printing ministry, radio, television, etc., are only methods of getting the Gospel to a lost and dying world. However, the question of who has the authority to do all of this is a serious one. Most would agree that the church of divine origin, the New Testament Church that Jesus built, has the authority to baptize, teach, and send. Yet, some of those churches who agree to that then yield to some mission board or agency. They do so by allowing the mission board to control the local missionary, his finances, and his discipline. This is contrary to the scriptural responsibility of the local church in the work of the Great Commission. Only the local