

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

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1 Timothy 3:15

# THE BAPTIST PILLAR

Canada's Only True Baptist Paper

## CLOSED COMMUNION

By John T. Christian, 1903

### The Baptist Position Stated and Defended by the Scriptures

The Baptists are strict communionists and are likely to remain such. We want to be just as close as the Word of God. If we have prospered as a people, it is because we have rigidly adhered to the Word of God. Whenever we turn aside from this well-trodden path for mere sentimentality or transient popularity, the day of our power and usefulness is gone. We are compelled to search for the old paths, and when we have found them to walk in them. Despite all criticisms and abuse we have prospered as strict communionists. The reason is not far away. In the face of all clamor we have adhered to God's Word and God has greatly honored us. What he has done in the past he will do in the future. There is neither argument nor wisdom in open communion. It is based upon mere sentiment, and that a false sentiment. We are strict communionists and we are going to remain strict.

This is freely admitted by Rev. J. L. Withrow, Presbyterian, in an able article in the *Interior*.

He says: "Furthermore, in their favor it is to be said. They have proved, beyond peradventure, that

narrow church doors and severe communion conditions do not bar people out of the Christian church. Against creeds and communion bars there is ceaseless outcry from some quarters. The Baptists have no chaptered creed, but their unwritten creed, as England's unwritten constitution, is more insurmountable than the Thirty-nine Articles of Episcopacy, or the ponderous chapters of the Westminster Confession. Against chaptered creeds the complaints are so urgent that Congregationalists have recently made a new one, you may safely offer a dollar for every new convert which has been captured by that new creed who otherwise would not have been secured. And now the Presbyterians are wasting a heap of hard-earned money (contributed, much of it, by God's poor for better purposes), and are stirring bad blood between the brethren in an attempt to smooth off and sweeten up their creed. The claim is that we keep people out of the church, and candidates out of our ministry with such strict conditions as now exist. It sounds like arrant nonsense in presence of the fact that the Baptist church is the strictest church we have; and yet it is growing, not as a weed, but as the Word of God is promised to grow. There is no church, so far as we know, into which it is more difficult to enter than the

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## THE NATURE OF SUCCESSION

By D. B. Ray,

Taken from, "Baptist Succession," 1870

All well-informed Baptists are agreed in the belief that we, as a people, have continued from the time of Christ until the present. In other words, they hold and teach the perpetuity of the Church of Christ. They believe that the Baptist succession exists; that there has been no period of time since the death of Christ when Baptists have not existed. But Baptists do not claim "*apostolic succession*," because they admit that the apostolic office expired with the death of John the beloved. There was no more necessity for the apostolic office when Christianity was fully established and the canon of revelation completed. Neither do we claim *Popish succession*, for this is only the succession of Antichrist. But while some agree that the Baptist succession does exist, or that a succession of Baptists has continued from the time of Christ to the present, yet they, at the same time, deny that the succession can be proved. This is wholly inconsistent; for no one has the right to believe that which can not be proved. There can be no intelligent faith without evidence. If we have no evidence to prove a succession, it is out of the question to affirm that we believe in the existence of *such succession*. It appears that the taunts of our opponents have caused some of us almost, to surrender our birthright. They tell us that this claim to succession is a "Popish principle," a "mark of the Beast," etc. But shall we reject a Bible doctrine because it has been perverted by the Church of Rome? Shall we reject the divinity of Christ because this is held by the Church of Rome? Shall we reject the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper because these have been perverted by the Church of Rome? Or shall we give up our church organization because the Church of Rome, professing to be the Church of Christ, has become the most cruel ecclesiastical despotism which has ever disgraced the name of Christianity? Shall we reject all currency because of the counterfeit? And shall we surrender the perpetuity or succession of the "everlasting kingdom" of Jesus Christ because the Catholics have inaugurated the Popish succession of

Antichrist?

But again, we are told that there is no importance whatever attached to the doctrine of succession; that it makes no difference whether we are in the succession or not, if we hold the Bible doctrine at the present time! But no man can hold the Bible doctrine of church organization who denies the succession. No man can be in the church or kingdom of Jesus Christ who is not in that kingdom which has the succession from the apostolic age. Is it not important to know that the words of Jesus Christ have been verified which are recorded in Matt. 16:18: "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"? Is it not important to know that the Church of Christ, which is the "pillar and ground of the truth," has been "kept by the power of God" as the beacon-light of the world through the dark ages, while the masses of mankind were wondering after the Beast? Is it not important to know that the more than fifty millions of martyred saints, whose blood has been poured forth like rivers, or whose bones have bleached upon the mountains and vales of Europe, and whose ashes have been scattered to the four winds of heaven, were members of the Church of Christ? Or shall we say, it makes no difference with us whether they fell as martyrs of Jesus Christ or died as members of Antichrist?

It is no new doctrine among Baptists to claim the succession of the churches of Jesus Christ. The author of the *Religious Encyclopedia* says: "They [Baptists] think that the Christian church, properly so called, was not visibly organized in the family of Abraham nor in the wilderness of Sinai, but by the ministry of Christ himself and of his apostles. All this time there were Baptist churches. A succession of the Novatians, or the true church, has continued down to the Reformation."

Joseph Belcher says: "It will be seen that the Baptists claim the high antiquity of the commencement of the Christian church. They can trace a succession of those who have believed the same doctrine and administered the same ordinances directly up to the apostolic age."

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## THE CHURCH'S WITNESS

Taken from "The Hiscox Standard Baptist Manual," 1936

Churches are God's appointed agencies for salvation of men. Though it would be false to say that men could not be saved outside the churches and without their aid, yet, as a matter of fact, such is rarely the case.

The mission of a Christian church, therefore, is to a "world lying in wickedness," to men "dead in trespasses and sins," as the bearer of glad tidings to "prisoners of hope," and herald of the great salvation to lost men. In order to accomplish this, the church must maintain the faith and discipline, the order and ordinances of the gospel. Indeed, for this cause Christ gave himself for the church, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). A self-centered and materialistic church can never perform this holy mission; indeed, it is neither worthy of it, nor fitted for it.

The responsibility of a church is both corporate and personal. As a *body* it is to make its influence far and near. Each member, therefore, should strive to be and to do what the entire church ought to be and do, "the light of the world," "the salt of the earth," "a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid." There is work for all, and work adapted to the condition and ability and capacity of each, old and young, great and small, male and female. The efficiency and usefulness of a church depend on each member's doing his own work, so as neither to attempt the work of others, nor yet to stand idly by while others serve. In nothing, perhaps, are the wisdom and skill of the pastor and officers more apparent than in finding suitable work for all.

It is a sad and somewhat humiliating reflection that so many churches exert so small an influence on their communities. The moral influence of these institutions of Christianity ought to do more to repress evil, and to increase righteousness. The results of church life and action are often more apparent in the lands of the younger churches overseas than in our own country. Doubtless the explanation of this is to be found in the lack of vitality of Christian faith and

life among us.

Some common methods of Christian work are as follows:

### Proclamation of the Gospel

The preaching of the gospel, the proclamation of pardon and eternal life through faith in Christ, is the foremost and the most effective instrumentality for the salvation of the world. It is divinely ordained and divinely sanctioned and sustained. The command is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The promise is, "My word ... shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). Four types of situations which provide opportunities for preaching may be noted:

1. Every church will support its own evangelical preaching ministry for the instruction and conversion of all who may be attracted to it. This ministry should be able and faithful, and generously sustained. If the nations are to be fed, the family at home must be built up and instructed in the purposes of grace.

2. At certain times, special preaching missions or evangelistic campaigns seem demanded, special occasions indicated by the Spirit's movement, and an unusual disposition on the part of the people to give heed to spiritual and eternal concerns.

3. Within the range of many churches, there are certain institutions, such as prisons, mental hospitals, or nursing homes, whose residents cannot or do not attend the churches. If they are to have the gospel it must be carried to them. And often they are more ready and eager hearers of the word than stated congregations.

4. But the world is the field, whose bounds extend beyond home and country and kindred. Begin at Jerusalem, but do not stop till *all nations* are reached, and every creature taught the way of life through Christ crucified. Each church and each individual should feel his obligation to aid in sending the gospel to people *the world over*. That was Christ's purpose and design. For that he died. Those

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Baptist through theological, ecclesiastical and ceremonial conditions. And yet there are throngs pressing through its narrow threshold. Whoever cares to study this subject of easy and exacting conditions or church membership, asking which is most likely to secure accessions to the fellowship of professing Christians, should compare the history of the Baptist church with that of the liberal churches, so-called."

The practice of restricted communion is no arbitrary affair with us. We think the Lord has laid down in the New Testament certain

#### Prerequisites to the Communion

We think the Scriptures warrant definite terms of approach to the Lord's Supper. The divine order is, first, faith; second, baptism; third, church membership; fourth, discipline; fifth, doctrine; sixth, the Lord's Supper. No man has a right to the Lord's table who has not exercised faith, been baptized, and is a member of the church, subject to its discipline, and agreeing with it in doctrine. This is so important that I shall illustrate and defend it from a number of standpoints.

The Lord Jesus himself instituted the Supper. A record of this event is given in Matthew 26:26-30: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."

We have no right to change a qualification. Were these disciples baptized? There is no doubt about it. Robert Hall, the foremost defender of open communion, admits this. He says: "It is almost certain that some, probably the most of them had been baptized by John." (*Works*, vol. 1, p. 303.) In the Gospel of John at least four of the disciples were declared to be disciples of John the Baptist. (1:36-40.) Jesus also made and baptized disciples. (John

4:1-2.) It is not reasonable to suppose that Jesus would have selected men to represent himself, who had refused to obey the first and plainest command of the Gospel. "The practice of the first Christian church," says Knapp, "confirms the point that the baptism of John was considered essentially the same with Christian baptism. For those who acknowledged that they had professed, by the baptism of John, to believe in Jesus as the Christ, and who in consequence of this had become in fact his disciples, and had believed in him, were not, in a single instance, baptized again into Christ, because this was considered as having been already done. Hence we do not find that any apostle or any other disciple of Jesus was the second time baptized; not even that Apollos mentioned in Acts 18:25, because he had before believed in Jesus Christ although he had received only the baptism of John." (*Christ Theol.* p.45.)

But the Scriptures do not leave us in doubt on this subject. When an apostle was to be chosen in the place of Judas Iscariot, he was required to be a disciple of John, as were the rest of the apostles. I quote Acts 1:21, 22: "Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, *beginning from the baptism of John*, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

This passage undoubtedly teaches that an apostle must have been a disciple of John. In fact this is made an absolute qualification. This interpretation is sustained by the foremost scholars.

Alexander, Presbyterian, says: "The idea evidently is, that the candidate must not only have believed Christ's doctrines and submitted to his teaching, as a disciple in the widest sense, but, formed a part of that more permanent body which appears to have attended him from place to place, throughout the whole course of his public ministry." (*Acts of the Apostles Expl.*)

Gloag says: "In these verses Peter assigns the necessary qualifications of the new apostle. He must have associated with them during all of the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them; that is, during the whole of his public ministry. He states the commencement of that period to be the baptism of John, and its termination to be the day of the

ascension." (*Crit. and Exeget. Com. on Acts.*)

Burkitt says: "That is one who had followed Christ from his baptism to his ascension."

Adam Clarke, Methodist, says: "They judged it necessary to fill up this blank in the apostolate, by a person who had been an *eye witness* of the acts of our Lord. *Went in and out*. A phrase which includes all the actions of life. Beginning from the baptism of John. From the time that Christ was baptized by John in Jordan; for it was at that time that his public ministry properly began." (*Com.*, vol. 3, p. 694.)

Barnes, Presbyterian, says: "The word 'beginning from' in the original refers to the Lord Jesus. The meaning may be thus expressed, 'during the time in which the Lord Jesus, beginning (his ministry) at the time he was baptized by John, went in and out among us, until the time in which he was taken up,' etc. From those who had during that time been the constant companions of the Lord Jesus must one be taken, who would thus be a witness of his whole ministry."

It is no answer to assert that John's baptism was not Christian baptism; for beyond doubt this was all the baptism Christ ever received and none of the persons baptized by John were ever rebaptized. It answers every requirement of the Lord Jesus and we ought to be satisfied. "The object of John's baptism," says Knapp, "was the same of that of Christian. and from this it may be at once concluded that it did not differ essentially from the latter. John exhorted the persons baptized by him to repentance and to faith in the Messiah who was shortly to appear, and make these duties obligatory upon them by this rite. And as soon as Jesus publicly appeared, John asserted in the most forcible manner that he was the Messiah, and so required of all whom he had then or before baptized, that they should believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Now in Christian baptism, repentance and faith in Jesus as the Messiah are likewise the principal things which are required on the part of the subjects of this rite." (*Christ Theol.*, p. 485.)

Turretin maintains with great learning and force that "the baptism of John was the same essentially with that of Christ," or Christian baptism.

Calvin says: "This makes it perfectly certain that the ministry of John was the very same as that which was afterwards delegated to the apostles. For

the different hands by which baptism is administered do not make it a different baptism, but sameness of doctrine proves it to be the same. John and the apostles agreed in one doctrine. Both baptized unto repentance, both for the remission of sins, both in the name of Christ, from whom repentance and remission of sins proceed. John pointed to him is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, thus describing him as the victim accepted of the Father, the propitiation of righteousness, and the author of salvation. What could the apostles add to this confession?" (*Inst. Christ. Relig.*, vol. 3, pp. 332, 333.)

We are not, therefore, left in doubt about baptism preceding the Lord's Supper.

You will also notice that in the celebration of this first Supper there was no one present except the twelve apostles. His mother was not there; Mary, Martha and Lazarus were not present; the seventy were not admitted, indeed there were no other participants, and no spectators. There was no foolish sentimentality about this observance. Not one argument that open communionists urge can be based upon the institution of the supper by Jesus.

This is the teaching of the great commission. Matthew 28:19, 20, states: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." I love to go back to foundation principles, and learn what Christ has commanded, and then I know how to obey. By this law we are required in the first place, to teach or preach the Gospel; secondly, to baptize those who believe; and thirdly, to instruct such baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded; and the order in which these several duties are here stated, is as imperative as the duties themselves.

This argument is so important, and the logic, of Dr. Hibbard, the Methodist writer, so just, that I transcribe a paragraph from him. "The reader will perceive," says he, "that the argument is based entirely upon the ORDER of the apostolic commission. It may be questioned by some whether the argument is genuine, and whether it is entitled to any considerable force. But suppose we assume in

opposite ground? Suppose we say that the *things* commanded are important to be done, but the *order* observed in the commission is a subject, of indifference. Now what will be the consequences of this position? What but total and irretrievable confusion? The apostles go forth; they are intent upon doing *all* that Christ commanded them, but the order of the duties is a subject of indifference. The consequence is that some are baptized before they are converted from heathenism; some receive the holy supper before either baptism or conversion; others are engaged in a course of instruction before they are discipled; and the most incoherent and unsuitable practices everywhere prevail. Improper persons are baptized, or baptism is improperly delayed; the holy supper is approached before the candidate is duly prepared, and it is therefore desecrated, or it is unduly withheld from rightful communicants. Is not the prescribed ORDER, therefore, in the administration of the ordinances, and the duties of the apostolic commission, all important? And thus we hold that Christ *enjoined the order* as well as the *duties* themselves; and, in this order of Christ, baptism precedes communion at the Lord's table." (*Hibbard on Bapt.*, P. 2, p. 177.)

The custom of the apostles is in line with the commands of Christ. The divine order is beautifully set forth in Acts 2:41, 42: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The order is, teaching, gladly receiving the word, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. The Syriac, the oldest existing translation of the New Testament so understands this passage.

Calvin says: "I would have breaking of bread understood of the Lord's Supper." (*Com. on Acts.*)

Blount, Episcopalian, says: "I consider 'the fellowship' or 'communion' and 'the breaking of bread' to stand in close combination, and to indicate that another bond by which these first Christians were joined to the apostles, to one another, and to a unity in Christ, was a collective participation in the Lord's Supper." (*Christ. Ch. First Three Cent.*)

Baumgarten, Presbyterian, says: "The third characteristic that is noticed in respect to the

baptized is the breaking of bread. The communion of the Lord with his disciples may very properly be characteristic that the disciples who, after his resurrection, had recognized him neither by his form nor by his discourse, immediately knew him upon his breaking of bread with them. This mode of communion was thereby consecrated; and appears as the proper medium of a community which lived together as one family." (*Com. Acts of Apos.*)

Burkitt says: "Another religious office which they continued constant, was the breaking of bread; that is, receiving the sacrament."

Bengel says: "The Lord's Supper is included in this expression." (*Gnomon of New Test.*)

Every instance of baptism in the New Testament confirms this view. The first duty after repentance and faith was baptism. As soon as the Samaritans believed the things Philip preached they were baptized both men and women. (Acts 8:12.) The eunuch was baptized at once upon a profession of his faith. (Acts 8:36,37.) As soon as the scales fell from the eyes of Paul, he was baptized (Acts 9:18); and the Philippian jailer was baptized the same hour of the night in which he believed. (Acts 16:33.) In none of these cases was there any time to celebrate the Lord's Supper between a profession of faith and baptism.

I read in Acts 20:7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." The Syriac version, and well nigh all commentators agree that this passage refers to the observance of the Lord's Supper. We know that none but disciples were present, for the passage distinctly says this.

Gloag says: "That is to celebrate the Lord's Supper.."

Paul in writing to the Corinthian church says: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it... For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the

same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Paul distinctly says he was addressing the church, verse 18, at Corinth. There is not a word said about outsiders. Indeed the whole of this epistle is in regard to disorderly members in the Corinthian church. This passage proves beyond doubt that the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance.

In chapter 12:12, 13 Paul says that baptism precedes the Lord's Supper. Says he: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

The argument is clear. They have all been baptized into the one body or church; and they have been made to "drink," or participate of the Lord's Supper, into one Spirit. Bloomfield says of this passage: "This is the interpretation adopted by almost all commentators, ancient and modern, who here suppose an allusion to the two sacraments."

Olshausen says: "The allusion in this passage to is unmistakable, so that we may see the *epotistheemen* point, to the communion." (*Cum.*, vol 4, p. 346.)

Burkitt says: "By baptism we were admitted into his church; and this union of ours, one with another, is testified and declared by our communion at the Lord's table, which is here called a drinking into the Spirit."

Dr. Charles Hodge says: "The allusion is supposed by Luther, Calvin, and Beza to be to the Lord's Supper."

Van Oosterzee, Presbyterian, says: "It is worthy of notice that baptism and the Supper are at least once mentioned by him in one breath, and placed upon a level." (*Theol. of New Test.*, p. 328)

MacKnight says: "For indeed with the gifts of one Spirit, we all have been baptized into one body. or church, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or freemen, and all are equally entitled to the privileges of that one body, and derive equal honor from them; and all have been made to drink in the Lord's Supper of one Spirit of faith and love, by which the one body is animated."

The priority of baptism to the Lord's Supper is likewise taught in 1 Cor. 10:1-3. The passage reads: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink."

Olshausen says: "Thus in this passage the history of Israel is typically conceived as referring to the sacramental rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which contain like holy vessels all the blessings of the gospels; and thus in this very passage lies a powerful argument for these two sacraments." (*Corn.*, vol. 4, p. 309.)

Meyer says: "Just as all receive the self same type of baptism (verses 1, 2), so too all were partakers of one and the same analogue of the Christian ordinance of the Supper, so that each one therefore stood on the very same level of apparent certainty of not being cast off by God."

Bishop Ellicott says: "The spiritual food referred to was, it hardly need to be said, that which typified one part of the other sacrament."

Godet says: "As the holy Supper serves to maintain in salvation those who have entered into it by the faith professed in baptism, so the Israelites also received, after the initial deliverance, the favors necessary to their preservation. These benefits, corresponding to the bread and wine of the Supper, were the manna daily received, and the water which God caused to issue from a rock in two cases of exceptional distress."

Afford says: "They had what answered to one Christian sacrament, baptism; now the Apostle shows that they were not without a symbolic correspondence to the other, the Lord's Supper."

Dr. Hodge says: "As the miraculous deliverance

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## DUTIES CHURCH MEMBERS OWE THE WORLD

By M.L. Moser Sr.,

Taken from the book entitled, "Baptist Doctrine"

1. *By the distribution of the Bible, religious books, tracts, etc.* This is a method by which a church may do good to the impenitent. God has given to the world one book. It is unlike all other books. It carries with it, wherever it goes, the credentials of its inspiration and claims the reverence due to a communication from heaven. The Bible is God's gift to the world. It was not given to the white man, nor the red man, nor the black man, *as such*, but to universal man. This volume alone unfolds the way of salvation by telling the wonders of the cross. It is revealed truth by means of which the soul is regenerated, sanctified, and prepared for heaven. Who is to see to it that this precious book is distributed at home and abroad? It cannot be reasonably expected that God's enemies will do it. His friends must engage in the work. They know something of the value of the Bible, and their sense of its worth must prompt them to circulate it. Every church should consider itself, by virtue of its constitution, a Bible Society, and should aid in the great work of disseminating divine truth throughout the world. It is a question that may well be pondered with solemn interest: *Will God, In His providence, long permit any people to retain His Word, if that people do not give it to others?* Let every church think of this.

The distribution of religious books, tracts, and periodicals is a work kindred to the circulation of the Scriptures. Religious books are reproductions and expositions of some of the truths of the inspired volume. A good book brings a portion of divine truth into contact with the conscience and heart. And this is the reason why the unobtrusive tract is so useful.

A special use should be made of the tracts and pamphlets that set forth the distinctive principles of Baptists. There is a very large variety of tracts, pamphlets and books. Copies of these should be circulated by hundreds of thousands. As a people, we claim that certain great truths have been committed to our care. For what did the Lord commit them to us? - to pass them over as unimportant? We dare not

do this. These principles are not ours to do with as may seem most agreeable. They are Christ's. He has honored us with their custody, not for ourselves, but for others. Upon us He has placed the especial responsibility of commending them. In common with all other Christians it is our duty to bear testimony to all truths, *but specially to our distinctive principles.* We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to Christ our Lord, and we owe it to our brethren dearly beloved, but in order to make known these principles to the very utmost of our ability.

The mission of Baptists will not be attained by apologizing to the world for an existence, by asking pardon of other denominations for differing from them, or by begging that we may not be esteemed as bigots. We must become aggressive in spirit, positive in the advocacy of our principles.

And these truths can be made known best by the free and wide-spread circulation of our Baptist tracts, pamphlets, and books. Let them, then, be freely used. Tracts cost but little, and what an irresistible, all-pervading power might be called into being by the churches, if they would but address themselves with determination and perseverance to the gradual but perpetual distribution of these tracts, pamphlets, and books!

How greatly might converts be guarded from erroneous views and practices, be indoctrinated in the principles of the gospel and faith of the church, and be made substantial Christians, if with the hand of fellowship, the pastor could give to each one received the best small work on Baptism, another on Communion, and still another on the Duties of Church members! And the pastor should not hesitate to ask the church to supply him with these aids in his work.

2. *By sustaining the cause of missions.* The missionary enterprise is usually referred to in its two aspects - home and foreign. There is full scriptural authority for the presentation of both these aspects. The commission of Christ to the apostles of itself furnishes it: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not

*(Duties continued on page 9)*



*(Duties continued from page 8)*

shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15-16). It is clear from this commission that the gospel is to be preached at home and abroad; for it is to be preached in all the world. It is to be proclaimed to all the nations; for it is to be proclaimed to every creature. "...Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This was the program of missionary labor in apostolic times. How suggestive the words, *Jerusalem - all Judaea - Samaria - uttermost part of the earth*. This was the plan and zealously was it executed.

It may be laid down as an axiom that no church, not animated with the missionary spirit, can be in a healthful, prosperous state. The missionary spirit is the spirit of the gospel - the spirit of Christ. Of every church it ought to be said in truth as of the Thessalonians: "From you sounded out the word of the Lord." (I Thess. 1:8) The sound should go forth till it reaches the remotest limits of the earth. It is the sound of the Word of the Lord. The Word of the Lord is the gospel by which sinners of all nations may be saved. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:13-15)

Indifference to the cause of missions is cruelty to immortal souls. How are sinners in our own land, or in foreign lands, to be saved without the gospel? Ought not those who have the gospel to send it to those who have it not? Earth's wretched millions are starving for "the bread of life," and this bread is in the custody of the churches. Dare they refuse to distribute it among the perishing at home and abroad? No church can perform its duties to the world without sustaining the cause of missions, without giving, according to its ability, to spread the gospel of the grace of God. Praying without giving is presumption, and giving without praying indicates a self-dependence offensive to God. Let it be said, as of Cornelius, so of every church: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." (Acts 10:4) □

*(The Nature of Succession continued from page 2)*

Mr. Benedict says: "The more I study the subject, the stronger are any convictions, that if all the facts in the case could be disclosed, a very good succession could be made out." (*Ben. Hist. Bapt.*, p. 51)

Dr. Howell says: "I assert that from the days of the apostles to the present time the true, legitimate Baptist Church, has ever been a missionary body." (*Letters to Dr. Watson*, p. 3)

John L. Waller says: "Here we rest our cause; the case is made out. The doctrine of reforming the Papal Church is unwarranted by Scripture and unsupported by history." (*Baptists not Protestants*, pp. 40-41)

The Church of Christ was persecuted, but never overthrown; cast down, but not destroyed. It was built upon a rock, against which neither the powers of darkness nor the seductions of Satan, transformed into an angel of light, could prevail. Poor, persecuted, obscure, and despised, still the true friends of the Redeemer maintained the great truths of our holy religion, untterrified by opposition and unswayed by corruption. And the honor of being the witnesses for the truth and the Word of God, when the civilized nations of the earth had bowed in blind and servile obedience to the authority of the Roman Pontiff, in sustaining in undiminished radiance and splendor the altar-fires of our holy religion during the long and dreary darkness of the world's midnight, belongs to the Baptists. This is confessed by their enemies; and thus in them is fulfilled the predictions of the prophets, and illustrated that promise of the Savior, "that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church."

The succession was also maintained by the Baptist martyrs of past ages. One important object in pointing out our denominational history is to stimulate the zeal of modern Baptists by the heroic examples of our ancient brethren and sisters, who sealed their testimony with their blood, by showing that they suffered the loss of all things earthly for the same principles which distinguish us as a denomination. In other words, our principles have been handed down to us at the cost of the lives of millions of our brethren and sisters who loved the Church of Christ more than life itself. Like Abel, being dead, they yet speak to us of the glorious things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and still continue to bear witness against every form of Antichrist. □

*(The Church's Witness continued from page 3)*

who have his spirit will strive to carry forward the work he began; "...If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

### Religious Visitation

Religious visitation is an effective means by which the churches can further their mission among the families of the neighborhoods they serve, especially those families which have no church relationships, and who therefore are under no definite religious influence.

It is presumed, of course, that the minister will visit such households, and offer them religious guidance and counseling. But this is not enough. The church, under the leadership of the pastor, should adopt some plan for systematic religious visitation carried on by the lay members. Such a plan may serve a variety of purposes, for example (1) to invite to the house of God, and bring the children to Sunday school; (2) if in sickness, want, or other misfortune, to report the fact to the church, and furnish such relief as may be practicable; (3) to provide, a ministry of friendship to the sick; and to those who mourn; and (4) to invite individuals to accept Christ and unite with his church (lay visitation evangelism). Thus the reality of the Christian fellowship can be demonstrated to those who do not know it.

In no other way can Christians more effectually imitate their Lord and Master, who "went about doing good," relieving and removing the temporal sufferings of men, that he might effectually reach their souls with spiritual food. There is no more Christly mission for the churches than this, and every member can bear some part in it. Hearts oppressed with sorrow hunger for sympathy, and welcome the counsels of those who will give it.

This ministry of Christian faith and love cannot well be overestimated in its value, both to those who perform it, and to those who receive it. James was right: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). And yet how few of God's people appreciate this work, or are anxious to imitate this most notable feature of the life and character of Jesus!

### Christian Literature

Another practicable and effective means for bringing religious truth in contact with human minds is the use of the printed page. Every good book or periodical put into circulation is a personal and a public blessing, and this means of grace is so accessible that none need be without it. Aside from the periodical religious press, there are numerous societies whose only business is the publication and circulation of religious reading at prices within the reach of all. Our own, as well as other Christian denominations, has its publication society, doing nobly and well this work, and deserving the utmost confidence and the largest patronage.

1. A few good religious books should be in every home. A few, read over and over until the mind is thoroughly imbued with their spirit, are better than many carelessly read, or not read at all. Many Christian families, it is a pity to say, have a generous supply of secular books in their homes, but few or none at all of a religious nature.

2. Church libraries are an excellent means for intellectual and religious instruction.

3. Religious periodicals are, if possible, still more important than books, not in their intrinsic worth indeed, but because they are so much more easily obtained, and so much more likely to be read. Few things could become so great a help to a pastor in his pulpit and pastoral work as a really good religious paper in every family.

### Missionary Support

Christianity is the most emphatic missionary force in the world, and every Christian church is a divinely appointed missionary society. If every church could be fully true to the purpose for which it was instituted, no other missionary organizations would be needed to send the gospel of the blessed God to the ends of the earth. In apostolic history, no others were known, and yet they went everywhere preaching Christ, and filled the world with the gospel of his salvation. Every church and every disciple is under bonds to Christ to aid in carrying out the great

*(The Church's Witness continued on page 11)*

*(Closed Communion continued from page 7)*

and miraculous guidance of the Israelites was their baptism, so being miraculously fed was their Lord's Supper."

Stanley says: "This is the natural expression for the voluntary pledge involved in Christian baptism. The food and drink are parallel to the Lord's Supper."

On this point the authorities are conclusive.

From these considerations we think the arguments for baptism as a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper are most conclusive. When once this proposition is admitted our argument is impregnable.

But we can go a step further in this argument. We are not only called upon to obey the ordinances of the Gospel, but we are required to obey them in the divine order. The Scriptures are unmistakable on this point. Notice the instructions to the churches.

To the church at Corinth Paul writes: "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church." (1 Cor. 4:16, 17.) "Be ye followers of me, even as I am also of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the *ordinances*, as I delivered them to you." (1 Cor. 11:1, 2.) "For I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered unto you;" and he immediately gives directions in regard to the Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. 11:23.)

To the church at Philippi: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample;" and this exhortation: "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16, 17.)

To the church at Colosse: "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness in your faith in Christ... Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:5, 8.)

To the church at Thessalonica: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." (2

*(The Church's Witness continued from page 10)*

Thes. 2:15.) "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you." (2 Thes. 3:4)

commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). No church can hope for prosperity at home unless it strives to give the means of salvation to all men.

Because it is not practicable in our day for all to go out into the world as career missionaries, Christians may avail themselves of the alternative of contributing financially to the support of those who do go. There are, of course, many who say that they have hard work to sustain their own church, and therefore cannot help others. This, however, is false reasoning. They that withhold from others who need, dry up the fountains of their benevolence, and have less for themselves, instead of more. God, who alone can give the increase, prospers those who trust and honor him. The churches that do not sympathize with, and aid missionary endeavor, are not likely to be very flourishing or prosperous. The missionary churches are uniformly the most honored and useful, whether rich or poor, large or small. Thereby they help to give the knowledge of salvation to those beyond the reach of their individual endeavors. The success which has attended the missionary work of American Baptists, through these societies, both in our own country; and in foreign lands, is most amazing, and testifies unmistakably to God's blessing on the work, and the favor with which he regards the methods that have been pursued.

In all that is said or may be said, it must be constantly borne in mind that a very large responsibility does and necessarily must rest on the pastors. For such purposes is the pastor made overseer of the flock, to instruct in duty as well as in privilege, and lead on to the discharge of every obligation. Few churches will be missionary churches if the pastors feel no interest in such work, and do not stimulate them, propose plans, impart information, and lead the people forward. With a pastor to do this faithfully, few churches would fail or fall short of a good degree of effectiveness. □

Thes. 2:15.) "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you." (2 Thes. 3:4)

No comment on these Scriptures is needed. We

# ❖ From Our E-mail ❖

Please send The Baptist Pillar to the following Bible College student....Thanks.



Greetings,

My name is C.S. I live in Florida. At the moment I attend a church that is Presbyterian. I am saved but I'm beginning to disagree with the Presbyterian doctrine, and feel that God is leading me to join the Baptist Church. But first, I was wondering if you would be willing to send a Baptist Pillar. I am limited on money, so I really can't afford one. If you are willing send me a Pillar, my address is:....I do appreciate it.

C.S.



Pastor Reaves,

I just read your web page on building a New Testament Church. I am in total agreement because it was Bible. As a young evangelist I see so many dead churches with little or no response when the Word of God is preached. Maybe God is done with a church that has no vision.

J.B.



As an independent Baptist in Italy, I will be glad to receive three to four copies of the Baptist Pillar Magazine. You can send it to:....

L. C.



Dear Pastor Reaves,

I enjoyed reading some of the articles on the Pillar website, and I have a question. I am considering joining an IFB Church in my town, but I don't agree with the premillennial, pretribulational, dispensational view that they hold so precious. I am a preterist. Should this be a deterrent to joining? I think they have other strong points that give me reason to joining.

Your thoughts would be appreciated.

Thanks!  
In Christ.

D



# NOTICE

The Baptist Pillar will be going to a quarterly paper, every three months, instead of two months. Postage to the U.S. has tripled in the last 12 years and doubled in Canada and to overseas.

If you would like to help with the postage it would be appreciated. The Pillar has been published and sent out free of charge for almost 12 years.

Editor,

*John Reaves*



I really enjoy your site. I live in Tennessee and it is truly hard to find those who share on true Bible doctrine in our area. I find your site very educational and informative. Keep up the good work.

Thanks. R.V.



Please send tract samples, magazines, newsletters, catalogue info., etc to: ....Mich. U.S.A. Thank you.



Do you believe that only Independent Baptist like yourselves will be in Heaven?

M.L.

(I am a Christian first, denominations are secondary and divisive.)



## 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.*

*If you would like to receive The Baptist Pillar, please write and request one. Also, feel free to copy it and hand it out.*