

# Back To The Bible Lectureship

*“Is The Church Of Your Choice  
The Right Choice?”*

*A series of lessons comparing different religions  
to the Bible*

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Back To The Bible Lectureship  
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**“Is The Church Of Your Choice  
The Right Choice?”**

**Under the oversight of  
David Turnmire - 336-385-6339  
Mark Miller - 336-246-2657**

**Directed by  
Milton Mathers - 336-246-5615**

**Held at the  
West Jefferson Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 117  
221 Barnett Street  
West Jefferson, NC 28694  
(336) 246-5615**

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# THE METHODIST CHURCH

*Mark Bass*

## I. Introduction.

1. Obviously time restraints will not allow us to cover every aspect of the Methodist Church (its origins or doctrines).
2. The Methodist are a somewhat conservative group, and are fairly strong throughout the United States
3. I would like to begin by reviewing the origin of the Methodist Church and then I want us to compare some of their teachings with the Word of God.

## II. Discussion.

### A. BRIEF HISTORY.

1. The Methodist Church was founded by John Wesley with the help of his brother Charles.
2. John Wesley (1703 - 1791) was born June 14th at Epworth, Lincolnshire, England.<sup>i</sup>
3. He was the fifteenth child of Samuel Wesley, a British clergyman.<sup>ii</sup>
4. John Wesley was brought up in the Church of England (Episcopal Church in America).
5. In 1725 Wesley was ordained a deacon, and was ordained a priest three years later.<sup>iii</sup>
6. For a short time he worked with his father as a curate in his father's congregation.<sup>iv</sup>
7. While a student at Oxford University John and his brother Charles began meeting with a group of other students for religious studies.
8. They arranged a daily schedule of duties, setting hours for visiting the sick and those in prison, praying aloud three times each day, etc.<sup>v</sup>

9. In time, these people became known as "Methodist" because of their methodical manner of life.
10. In 1735 John went to America to serve as an Anglican missionary.<sup>vi</sup>
11. Upon his return to England in 1738, he attended a Moravian religious meeting in London (May 24, 1738) and experienced a religious awakening that convinced him that salvation was possible for every man through faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>vii</sup>
12. In 1739 George Whitefield, who had met with great success as an evangelist, urged the young Wesley to join him in his evangelistic efforts.<sup>viii</sup>
13. At first he was reluctant to preach outside the church, but after being enthusiastically received at an open-air service, he was convinced that outdoor meetings were the most effective way of reaching the masses.<sup>ix</sup>
14. Realizing that few pulpits would be open to him, (since the Anglican Church frowned on revivalism) he agreed to work with Whitefield.<sup>x</sup>
15. However a short time later, he rejected the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, and broke away from Whitefield.<sup>xi</sup>
16. Wesley attracted immense crowds virtually from the outset of his evangelical career.<sup>xii</sup>
17. His success was due in part to the fact that England was ready for a revivalist movement (the Anglican Church was unable to offer the kind of personal faith that the people were craving).<sup>xiii</sup>
18. Furthermore, his emphasis upon inner religion and his assurance that each man was accepted as a child of God had a tremendous appeal to the people.<sup>xiv</sup>
19. On May 1, 1739, Wesley and a group of his followers, meeting in a shop on West Street, London, formed the first Methodist society (not called churches until sometime later).<sup>xv</sup>
20. In 1744 Wesley called the first conference of Methodist leaders, with conferences being held annually thereafter.<sup>xvi</sup>

21. In 1751, at the age of forty-eight, Wesley married Mary Vazeille, a widow with four children.<sup>xvii</sup>
22. Their marriage was not a happy one and she finally left him.<sup>xviii</sup>
23. Ultimately, John Wesley had no children of his own.<sup>xix</sup>
24. In time, Wesley discarded many of the beliefs of the Church of England, (such as the doctrine of apostolic succession).
25. Ironically, John Wesley never intended to start a new church.<sup>xx</sup>
26. However, his actions made separation inevitable.
27. In 1784 he issued the deed of declaration, which provided rules and regulations for the guidance of the Methodist societies.<sup>xxi</sup>
28. The same year he appointed Thomas Coke (an Anglican clergyman), superintendent of the Methodist organization in the United States.<sup>xxii</sup>
29. Ordination represented the largest step in the direction of severing all ties with the Anglican Church.<sup>xxiii</sup>
30. Full separation did not take place until after Wesley's death.
31. A tireless worker, Wesley traveled about 5,000 miles a year, delivering as many as four or five sermons a day.<sup>xxiv</sup>
32. He compiled twenty-three collections of hymns, edited a monthly magazine, translated Greek, Latin and Hebrew works.<sup>xxv</sup>
33. Wesley was also deeply concerned with the intellectual, economic and physical well-being of the masses.<sup>xxvi</sup>
34. He was very generous with his money (although he was not rich) and helped found medical dispensaries.<sup>xxvii</sup>
35. He opposed slavery and was interested in social-reform of all kinds.
36. In the latter years of his life the hostility of the Anglican Church to Methodism had virtually disappeared and Wesley was greatly admired.<sup>xxviii</sup>

37. He was buried in the graveyard of City Road Chapel in London.<sup>xxix</sup>
38. There is a memorial plaque in Westminster Abbey inscribed with his name.<sup>xxx</sup>
39. Since its beginning, the Methodist Church has had two major divisions or splits:
  - a. In 1828, a group separated becoming known as the Methodist Protestant Church.<sup>xxxi</sup>
  - b. In 1844 there was another division having to do with slavery and with the powers of the General Conference.<sup>xxxii</sup>
40. According to one United Methodist Web site, there are over eight million Methodist in the United States with a world wide membership of over 9½ million.
41. With this brief introduction behind us, let's turn our attention to some of the teachings of the Methodist Church and compare them with the Word of God.

## B. METHODIST DOCTRINE VERSUS THE WORD OF GOD.

1. Infant baptism.
  - a. Error, According to the Methodist Discipline, "The baptism of infants is justified on the basis that Jesus said 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.'" (Mark 10:14)
  - b. Reply, Baptism is not the subject Jesus was teaching on this occasion...not mentioned in this entire chapter, nor in the chapter before or after.
  - c. Infants were never baptized in all Bible history.
  - d. Children have no sins of which to be forgiven. (If they do, what are they?)

- e. Inspiration defines sin as: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).
- f. How can children transgress what they do not know?

2. Preaching.

- a. According to their Discipline, no member of the Methodist church can preach without a license.
- b. Before anyone can preach in the Methodist Church, he must first be licensed by the District Conference, which also has the authority to renew or reject the person later, depending on their feelings of his usefulness.
- c. He must also be recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the charge to which he belongs, and must first pass before a committee of three, to be appointed by a Presiding Elder.
- d. Reply.
- e. According to Acts 8:4 every Christian was a preacher. Were all these people licensed?
- f. Where do we read of Paul or Peter (or any preacher) going before a review board?
- g. The great commission (Matt. 28:18-20) places the responsibility of preaching on every Christian.
- h. Why didn't the Lord tell the apostles to license their new converts before they sent them out to teach others?

3. Closely related to this is the matter of choosing preachers.

- a. The Methodist Conference decides which preacher goes to which congregation.
- b. The local congregation has no say in the matter other than to request a certain individual.



- c. Beloved, as we study the New Testament we see that each congregation was autonomous (i.e., self governing) with elders who oversaw the work and worship of the church (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5).
4. Religious titles.
- a. The Methodist Discipline allows their preachers to wear the title “reverend.”
  - b. The name “reverend” is only used once in the entire Bible (Psa. 111:9) and there it is applied to God, not man.
  - c. Personally, I would be afraid to take God’s name and apply it to myself (talk about presumptuous!).
5. Salvation by faith only.
- a. The Methodist Discipline reads: “...Justification of faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort” (Article 9).
  - b. Answer.
  - c. Read Jam. 2:14-26.
  - d. Faith only gives us “...power [right] to become the sons of God” (John 1:12).
  - e. “...Power to become...” suggests possibility, not actuality.
6. Instrumental Music.
- a. The Methodist Church uses instrumental music in their worship services.
  - b. Reply:
  - c. The Bible still says, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19).

- d. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).
- e. I find it interesting that John Wesley objected to their use.

7. Baptism.

- a. Methodists teach that baptism (immersion) is not essential for salvation of adults (although they do hold that infants are saved by baptism).
- b. Reply, Clearly this doctrine is in direct opposition to what God’s word teaches.
- c. “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 3:21).
- d. In Acts 22:16 Saul of Tarsus was asked, “...why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
- e. In 1754 John Wesley printed the New Testament with brief notes on each verse (a mini commentary). In his notes on Romans 6:4 he writes regarding the phrase “...buried with him...”: “Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion...”<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- f. How strange -- Methodist doctrine doesn't even agree with their founder!
- g. His comment on verse 3 is just as interesting: “As many as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death.”
- h. “In baptism we, through faith, are ingrafted into Christ...”<sup>xxxiv</sup>

8. Lord’s Supper.

- a. Most Methodists partake of the Lord’s Supper once every quarter (four times a year).

- b. Reply.
  - c. The early church partook of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week according to Acts 20:7.
  - d. I find it interesting that Methodist take up an offering every first day of the week.
  - e. Strange isn't it that the phrase "first day of the week" means every week when it comes to taking up the collection, but it means once a quarter when it refers to the Lord's Supper.
9. Methodist attitude toward the scriptures.
- a. Most Methodists believe in the inspiration and all-sufficiency of God's Word.
  - b. Allow me to read a brief statement from their Discipline: "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proven thereby, is not to be required or necessary to salvation."
  - c. If this truly represents the Methodist view of the Scriptures, then why do they have their Discipline?
  - d. If the Bible is all sufficient, why do they need anything else?
  - e. If their discipline has more than the Bible, then it has too much; if it has less than the Bible, then it has too little. If it contains only the Scriptures, then why bother with it?
10. Methodist make no distinction between the Old and the New Testaments.
- a. Methodist doctrine says that both are to be obeyed.
  - b. John wrote, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).
  - c. In Colossians 2:14 Paul writes: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

- d. In reality, Methodist do not keep the law of Moses.
- e. They do not observe the Sabbath Day as God instructed.
- f. They do not make the required pilgrimages to Jerusalem.
- g. They do not offer the various animal sacrifices required by the Law.
- h. The list of examples could go on and on.

C. METHODIST PLAN OF SALVATION.

1. Keep in mind that the various groups of Methodist have different views regarding salvation.
2. They like to use the term “getting saved.”
3. They teach that one must believe and confess the name of Jesus.
4. Contrary to many Methodist groups, the United Methodist teach that baptism is for the remission of sins.
5. However, they believe that one can be sprinkled, or immersed or have water poured over him.
6. It's important to keep in mind that they make a distinction between “getting saved” and “joining the church.”
7. According to Methodist doctrine, one gets saved and then joins the church at a later date.
8. In the New Testament, we find people being added to the church when they were saved (Acts 2:47).
9. We would also mention that the idea of “joining” the church is totally foreign to the Scriptures.
10. As we just saw in Acts 2:47, God added converts to His church, they did not join, nor were they voted in.

11. One doesn't have to study long to see that the Methodist plan of salvation is not the one we read about in the New Testament.

### **III. Conclusion.**

1. While there are many good things that could be said regarding the Methodist Church and its members; sadly, when it is compared to the word of God, it falls far short of measuring up to the Church of the New Testament.
2. In John 8:32, the Lord said: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
3. John 17:17 tells us what truth is: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
4. God's Word is Truth -- not some Discipline, or Manual or Catechism -- not any writing of man.
5. If folks really want to be set free, if they really want to be saved; they need to forget about these man-made doctrines.
6. We all need to be certain that we speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent.

Mark Bass preaches for the church of Christ in Grove City, Ohio  
2779 Alkire Rd.  
Grove City, Oh 43123  
614-875-1028  
email: mebass1957@aol.com

## Endnotes

- i Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, 1972 vol. 25, p. 48
- ii Ibid., p. 48
- iii Ibid., p. 48
- iv Ibid., p. 48
- v Ibid., p. 43
- vi Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, 1972 vol. 25, p. 49
- vii Ibid., p. 49
- viii Ibid., p. 49
- ix Ibid., p. 49
- x Ibid., p. 49
- xi Ibid., p. 49
- xii Ibid., p. 49
- xiii Ibid., p. 49
- xiv Ibid., p. 49
- xv Ibid., p. 49
- xvi Ibid., p. 49
- xvii Ibid., p. 49
- xviii Ibid., p. 49
- xix Ibid., p. 49
- xx Ibid., p. 49
- xxi Ibid., p. 49
- xxii Ibid., p. 50
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- xxiv Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, 1972 vol. 25, p. 49
- xxv Ibid., p. 50
- xxvi Ibid., p. 50
- xxvii Ibid., p. 50
- xxviii Ibid., p. 50
- xxix Ibid., p. 50
- xxx Ibid., p. 44
- xxxi Jennings, Alvin, *Traditions of Men Versus the Word of God*, 1985, p.44.
- xxxii Ibid., p. 44
- xxxiii Wesley, John, *Explanatory Notes on the new Testament*, Epworth Press, London, p. 54
- xxxiv Ibid. p. 540

# CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN UNION

*Milton Mathers*

## I. Introduction.

1. I would like to make it known right up front, that I have no ill-will towards those in this denomination, but to compare this religious group with what the Bible teaches.
2. I love their souls, and would want them to examine the evidence from God's word the Bible, and compare that evidence to their beliefs and practices, to that of Bible teaching.
3. The material that follows comes from their Manual for the Churches of Christ in Christian Union. It is here for you to read and study, because I do not want to misrepresent them.
4. I will make some comments after every major heading so that it will be easier to follow. I do not want this to be confusing, but, to make sure that it goes with what the Bible does teach.
5. The Cardinal Principles of the denomination, Churches of Christ in Christian Union are:
  - a. The Oneness of the Church of Christ.
  - b. Christ the only Head.
  - c. The Bible the only rule of faith and practice.
  - d. Christian union without controversy.
  - e. Each local church governs itself.\*
  - f. Partisan political preaching discountenanced.

\*(As limited by the Constitution and Bylaws of the organization)

Answer: The error of Churches of Christ in Christian Union.

6. In the first place, the name is not scriptural. The first part is, churches of Christ, Rom. 16:16. The last part, "...in Christian Union" is not scriptural. That part is not



found in the New Testament!

- a. With that thought in mind, I would have to question point #d.
  - b. I like what they have said in points above except #d and #e with an asterisk, and the comment of it, and #f (I don't know what that involves?).
7. The Bible does say that each congregation is to take care of its own affairs, and that they are to have their own elders, deacons, evangelists, members, and are governed by the word of God. (1 Cor. 6; 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1;l, 2 Tim.; 1 Cor. 12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- a. Not a central headquarters governed by elected men to run the churches with constitutions and bylaws. (Scripture? There is none.)
  - b. There are the different congregations throughout the New Testament - Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, etc. With Christ being its Head, ruling every congregation, and not a group of men ruling all churches. (1 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phi. 1:1; Eph. 1:22-23).
8. Let's briefly mention some things about this group:

## II. Discussion.

### A. THEIR HISTORY.

1. The Churches of Christ in Christian Union traces its origin as an independent body to the year of 1909 at the council of The Christian Union Churches which was held at Marshall, Ohio. A prominent breach was present among the churches of that district. The point of controversy was the preaching of holiness as a second definite work of grace subsequent to regeneration. Those opposed to such preaching, being in the majority, enacted certain legislation to silence those upon whose preaching they frowned. Instead of being silenced, this group, led by The Reverend J.H. McKibban, withdrew by compulsion and took the name "The Churches of Christ in Christian Union."
2. On October 27, 1909 a convention of this group was held at the Christian Union publishing house at Washington Court House, Ohio with The Reverend E.S. Cartwright presiding. At this convention a charter of The Churches of Christ in Christian Union was read and endorsed by the ministry and members present. There was also a Declaration of Rights written and presented.

3. Being no longer members of the council of Christian Union Churches, this new group was compelled to establish their own council. The first council of The Churches of Christ in Christian Union was held at Jeffersonville, Ohio October 28 to 31, 1909. The Reverend E.S. Cartwright was moderator of this council. Annual councils have been held from that date.
4. At the thirty-seventh annual council at Circleville, Ohio in 1945, legislation was enacted amending the Articles of Incorporation and resolutions passed permitting the organizing of other state and district councils and their incorporation in this body of believers.
5. The first general council (composed of all districts) was held at Circleville, Ohio in 1948. General councils are held every two years.
6. Their official publication is called The Evangelical Advocate.
7. They have a college called Circleville Bible College. It was established by a council action and began its first year in 1948.

Answer: As you can read, this group did not come to existence because of Bible teaching. The true church of Christ, in the New Testament, had its existence from Jerusalem, about 33 A.D. (Acts 2).

#### B. WHAT THEY BELIEVE AND TEACH WITH A REBUTTAL TO THEIR BELIEFS.

1. As a church we unite in our basic beliefs of what the Scriptures teach. Such teachings, or doctrines, are valid only as they are based in God's Word. No other source is an acceptable authority--no individual, no tradition, no religious writings or church dogma. This section lists the topics of our shared doctrine, and the short summary accompanying each topic contains the scripture on which we base that statement.

Answer: I want you to keep in mind the things that they affirm, as we continue this lesson. I wish they were committed to their statement above. It's one thing to say something, it's another thing to prove it, or, do it.

##### a. God, The Father

- 1) God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity. God as the Trinity consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is three distinct personalities, yet one God, often referred to as

God, the Three in One (Mat. 3:16-17; 28:19). Note that whatever the Bible teaches about God applies to the Godhead and God the Father equally.

Answer: Sounds like a miss-use of terms. Maybe they are confused over the Godhead's role, each one? Trinity is not mentioned in the Bible. Let's call Bible names with scripture. In the verses they mention, reveals all Three of the Godhead at the same time. (Godhead, Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9 KJV)

- 2) God is the creator of the entire universe. He is the creator of man, all other creatures, and of the universe itself (Gen. 1).

Answer: God, in Genesis chapter one, is plural, referring to the Godhead. They all had part in the creation process. He is though the First Person of the Godhead.

- 3) God is omnipotent. He is all-powerful; He is the Almighty (Gen. 17:1; Jer. 32:17-18, 27).
- 4) God is omnipresent. He is present everywhere at once (Psa. 139:7-10).
- 5) God is omniscient. He knows all things, and nothing is hidden from Him (Psa. 139:1-6; Heb. 4:13).
- 6) God is eternal. He has neither beginning nor ending. He is the first cause of all things, and all things derive from Him (Deu. 33:27; Psa. 90:2; Hab. 1:12).
- 7) God is holy and just. In the Old Testament alone, He is called the Holy One of Israel over 30 times (Psa. 89:18; Isa. 1:4). He is a just God (Deu. 32:4; Psa. 89:14). His holiness is just, and His justice is holy (Gen. 18:25; Exo. 34:5-7).
- 8) God is loving and merciful. His love and mercy extend to all His creatures (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8, 12).
- 9) God is worthy of our total trust and submission. Because He is all-wise and loving, we should submit our wills to Him and trust

Him implicitly (Job 13:15; Psa. 37:3, 5; Pro. 3:5; 2 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:12).

b. God The Son, Jesus Christ

- 1) Jesus Christ is God. He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. All that has been said of the Father may be said of the Son (John 1:1-3).
- 2) Jesus Christ was man. For the redemption of humanity He became a man. (1) He was born of the virgin Mary, having been conceived by the Holy Ghost (Mat. 1:18-21; Luke 1:26-35). (2) He lived a sinless life, having been born without sin though in all other things He shared our humanity (John 8:46; Heb. 4:15; 7:26-28).
- 3) Jesus Christ is our Saviour. Of His own free will and volition, He laid down His life and was crucified for our salvation. He as our substitute went to the cross. He actually died for us (Rom. 5:6-8; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).

Answer: He was crucified, laid down His life for us, shed His precious blood, that we may have salvation, if we choose to obey Him (Heb. 5:9). He made it possible to be saved, through His blood. We make contact with that blood to wash away sins in the watery grave of baptism (Rom. 6:3-4).

- 4) Jesus Christ is alive. The third day He rose from the grave and showed himself to more than 500 witnesses (Mat. 28:5-6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5-6; John 20; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Cor. 15:1-9). He ascended to heaven in the presence of many believers and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father interceding for us (Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11; 7:56; Heb. 4:14-16).

Answer: He intercedes for those who become Christians by hearing, Rom. 10:17; believing, John. 8:24; repenting, Luke 13:3, confession of faith, Acts 8:37, being baptized for the remission of sin, Acts 2:38. Baptism puts one into Christ, Gal. 3:27.

- 5) Jesus Christ will return to earth. At the end of this age the

coming of Jesus will be in two phases (Acts 1:11).

Answer: Jesus will come again as Acts 1:11 says, but not to this earth. When He comes the last time, it will be to bring judgment on all accountable beings (2 The. 1:7-9). The Bible says that those who are alive will be raised to meet Him in the air (1 The. 4:13-18).

- 6) First, He will come to translate the Church to heaven and to Himself (John 14:1-3; 1 The. 4:14-17; 1 John 3:1-3).

Answer: In John 14:1-3, Jesus assures His disciples that after He left He would come again. In 1 The. Paul said He would come, and those who are alive at that coming will meet Him in the air. 1 John 3 says that Christians will be like Him. These passages do not refer to the church being translated to heaven or to Himself. Let the Bible speak. Besides, 1 Cor. 15:14-28 says that Christ will turn the Kingdom over to His Father at the end.

- 7) Second, He will come to judge the existing nations and set up His millennial kingdom of 1,000 years; therefore, His second coming will be premillennial (Mat. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:1-6).

Answer: Matthew 25 is teaching the judgment scene. There will be only one judgment at the end, when Christ will come the very last time, in the air. Revelation 20 does not teach that Christ will come on this earth and reign for 1,000 years. Premillennialism is a false doctrine!

- 8) Jesus Christ will be our judge. He will finally judge all mankind and all fallen spirits at the end of time (John 5:22-29; Rev. 20:7-15).

c. God, The Holy Spirit

- 1) The Holy Spirit is God. He is one with the Father and with the Son, and all that has been said of the Father may be said of the Holy Ghost.
- 2) The Holy Spirit is a person. He is not a mere influence (John

16:13-14).

- 3) The Holy Spirit is the source of conviction. He is the agent of the Godhead in the convicting of sin (John 16:7-11).

Answer: What they say is true, but how does He convict of Sin? He does it through the word of truth, the Bible only. He guided the apostles into all truth, and it is written down for us today, in the Bible. (John 16:13)

- 4) The Holy Spirit is the administrator of God's grace. He is active in converting and regenerating those who repent (John 3:5-6) and in sanctifying the lives of believers (Acts 15:8-9).

Answer: In John 3:5, Jesus teaches that one needs to be baptized in order to have their sins washed away (Acts 2:38). The Christian then is spiritually born into the family of God. In Acts 15, Peter was recounting when Cornelius and his household (Gentiles) had received the gift of the H.S. and were baptized in order to wash away their sins (Acts 2:38). The belief of the C.C.I.C.U. teaches that the H.S. is directly, personally, doing something to one's heart in order to convict them of their sins, and this is contrary to Bible teaching.

- 5) The Holy Spirit is the indwelling sustainer. He dwells within believers giving them comfort, aid, counsel, and ability to live victoriously in this life (John 14:16-17; Acts 9:31).

Answer: In the John 14 passages, Jesus was talking to His apostles, the H.S. helped His apostles personally, not us today. In the passage in Acts 9:31, the church was edified, was at peace, and comforted by the H.S. through the means of the apostles through signs, wonders, miracles and the laying on of the apostles hands to others.

- 6) The Holy Spirit is the source of our understanding about Christ. He magnifies Christ within the vision and life of the Christian (John 16:13-15).

Answer: This seems to imply that the H.S. directly helps us to understand what the Bible is teaching, personally. But this is not the case. They use this passage with the wrong

understanding of it. I wish and pray that this group would be consistent in what they say. Read what they say about the Bible below.

d. The Bible.

- 1) The Bible is God's inspired Word. Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to write God's message for us. The Bible is inspired in a sense distinctly different than any other book. The Word which He inspired has also been preserved by Him, and that preservation is in itself a verification of the claim of inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).
- 2) The Bible is infallible. God has provided a totally accurate and dependable record of His message (Deu. 32:4; 2 Sam. 7:28). It is infallible in every detail, especially in the original languages, Hebrew and Greek.
- 3) The Bible is the only rule of faith and practice. As the only rule, the Bible is a sufficient authority on which to base our faith and our behaviour (Gal. 1:8). The practice of imposing on believers any rules or regulations, other than those contained in the Bible, is to be rejected and shunned.

Answer: I just wish they would put to practice what they say here. Why then have other, different, rules, laws, that are contrary to what they claim here?

- 4) The Bible is the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). If this gospel is faithfully and dynamically proclaimed with simplicity and prayer, the Spirit of God will use it to draw unbelievers to God and to give direction and light to Christians for their daily lives.

Answer: This is a good statement because it does come from God's word. Only the Word of God will do this upon those hearts who are opened unto it.

e. Salvation

- 1) Salvation meets man's need. Man's need to be saved is derived

from the fact that he is a fallen creature. He is a sinner by nature, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Answer: No, man is not a sinner by nature, he chooses to sin.

- 2) The book of Genesis records the fall of man (Gen. 3). Adam, as the first parent, is the head of the human race. Although created in a state of perfection, which included his will, he exercised that will "in disobedience." The penalty of sin, death, has been passed on to the whole human race. All men are born into a slavery to sin (Rom. 6:6,12,16-18).

Answer: Again, we are not born in slavery to sin, we are born into a world where sin exists. Romans 6:6 says that we should not "serve" sin. We choose that which we want to serve.

- 3) Sin is a part of all men's lives, both as acts of disobedience as well as the nature that produces those actions (1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:12; 8:5-8). Both the act and the principle are addressed by God's provision of salvation.

Answer: We have the choice to obey God, or not obey God. If we obey Him, we can know that we can have salvation through His son. (Heb. 5:8-9).

- 4) Salvation is the result of God's love. Though man is a sinner, he is the object of God's love, "For God so loved the world..." (John 3:16). He manifested His love for man by giving His Son for his redemption and salvation from sin. Salvation begins with man's need plus God's love and willingness to meet that need, which He does through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ.
- 5) Salvation is conditional. The Bible makes it clear that there are two definite things that man must do before he can experience God's pardon for the sins of the past.
- 6) The first is repentance. Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin and consequently a turning from sin to righteousness. Repentance may be accompanied by acts of restitution, as God may reveal to the penitent that which needs to be and can be



restored (Acts 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9).

- 7) The second, all-inclusive condition is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith is an act of trust in the merits of Jesus Christ. It is believing that God, for Christ's sake, forgives the penitent sinner. John 1:12-13 makes clear that to receive Christ and believe in His name are one act which leads one to become "born of God" (1 John 3:9).

Answer: Let me just say what the Bible says for one to meet the conditions of God for salvation: 1) Must hear and believe what God says in His word, the Bible (Rom. 10:17; John 8:24). 2) One must repent of his sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9). 3) One must make the confession of faith (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10). 4) One must be baptized in order to have his sins forgiven by the blood of Christ in that watery grave of baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Pet. 3:21; Eph. 1:7). 5) One must then be faithful till death (Rev. 2:10).

f. The Church

- 1) The true Church is the body of Christ. The body of Christ is made up of many members who by faith have received Christ and have thus been born again. As a body the Church possesses the various spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has designated for each member (Eph. 4:16). More important, the Head of the body is Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:22-23; Col. 1:18).

Answer: To receive Christ, is to obey Him. And to be born again, is to be baptized, which then puts one into Christ, His church, His body (John 14:15; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:22-23). There are no spiritual gifts today as they claim. Those were special gifts given to those in the infancy of the church.

- 2) The Church is more than any denomination of Christianity. The Church as the body of Christ is composed of all persons, everywhere in the world and throughout all ages, who truly know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. One becomes a part when sins have been forgiven and faith in Christ becomes

reality. The Church then transcends any denominational group.

- 3) Those who claim to be Christian, but have never experienced a saving faith in Christ, may be a part of an earthly church or denomination, yet not be a part of the Church which is the true body of Christ. Salvation, not an affiliation with a local congregation, brings one into participation in the body of Christ, the true Church.

Answer: Jesus only built One church (Mat. 16:18). It is the whole, it is not a part of anything. Denominationalism is a part of something. When one obeys the gospel (hearing, believing, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins), he is then added to the church, by the Lord, that Jesus had shed His blood for (Acts 20:28). His church is NOT a denomination!

- 4) The Church is both a human and a divine institution. It is God's medium on earth, but it is composed of frail humanity which is also subject to failures; therefore, no leader or head of any of its branches is infallible.
- 5) The Church is a body of fellowship. There should be fellowship and communion between all believers even though divided into various denominations. This unity is much more important than it is to have one great organization of the whole church (John 15:12; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:17).

Answer: Jesus prayed that they "all" may be "one" as the Father and Son are in perfect harmony with one another (John 17). You can't have harmony and unity when there is doctrinal division. Jesus didn't shed His blood for "all" denominational churches, He shed it for His "one" church (Acts 20:28). He is the Saviour of only this "one" church, His body (Eph. 5:23).

- 6) The Church is a body with a mission. The Church is to be a light in the world and the salt of the earth (Mat. 5:13-16). The Church has a commission from Christ, her Head, to "preach the gospel to every creature." To be true to her Lord, the Church must be a missionary church at home and abroad. As long as there is one soul who has not heard the good news anywhere in the world, it is the Church's responsibility to get to

him. Since millions have not even heard of Christ, the Church's mission is not yet complete (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8).

- 7) Additionally, as a Church with a mission, she is the visible expression of the Kingdom of God. She is to live out the ethics of God's Kingdom so as to bring God's will to bear upon society, never forgetting, however, that she is engaged in a spiritual warfare with principalities and powers, not with flesh and blood (Eph. 6:12).

Answer: Yes, we do need to evangelize the community, county, and the world. And when we do this, it needs to be by the authority of Jesus Christ (Col. 3:17).

g. The Sacraments

- 1) We recognize only two sacraments or church ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper. The sacraments are outward symbols that teach us about the inner life, faith, and the hope of the believers.
- 2) Baptism by water is an outward confession and testimony of the believer's relationship to Christ and separation from the world. Most of us advocate immersion in running water, but we believe that the mode is not so essential as the fact. We leave the candidates to choose the method whereby they wish to be baptized, whether by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling (Mat. 28:19; 1 Cor. 1:13-17).

Answer: This is what they believe and teach. But what says the Lord? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" Mark 16:16. Is the statement of Jesus true? Is it important? Which one will you believe - Jesus? or, this group? Their doctrine/belief will cost you your soul in hell if you obey what they teach! The Bible does not call these things "sacraments" or "church ordinances." That is what "they" call them. It is a command from God that we obey them, if we want to please God.

- 3) The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ as a memorial of

His death. Only those who have real faith in Christ should partake of this, and we are indeed commanded to do so until Jesus comes (Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-30).

- 4) We do not recognize any sacraments as saving ordinances. We do not wish to quibble with those who recognize other sacraments and practice them. We do, however, strongly object to the teaching that any sacrament is a saving ordinance. Salvation is the product, not of our acts, but of God's acts of grace (Eph. 2:8).

Answer: Believe in what Jesus teaches, and you can know that you can have salvation, and eternal life with Him, if you obey Him! (Heb. 5:9) It is a command of Jesus to partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of every week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34), to do otherwise is not in keeping with what He says needs to be done.

#### h. Other Beliefs

- 1) Tithing. Tithing has been a practice of the New Testament church from earliest times. That practice is based upon their reasoning.
- 2) Christ sanctified tithing (Mat. 23:23; Luke 11:42). He, in fact, received tithe, in type, in the person of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-7, 17).
- 3) He required tithing of His disciples (Mat. 5:20; Luke 18:12). The early church met His requirements both materially and in their spiritual dedication.

Answer: Jesus does not authorize tithing for the Christian in the New Testament, it is not there. The passages that are mentioned above do not authorize tithing today. Christians are to give as they have been prospered on the first day of every week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). They are to give as they have purposed in their heart, and to do it cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7).

- 4) Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath was for the Jews. The Christian Sabbath, or Lord's Day, is to commemorate the resurrection of

Christ on the first day of the week, or Sunday. There is no direct command for this, but the early church kept this day from the beginning in honor of Christ's resurrection (John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10).

Answer: The Lord's day is a most important day for the N.T. Christian. A day to worship God, in spirit and according to God's way of worship (John 4:24). On that day, A Christian's worship requires taking of the Lord's Supper, unleavened bread, and grape juice. Acapella singing, everyone is to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Praying (I The. 5:17-18). Preaching (Acts 20:7). Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Because the early Christians did those things mentioned, that is a binding example for us today as well. Let us recognize Bible authority.

- 5) Judgment. Everyone will be judged (Mat. 25:32; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16).
- 6) There will be an everlasting heaven and state of bliss for believers.
- 7) The wicked will be judged and will be sentenced to the lake of eternal fire (Mat. 25:46; Luke 19:15-27; Rev. 20:14-15).

Answer: That is certainly true! Study also (2 The. 1:7-9; Heb. 9:27).

- 8) Conclusion to the statements made from above. No church consists of members who see everything alike in Scripture. While the Holy Spirit may enlighten one member to embrace something which another may not embrace, such variations of understanding are the result of the responsive care and direction of God in the light of each person's need and state of maturity. The emphasis in this section, however, has been on the common bonds of our faith, as indeed it should always be.

Answer: No, the Holy Spirit does not reveal one truth to you to embrace, and another truth for me to embrace, such is false, contrary to Holy Spirit instruction through His word, revealed in the Bible. Those things which are written are what the Holy Spirit wants us to embrace and do.

### C. CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN UNION CONSTITUTION.

1. Name: This organization shall be known as “Churches of Christ in Christian Union.”
2. Object: Its object is to spread the Gospel of Christ in its entirety, among all people of the earth, for the benefit of both saint and sinner.
3. General Officers: There shall be five of them. No one can serve more than eight consecutive years except in the case of a General Council Meeting.
4. District Officers: There shall be five of them. The terms shall be the same as the General Officers.
5. Authority of these officers. They have the right to make sure that each congregation is following the rules of the constitution and bylaws. There are other district leaders, but space does not permit to put into this manuscript all the info in that area.
6. There is even a Constitution of Evangelical Christian Youth.
  - a. Its object is to evangelize young people throughout the world.
  - b. To build up its members in a Christian experience and holy character and to instruct them in the doctrines of the Bible as taught by the Church.
  - c. And to promote wholesome, Christ-centered activities for young people to aid in the development of soul, mind, and body.
  - d. This is an organization that has a President, Vice President, financial secretary, recording secretary, advisory pastor, editor.

### D. SOME BYLAWS OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN UNION.

1. Organization. To be recognized as a Church of Christ in Christian Union, each church must be organized under the direction of proper officials; must accept and be willing to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the corporate organization.
2. Church property. All church property shall be deeded to: “The Churches of

Christ in Christian Union, an Ohio corporation having headquarters at Circleville, Ohio.” The local church must maintain the property. Each local church shall send monthly to the district treasurer ten percent of all income except that for missions, church extensions, offerings for Circleville Bible College, and local church building funds. Annual reports are to be sent in to the respective district council. Business meetings are to be presided over by the pastor, first elder, elected chairperson, district superintendent.

3. Pastor.

- a. The pastor’s work will be for two years. This can be either male or female. Subsequent recalls shall be for a minimum of three years.
- b. A church may give the pastor extended time by a simple majority vote. It can go on until such time as the congregation sees fit, or, the pastor chooses to leave.
- c. No minister is eligible for a call to any pastorate until said minister has been a member of a local church for a period of at least six months, except by approval of the general superintendent and the General Board of Trustees.
- d. All ministers shall send one-half of their tithe (which includes all income) either to the treasurer of the their local church monthly for conveyance to Circleville Bible College, or send it directly to the College for support of it.
- e. No minister can pastor more than two churches in this organization at the same time. He/she chooses which one they will place their membership with.

4. Membership.

- a. Qualifications for Membership. All candidates for membership shall:
  - 1) Be interviewed by the pastor prior to being received into membership. This is intended to assure that the new member will fully understand the nature of the vows that are to be taken.
  - 2) Have a clear testimony that Christ saves from all sins in the present moment.

- 3) Evidence an inward and outward life of godliness, always and in all things living “as becometh godliness.”
- 4) Be good stewards of their income and possessions, faithfully supporting the kingdom through their local church by their tithes, offerings, and gifts.
- 5) Accept the doctrinal position of the church as set forth in the Statement of Doctrine without mental reservation.
- 6) Abstain from all use of tobacco or alcoholic beverages, and shall not own a business engaged in dealing in tobacco or alcoholic beverages of any kind. Further, they shall abstain from undue and irresponsible dependence on habit-forming drugs and shall at all times avoid promiscuous use of stimulant, depressant, or hallucinogenic drugs.
- 7) Not to be avowed homosexual or lesbian. Such persons shall not be received into or retained in membership, nor shall they be permitted to hold ministerial credentials or to hold any office either by election or by appointment at either the local, district, or general level in the Churches of Christ in Christian Union.

b. Reception of Members.

- 1) All members shall be taken into the local church by the pastor only, except where a church is without a pastor.
- 2) The following questions are to be asked of all applicants for membership:
  - a) Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is contained the knowledge of the way of salvation?
  - b) Have you the assurance of all sins forgiven, and do you publicly confess Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?
  - c) Are you determined by the grace of God to follow Christ, in renouncing the world and all ungodliness, seeking to



live a life of holiness and devotion to God and His cause?

- d) Are you willing to be governed by the Word of God and the rules of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union?
- e) Whereas, the Word of God teaches that tithes and offerings are God's method of financing His work, will you be a good steward of your income and possessions, and faithfully support the Kingdom through your local church by your tithes, offerings, and gifts?
- f) Whereas, the Word of God teaches that the church is composed of many members being one body, will you by the help of God be loyal to this local church and be faithful in attendance?
- g) Whereas, the Scriptures teach that we are to be witnesses, will you endeavor to witness and do personal work, seeking to win others to Christ and the church?

(Applicants to answer in affirmative.)

Applicants having answered all questions, the members of the church shall arise, and the minister shall say:

Do you, the members of this Church of Christ in Christian Union, enter into covenant with these applicants, promising to pray for them and to watch over, instruct, counsel, and cherish them, in all longsuffering, gentleness, and love?

(Church to answer in unison: By the grace of God we will.)

## 5. Elders.

### a. First Elder-

- 1) The first elder is the class leader whose duty is to lead all prayer meetings or see that such meetings are supplied with a

competent leader as approved by the pastor.

- 2) The first elder is required to cooperate fully with the pastor.
- 3) The first elder, with the pastor, is charged with the responsibility of seeing that the membership roll is kept and reported, according to the rules of the church. He/she shall see that names and addresses of new members are duly recorded.
- 4) The first elder shall be eligible to cast a vote in the District Council.
- 5) The first elder shall receive church and Sunday school report blanks at the end of each council year and, with the pastor, shall see that they are properly filled out and sent to the District Council.
- 6) The first elder shall receive and, with the pastor, see that proper credentials are filled out for council delegates, first elder, and the Sunday school superintendent. Thus, all these delegates may be properly identified to the District Council.
- 7) The individual cannot, while holding office of first elder, be Sunday school superintendent, nor serve as an elected church delegate to the District Council.

b. Second Elder.

- 1) The second elder is the clerical elder or secretary of the local church whose duty it is to see that all business transactions, including that of all boards, are duly recorded.
- 2) For any money received by them due credit shall be given.
- 3) The second elder shall turn all money over to the treasurer and issue all orders on treasury for payment of funds as authorized by proper officials.
- 4) In the absence of the first elder, and where no leader has been supplied by the first elder, the second elder shall lead the prayer meeting or see that a competent leader is provided as

approved by the pastor.

c. Third Elder.

- 1) The third elder is the financial elder or treasurer of the local church whose duty it is to receive all funds from the second elder and pay out same as authorized by proper officials. They shall deposit all church monies in a bank, if possible, and account for them according to sound bookkeeping methods.
- 2) In the absence of the first and second elders and where no leader has been supplied, the third elder shall lead the prayer meeting or see that a competent leader is provided as approved by the pastor.

d. Qualifications.

- 1) The elders must be members of the local church where they are elected and shall cooperate with the local church, their pastor, and the general organization.
- 2) The elders shall advocate and practice tithing in the local church.
- 3) No person shall be elected to the office or allowed to hold the office of an elder who opposes the doctrine of sanctification as a second definite work of grace.
- 4) No more than one member of a single household (husband, wife, or unmarried children) may be an elder in a local church at the same time.
- 5) Any violation of the rules relating to elders or accusations against them shall subject the violator to be called for a hearing before the District Board of Trustees for whatever action they deem necessary.

E. SOME RITUALS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN UNION.

1. Baptism.

- a. General Instructions.
    - 1) The minister has the responsibility to inform the candidates the meaning and requirements of this sacred rite.
    - 2) This applies only to born-again believers whose lives bear a changed heart; also, that it is an outward confession and testimony of one's relationship to Christ.
  - b. The Service.
    - 1) Should be one of great joy, thanksgiving, reverence, dignity.
    - 2) Songs can be sung, prayer, selected scripture readings and comments, testimonies by others who have been baptized, and a benediction. (The baptisms may be interspersed with spontaneous congregational singing or instrumental music.)
  - c. The Rite of Baptism.
    - 1) When the minister is about to baptize each candidate, the minister should raise his/her right hand and say, "(the name of the candidate), upon the profession of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, your repentance from sin, and in obedience to His command, I now baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen"
    - 2) Selected scriptures: Mat. 3:13-17; 28:18-19; Acts 2:38-42; 8:26-37; 16:25-33.
2. The Communion Service. (Holy Eucharist)
- a. General Suggestions.
  - b. Communion was instituted by Christ as a memorial of His suffering and death, and with baptism, constitutes the two ordinances of the church. It should be a time of self-examination and drawing near unto God.
  - c. The Bible does not say how often this sacrament is to be observed, only that it is to continue until Jesus comes. Many of our churches

conduct communion at least four times a year.

Answers: To major points B, C, and D above. Open up your Bibles and compare what they say, to the Bible. Let the Bible be your guide in all religious matters. Do only those things that God authorizes to be done. Don't add, subtract, nor go beyond those things that are written. (2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19).

### III. Conclusion.

1. The Churches of Christ in Christian Union has some good qualities. But on the other hand, according to God's word, the Bible, they are not the true church which Jesus Christ shed His precious blood to purchase.
2. It is my desire, wish, prayer, that those who are in that group, will come to the true understanding of what the Bible teaches concerning their beliefs, as we have tried to bring forth in this study.
3. Examine the evidence that has been brought forth. Then, turn to the Bible, to make sure the things that were said, were according to the Bible truths. (Acts 17:11).
4. Much more could have been said concerning this group, but this is sufficient for now. Let us be people of God, people who love His book, who are willing to abide by those things that are revealed therein, and do them.

Milton Mathers preaches for the church of Christ in West Jefferson, NC.  
221 Barnett Street  
West Jefferson, NC. 28694  
336-246-5615  
[mmathers54@skybest.com](mailto:mmathers54@skybest.com)

## Endnotes

All the material that is mentioned concerning the Churches of Christ In Christian Union, comes from their manual.

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All the “answers” mentioned above, comes from this writer.  
Scripture references come from the reliable KJV.

# MENNONITE DENOMINATION

*Harold Morefield*

## **I. Introduction.**

1. There are at least 12 major Mennonite groups in the United States and several tiny splinter groups.
2. Some Mennonites are much like any evangelical denomination; others are formed into various Amish bodies with varying degrees of conservatism and non-conformity with the modern world.
3. Statements of what Mennonites believe have been among us from earliest beginnings. A group of Anabaptists, forerunners Mennonites, wrote the Schleitheim Articles in 1527. Since then, Mennonite groups have produced numerous statements of faith.
4. How do Mennonite confessions of faith serve the church? First, they provide guidelines for the interpretation of Scripture. At the same time, the confession itself is subject to the authority of the Bible. Second, confessions of faith provide guidance for belief and practice.

## **II. Discussion.**

### **A. ORIGIN AND HISTORY.**

1. The Mennonite movement grew out of the Anabaptist movement in the Protestant Reformation. The first Mennonite congregation was organized in Zurich, Switzerland in 1525.
2. They opposed the union of church and state.
3. They denied the validity of infant baptism.
4. They refused to take oaths or serve in the military.
5. Menno Simons (1496-1561), a Roman Catholic priest, was converted to the movement and became its leader; he organized so many congregations that they began to wear his name.

6. Many, because of persecution, fled to England in the 1500's. Thirteen Mennonite families settled in Pennsylvania in 1683.

**B. SOME TRUTHS THEY TEACH.**

1. They believe in the Deity Of Christ, His virgin birth, atoning death, and bodily resurrection.
2. They accept the verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.
3. They believe in Heaven as a reward for the righteous and Hell as a punishment for the wicked.
4. They believe that, through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life.
5. They believe that God created human beings with an ability to choose to obey or to disobey the word of God.
6. They believe that the church is the body of Christ, has many members belonging to one body.

**C. ERRORS THEY HOLD.**

1. Most Mennonites accept a Confession of Faith containing 18 articles which was signed at Dordrecht, Holland in 1632 (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
2. They Teach water baptism by pouring, immersion, or sprinkling of water (Acts 8:-39; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
3. Most Mennonite churches serve the Lord's Supper only twice a year.
4. They teach that feet-washing is an important part of the Christian Communion. Foot washing was a custom of ancient times (Gen. 18:4; 1 Tim 5:10).

**III. Conclusion.**

1. The Mennonite church is a religious body which teaches and practices false doctrine.



2. The Mennonite Church has the wrong founder, place, and date of founding, doctrine, name, organization, and terms of membership to be the true church of the Bible; therefore, it has no right to exist (Mat. 15:13).
3. Unless we accept God's standard, we cannot be united, saved, or pleasing to Him in any way (Luke 6:46).

Harold Morefield preaches for the church of Christ in Butler, TN  
238 East Holly Hill Rd.  
Mountain City, TN 37683  
423-727-8236  
email: morefieldlou@hotmail.com

# THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

John D. Cotham

## I. Introduction.

1. The late H. Leo Boles once wrote, "Nothing is taught more clearly and emphatically in the New Testament than that Christians, disciples of Christ, should be united. Jesus, before he established his church, prayed that his disciples should be one: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (John 17:22-23). The Holy Spirit through Paul exhorted Christians to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Again, Paul wrote by the Holy Spirit to the church at Philippi "that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Philippians 2:2). "One of the vital questions of our day is that of bringing together all the professed followers of Jesus. The question is frequently asked: How shall the followers of Christ, now ranged under different banners, be rallied and united under one standard, when party names shall be known no more? The desire of many is that the distinctions which are represented by party names pass away and the reproach be removed. Many earnest and honest hearts are pondering the difficult solution of uniting the believers in the Lord. They feel keenly that such divisions as now exist are condemned by the New Testament. At the same time they see no satisfactory conclusion of the present divided conditions; they know that no power can force people to unite; they know that the union must be wholehearted on the part of everyone. The heads of the denominational bodies know that they cannot compel the members of the different denominations to disband and merge into one large body of believers. No one denomination today will claim to have all the truth, and each denomination will admit that the other denominations have some truth. It is an impossible task to unite the present denominations. A uniting of all the denominations into one large denomination is not the unity for which Christ prayed and which the New Testament teaches."<sup>1</sup>
2. The elders and brethren at West Jefferson are to be commended for such a theme as they have chosen; to examine many of the different religious bodies and doctrines in existence today for the purpose of comparison with each other and with the Bible.

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<sup>1</sup> H. Leo Boles; The Sin of Denominationalism; as quoted by *Seek the Old Paths*; March, 2002 issue; Garland M. Robinson, editor; Corinth, MS

3. My assignment is to examine the Presbyterian church.
4. We have many good friends who are members of this religious body. We know these people to be sincere in their beliefs and statements of faith. It has been the hope of these good elders to lay each of the religious bodies examined this week along side the word of God. This is an effort to compare what we each believe with what God's word says the church of our Lord should follow or practice.

## II. Discussion.

### A. FIRST, LET US NOTICE SOMETHING ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

1. The religious body called by the name Presbyterian is the result of the work of two men.
2. John Calvin along with others of his time became very intolerant of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.
3. Men like Martin Luther rebelled against some of the activities of the Catholic church.
4. Martin Luther simply had the desire to reform the Catholic church; however, John Calvin desired to literally "re-form," i.e. to start a new church.
5. Nineteen years after Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church building at Wittenberg, John Calvin published his statements of reformation called Institutes of the Christian Religion in 1536, at the age of 27.
6. The single theme of Calvin's theology was the inability of man to help himself to be saved in any way.
7. His view was that man was totally depraved; that man lacked any ability to make a choice about his salvation.
8. Calvin used the TULIP acrostic to define his theology:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Duane Edward Spencer; TULIP, The Five Points of Calvinism in the Light of Scripture; (Baker Bookhouse, Grand Rapids, MI; 1979)

T—Total Depravity = Totally Lost, no hope, no free will choices.  
U—Unconditional Election = God chose before creation who will be saved.  
L—Limited Atonement = Atonement is limited to only those God choose.  
I—Irresistible Grace = Those chosen can not resist God's saving grace.  
P—Perseverance of the Saints = Saints cannot so sin as to fall from God's grace.

9. This became the basis for doctrine in the Presbyterian church.
10. In Scotland, John Knox was converted to Calvin's Reformed faith.
11. Knox became the prominent figure in the establishment of the Presbyterian church. Presbyterianism permeated all of Scotland under Knox's efforts.
12. Presbyterians came to America in the early 1600's.
13. Although many came so early, there was no official organization until 1706 when the first American presbytery called the General Presbytery was organized.<sup>3</sup>
14. We need to call attention to one thing H. Leo Boles said: "...each denomination will admit that the other denominations have some truth." As we discuss and compare the doctrine of the Presbyterian church, we begin our search for areas of agreement with the scripture.

B. THE TERM "PRESBYTERIAN" WAS USED BECAUSE OF THE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT OR RULE.

1. They were to be commended in that they understood the ruling machine of the Catholic church with its pope and separated hierarchy of priests was unbiblical.
2. They also understood that the rule should be by a plurality instead of a single pastor system as is used by most religious bodies today.

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<sup>3</sup> John David Stewart; A Study of Major Religious Beliefs in America; Chap. Six, The Presbyterians; (R. B. Sweet Co., Inc; Austin, TX, 1964) p.36

3. Truly God's word teaches that the Lord's church is to be overseen by a plurality of presbyters or elders.
4. Paul wrote that there should be elders (plural) in every city (over every congregation): "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (plural) in every city (every congregation), as I had appointed thee" (Tit. 1:5).
5. James also speaks of the plurality of elders (plural) and their responsibilities: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (Jam. 5:14).
6. It is commendable to recognize that presbyters (plural) are overseers of the church; however, Presbyterians have gone beyond this scriptural governing rule.
7. Besides these elders (called the Session), local congregations are formed into Presbyteries. Presbyteries are formed into Synods.
8. A General Assembly decides and settles all matters of discipline and doctrine sent to it by lower bodies.<sup>4</sup>
9. In themselves, these overseeing bodies are unscriptural. The church of scripture is autonomous. The government is autocratic, Christ is King, Head of the church: "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:20-22).
10. There is to be no other head. There is to be no other ruling body.
11. The only rule on earth authorized by God is the rule of presbyters (elders, bishops) over a single congregation: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must

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<sup>4</sup> Brant S. Copeland, Pastor; The Organization of First Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee, Organized 1832; [www.oldfirstchurch.org](http://www.oldfirstchurch.org)

give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17), meaning simply to submit yourselves only to the eldership having oversight of your congregation.

12. Presbyterians also in their plurality of elders utilize women as presbyters.
  - a. “In the past 30 years women could be elected as elders, but since 1983 it is necessary that the church have women elders. It is required that the composure of the Session reflect the composition of the congregation.”<sup>5</sup>
  - b. Though God has given strong responsibilities to women in the church (Tit. 2:3-5); for a woman to hold the office of presbyter is a violation of scripture: “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2). See also Tit. 1:6-7.
  - c. A woman can not fill this biblical qualification.
  - d. Neither does God allow a woman to have any authority over the congregation, particularly over the men of the congregation: “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. 2:11-14).
  - e. Some argue that this is antiquated and cultural. They are right in that it is antiquated. Paul goes all the way back to the sin of Eve. Because she sinned first and tempted Adam, this curse has been on all women of all ages regardless of the culture of any society.
  - f. Therefore, God still today, does not allow women to have this authority over men.

C. CALVIN BELIEVED THAT ALL MEN ARE BORN BURDENED WITH THE “ORIGINAL SIN,” i.e. THAT ALL MEN ARE BORN SINNERS BECAUSE OF ADAM’S SIN.

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<sup>5</sup> Anthony Lawrence, Which Church Is Right?; The Presbyterian Church; (McMinnville, TN, 1990)

1. Many denominations accept this theology including the Presbyterian church.
2. However, such cannot be the case since God specifically says that a son cannot inherit, nor will he pay for the sins of his father: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Eze. 18:20).
3. The argument against "original sin" is simple: Since no son can be guilty of the sins of his father; neither, Cain, Abel, Seth, nor any other son of Adam could bring Adam's sin to another generation. Adam's sin stopped with Adam.
4. However, the doctrine of Total Depravity was the view of both Luther and Calvin. Calvin's theology as developed into the TULIP acrostic became the doctrine of salvation for the Presbyterian church.<sup>6</sup>
  - a. This doctrine teaches that man has no free will nor choice concerning his salvation.
  - b. This doctrine teaches that God pre-selected, predestined, pre-elected exactly who will and who will not be saved before creation.
  - c. Calvin took several verses from the Roman letter using the term "election," and verses from Romans and Ephesians using the term "predestinate(d)" to assume that these terms mean God "predestinated" specific individuals to salvation, whereas all others were "predestinated" to damnation.
  - d. From these verses Calvin determined that man had no hope outside God's election process, and that God had selected all the saved before He made man.
  - e. Calvin determined that atonement was limited only to those pre-elected by the grace of God, that man could not refuse God's grace,

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas M. Gregory; Presbyterian Doctrine of Total Depravity; Thesis for Grace Online Library;  
[www.graceonlinelibrary.org](http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org)

and that once God saved a man, the man could not so sin as to remove himself from God's atonement, salvation, and grace.

5. Calvin assumed too much by teaching that man had no choice—no free will in the matter.
6. Only one scripture is needed to refute Calvin's entire doctrine of "election": "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Pet. 1:10).
7. When we analyze Peter's statement we see that our "election" has everything to do with our "giving diligence to make our election sure."
8. If we do not "do these things" (follow God's instructions), then our election is not sure (we shall not persevere), and we shall "fall."
9. Therefore, there are "things" we must "do" else we "fall" from our "election." This puts the will and action of man into the election process. God has done His part for ALL men. Man must also do his part, meaning man is a part of his own salvation; not by meritorious works, but by his free will choice (faith) to follow God's will: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).
10. God's part is His free gift of grace. In turn, man must respond by faith. Faith is not a meritorious work; however, it is still necessary on the part of man: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). It is man's choice, not God's.
11. In order to promote the doctrine of Total Depravity, one would have to totally distort every verse of scripture that speaks or implies man's free will, verses such as: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9).
12. Salvation by the grace of God includes every man.
  - a. The term "whosoever" is used 110 times in 93 verses of scripture.
  - b. In context, it is used to show there are no limitations placed; i.e. any one, anybody.



- c. Notice the invitation of Jesus Himself: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).
  - d. Paul said in the same book of Romans where the term “election” is used: “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:11, 13).
  - e. Paul used the Greek word [πας] in Rom. 10:11, 13. It means: “all, any, every, the whole, as many as.”
  - f. By this we know that Paul was not teaching a doctrine of “pre-election” of specific individuals, but a pre-election of all who “believeth on him.” The doctrine of Total Depravity is a terrible doctrine that condemns most of humanity to eternal damnation without any hope (and without any love from God, John 3:16).
13. God made man a free will creature and gave man a choice. The fact that salvation is offered by God to every man also refutes the points of Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, and Irresistible Grace. Since the doctrine of Total Depravity is not true, neither can either of these doctrines be true.
14. The last point of Calvin’s acrostic is Perseverance of the Saints, meaning that a saint cannot so sin as to fall from the grace of God (the “once saved, always saved” theology).
- a. A verse already stated reproves such an argument. By inspiration Peter stated: “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (2 Pet. 1:10); the point being that one can fall (from God’s grace) if he is not busy “doing” the “things” instructed by God.
  - b. The apostle Paul warned: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12).
  - c. Paul also warned that we can cause another to fall: “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no

man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way” (Rom. 14:13).

- d. The writer to the Hebrews states: “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. 4:11).
- e. Similar to Peter’s admonition to “give diligence,” here we are told to “labor” to keep from falling.
- f. According to the Hebrew letter, falling away is extremely dangerous for the Saint: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 6:4-6).
- g. The doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints is reproved by God’s word.

#### D. GOD HAS GIVEN A GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION.

- 1. It certainly involves belief (or faith): John 8:24; Heb. 11:6. Man’s belief (faith) must move him to reject his former manner of life beginning with repentance: Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30.
- 2. Man must be willing to confess his belief (faith) that Jesus truly is the Son of God: Mat. 10:32; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10.
- 3. Finally, man must be baptized for the remission of his sins: Acts 2:38; in order to have his sins washed away: Acts 22:16; or clearly to be saved: 1 Pet. 3:20-21.
- 4. Therefore, Calvin’s plan of salvation does not agree with the plan found in holy scripture.

#### E. CONCERNING BAPTISM, THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFERS BAPTISM TO ITS MEMBERS.

- 1. Two modes of baptism are offered: sprinkling or pouring.

2. The only mode of baptism taught (allowed) in scripture is that of immersion: (Rom. 6:4-5) “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection”; and (Col. 2:12) “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”
3. The two modes of sprinkling or pouring are not scriptural modes of baptism, which literally means to dip, plunge, or bury.
4. As administered, Presbyterians teach that baptism is not for the remission of sins.
  - a. John S. Bonnell stated: “While baptism is urgently recommended in the Presbyterian Church, and while its omission is regarded as a grave fault, it is not held to be necessary for salvation.”<sup>7</sup>
  - b. Peter, in his first recorded sermon, stated the purpose for baptism: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).
5. Presbyterians administer baptism to infants and small children.
6. Parents are encouraged to submit their very young child for baptism. Brant S. Copeland writes: “In the case of children or infants, who, of course, are unable to claim God’s promises for them selves; their parents or guardians respond on their behalf.”<sup>8</sup>
7. Scriptural baptism requires belief (faith) on the part of the one being baptized: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16).

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<sup>7</sup> John S. Bonnell; A New Guide And Almanac. RELIGIONS OF AMERICA; ed. Leo Rosten; Sixth Edition; (Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1975)

<sup>8</sup> Brant S. Copeland, Pastor; YOUR CHILD’S BAPTISM AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, An Essay for Parents Considering Baptism for their Children; Brant s Copeland, Pastor;First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee, Organized 1832; www.oldfirstchurch.org.

8. The writer to the Hebrews states: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).
9. In the case of the child (especially infants), Presbyterian parents express their faith in lieu of the child's faith: "When a child is being baptized, its parents or guardians declare their own faith and pledge to rear their child as a Christian."<sup>9</sup>
10. No one has authority to confess faith in Christ for another person.
11. Confession should be as clearly stated by the believer as was stated by the Ethiopian eunuch: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).
12. That confession must be made by the mouth of the believer: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).
13. Common sense logic dictates that a child too young to understand and to state for themselves even the simplest faith in Christ is not a candidate for baptism. Baptism of a non-believer or one too young to understand what faith in Christ is about is not in accordance with scripture.

**E. PRESBYTERIANS SERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER EVERY LORD'S DAY USING THE SCRIPTURAL ELEMENTS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD AND FRUIT OF THE VINE.**

1. This is as scripture teaches: "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" (Acts 20:7).
2. However, the Supper is offered even to children. Jesus instituted the Supper as a memorial to Himself; its purpose being to call men's minds to remembrance of His death on the cross. Whoever partakes of this memorial

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid

Supper is to think on Christ, His vicarious death, the purpose of His death, His suffering on our behalf, etc.

3. However, Brant S. Copeland states: “Baptized children who are being nurtured in the Christian faith are also invited to eat and drink, even though their understanding of the Supper will vary according to their maturity.”<sup>10</sup>
4. Keep in mind many of these small children were baptized as infants not having any faith in any fact concerning Jesus the Christ.
5. Certainly one who is too young to understand the purpose of the memorial that the Supper represents is too young to partake of the Supper.

### III. Conclusion.

1. Presbyterian churches today still use the basic organization as developed by John Calvin.
2. Their plan for man’s salvation is basically the same as described by Calvin’s theology of Total Depravity, and that those who will be saved were pre-selected by God’s grace before the foundation of the worlds.
3. Certain elements of worship such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper are carried out, but in a manner foreign to the inspired word of God. The Lord’s Supper is served each first day of the week; however, even very young children are allowed to partake.
4. It is conclusive that the organization or government, the plan of salvation, their baptism, and even the Lord’s Supper have all been perverted with doctrines of men.
5. With love we seek to teach and admonish each other to strive to be nothing more than the simple church for which Christ died to purchase and save:
  - a. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

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<sup>10</sup> Brant S. Copeland, Pastor; The Lord’s Supper at First Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee; [www.oldfirstchurch.org](http://www.oldfirstchurch.org)

- b. “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).
- c. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body” (Eph. 5:23).

John D. Cotham preaches for the Crandull Church of Christ in Shady Valley, TN.  
120 Stegall Road  
Shady Valley, TN 37688  
423-739-3982  
email: [jdcotham@preferred.com](mailto:jdcotham@preferred.com)

# THE CHURCH OF GOD/PENTECOSTAL

*By Charles A. Huff*

## I. Introduction.

1. Some of the most religious people we read of in the Bible were lost people. When in Athens, Greece, Paul the apostle observed those who worshiped many gods and said to them, “..I perceive that in all things you are very religious” (Acts 17:22).
2. The Holy Spirit dispatched Phillip to overtake a very religious pilgrim who had traveled over one thousand miles from his home in Ethiopia in a chariot. On the road to Gaza, Phillip taught this traveler about Jesus and he obeyed the gospel and became a Christian (Acts 8:26-40).
3. Saul of Tarsus, a religious zealot of Judaism thought he was doing God a great service by persecuting disciples of Jesus. On his way to Damascus to jail more Christians, he met a great light, brighter than the noon day sun. The voice from the light said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecuteth” (Acts 9:5).
4. These examples of religious but lost people remind us of many contemporary acquaintances, family and friends, who too are very devout, and zealous, and as the religious Athenians, they seek to worship God in ignorance and error.
5. I must shamefully admit that for many years, I too was a religious zealot, I read the Bible regularly, yet as the Ethiopian Queen’s Treasurer, I needed someone to guide me. I persecuted the Lord’s church and traveled many miles worshiping and leading others in ignorant worship. Thank God, I met and was taught by faithful gospel preachers. How tragic for my soul if I had met one of the current “liberal change-agents” with an ecumenical agenda, who would have told me, “If you were baptized in Jesus’ name to please God, you are all right spiritually. After all, there are saved people in all denominations.” If I had heard and accepted that error, what motivation would I have had to change?
6. The twenty two years that I spent in a Pentecostal denomination called, “the church of God”, I was deceived into thinking that I was a member of God’s church. But after studying the Scriptures, I began to realize that I was wrong, that my baptism was for the wrong purpose, that I

was lost, outside the family of God, without hope, and without the blood of Jesus covering the sins of my life.

7. May I humbly say as did Paul: “although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; I obtained mercy because I did it in ignorance and in unbelief” (1 Tim. 1:13, NKJV).
8. There are many segments of Pentecostals. There are those who believe correctly concerning the Godhead. There are some who believe in “Jesus only”. Some believe in speaking in the “unknown tongue”, and some who do not. Those who identify themselves as “the church of God” also have a great deal of diversity, ranging from “Armstrongism” to small independent congregations of “snake-handlers” scattered throughout Southern Appalachia. These groups generally have their roots in “Methodism”, and even though many of them had a beginning among the impoverished mountaineers of Appalachia, in recent years they have become highly influential and popular religions. I was baptized into the “church of God” in 1948, began preaching for them in 1953, and preached their error for seventeen years. My wife and I left that group in 1970, studied the Bible and obeyed the gospel that same year. And were added to the church of Christ by the Lord Himself (Acts 2:47).

## **II. Discussion.**

### **A. SEVEN REASONS WHY I LEFT “THE CHURCH OF GOD” DENOMINATION.**

1. This church had the wrong founder.
  - a. In 1886 a group began meeting in a school house in Cherokee County, NC, under the direction of Richard G. Spurling. They called themselves “The Christian Union”. They later moved to Cleveland, TN and changed their name to “The Holiness Church.” Fanaticism almost destroyed them in the years 1900-1902. In 1907, A.J. Tomlinson became their “pastor” following another name change in 1906 to “The Church of God.” Then in 1909 the new denomination elected Mr. Tomlinson as their “General overseer.” Which office he held until 1923, when questions of financial impropriety came up. He was



impeached and started “The Church of God of Prophecy,” which he and his sons controlled for many years.

- b. Contrast the founder of this denomination to the Lord Jesus Christ, who promised, “...I will build MY church...” (Mat. 16:18-19). Isaiah had foretold that the Lord’s house would be built in the last days (Isa. 2:2-5), that it would begin in Jerusalem, and that “...all nations would flow unto it...” Daniel prophesied that Messiah’s kingdom would begin in the days of the Roman kings, (Dan. 2:44). The Psalmist declared: “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it...” (Psa. 127:1). What Biblical right does any mere human have to begin a church different in origin and teaching from Christ’s own church?

2. This church had the wrong beginning date.

- a. The modern “church of God” sects did not begin until the 20th Century. Jesus began His church on the first Pentecost Sunday after His ascension back to heaven (Cf: Acts 1, 2). He promised that it would begin during the lifetime of His disciples, “. . . there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power...” (Mark 9:1). Those whom Jesus bought with His own precious blood are His kingdom or His church (Cf: Rev. 1:6,9; 5:9,10; Acts 20:28).
- b. Some try to deny that we have the Pattern by which we can restore that original church in all its pristine purity. The “good seed” of the kingdom/church is the “WORD OF GOD” (Luke 8:11). So long as we follow the Word of God without the opinions and creeds of men, we can restore and have restored the church. When we cease to follow the Word of God and give credence to those who promote a “new hermeneutic,” we leave the Divine Pattern for the opinions of mere men (Cf: Heb. 8:5).

3. This church began at the wrong place.

- a. Various branches of “the church of God” have different geographical beginnings. Some in Anderson, IN; Cleveland, TN, Dalton, GA, and the largest sect of Pentecostals, the “Assemblies of God,” began and maintain headquarters in Springfield, MO. But the church of Jesus, the Son of God began at Jerusalem.
  - b. Isaiah prophesied where the church of Christ would begin. And Jesus told His apostles: “...Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46-47).
  - c. In Jerusalem, in A.D. 33, “...repentance and remission of sins...” truly began to be preached “...in His name...” (Cf: Acts 2:36-47). His church could not begin without the proclamation of His gospel (Cf: Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:17-18). On that momentous day, “...the Lord added... to the church, those who were being saved” (Acts 2:41, 47).
4. This church had the wrong organization.
- a. The “church of God” denominations have an “international or national headquarters,” or “general offices” at different locations. Then there are “district” or “state offices” from there--directions are given to local congregations, ruled over by “a pastor”, with an “assistant pastor”, then “deacons”, and members. At the very top of this pyramid type of church government is the “General Overseer”, with the “Assistant General Overseer”, then usually a “Cabinet of Advisors”, sometimes called the “Supreme Council” or “Board of Elders”. These exalted positions of authority are usually political and consist of “yes” men/women to the top man. Within the local congregation, usually a very active “Ladies Willing Workers” group serve diligently to raise funds for the local church or the denomination. These too are organized regionally or nationally. Even a casual reading of the New Testament is sufficient to inform us that such an “Ecclesiastic Conglomerate” cannot be found within the

pages of God's Word. "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phi. 1:1). "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you" (Tit. 1:5). "The elders who are among you, I exhort ... Shepherd the flock of God which is among you..." (1 Pet. 5:1-2, NKJV).

- b. The New Testament pattern shows no church organization larger than the local congregation with the "oversight" or spiritual care of her elders, (also called: bishops, shepherds, pastors, and overseers). Deacons are "servants" of the local church whose work assists the elders in providing both spiritual care and/or physical needs of the congregation.
- c. Teachers and evangelists serve under the direction or "oversight" of the local elders. While it is true that the New Testament pattern for the church knows no organization larger than the local congregation. It is also true that the pattern shown in the New Testament knows no organization smaller than the whole of the local congregation. Thus "cell groups", "house churches", or any other sub-division of the local assembly is a dangerous trend, and is copied after denominations fostered by mere men, and not the New Testament church founded by Jesus Christ, and guided by Holy Spirit filled apostles, prophets, and elders, as their examples and words are given in the New Testament.

5. This church taught the wrong doctrine.

- a. "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God..." (2 John 9). "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). As most other denominations, "church of God" sects fail to "rightly divide" the Old and New Testament. Some things from the Old Testament law including tithing, and instrumental music, are carried over and incorporated into their teaching and practice. While other things from the Old Testament are rejected. It all boils

down to using whatever pleases their leaders without serious concern whether or not it pleases God. They also try to claim promises that Jesus made to His apostles concerning miraculous gifts, and signs, that were to accompany the apostles ministry, for the purpose of revealing and confirming all the truth. (Cf: Mark 16:15-20; Heb. 2:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:9-13; 13:9-10; Jam. 1:25; 2 Cor. 12:12). Confusion, frustration, and a sense of failure often cause the more honest people among Pentecostals to grieve because they cannot seem to “get all that the Lord promised”. They are often not discerning enough to detect the fakery of their peers in their “victorious jubilation”.

- b. While not all Pentecostal groups are “premillennial” in their theology, most of them are steeped in the erroneous teaching of the “rapture”, and a literal one-thousand year reign of Christ on earth. Most of them are very liberal in their use of women in places of authority in their organization. Many of them have women evangelists, “pastors”, etc. They have for years set aside New Testament restrictions on women as teachers of men and/or public proclaimers in their worship assemblies.
- c. Believe it or not, we now have feminists among us, in churches of Christ, who have an agenda, which if followed, we also will have women elders, preachers, and deacons (Cf: 1 Cor. 14:34, 37; 1 Tim. 2:8-12). A recent “brotherhood” teen teacher’s manual taught that we may have “deaconesses” in churches of Christ.

6. This church practices wrong worship.

- a. Much of the worship activities of the “church of God” denominations is clearly for entertainment, and self gratification. Musical instruments of many varieties are part and parcel of their emotionally charged worship. “Special” choruses, quartets, trios, duets, and solo musical entertainment, are included in nearly every assembly. Applauding with the hands, cheering, and standing ovations, are an acceptable way to express appreciation and approval of musical performances. While

I admit, they do put on a pretty good show, but is this what God wants by way of worship? (Cf: John 4:23-24). Peter tells us: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3). If God wanted such aforementioned human originated worship, He failed to tell us of such a desire. We are commanded to do all things in Jesus' name, that is by His authority (Cf: Col. 3:17). Sadly enough, we have some among "churches of Christ" today who have little or no conviction concerning faithful adherence to the New Testament pattern for worship.

- b. The same frequency for partaking of the Lord's Supper and the receiving of the contribution of our monetary offerings is given in the New Testament (Cf: Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). While I attended "church of God" worship services for part of three decades, collections were a part of nearly every gathering, but I can only remember them celebrating the Lord's supper less than a dozen times. They would literally go for years without any mention or practice of the communion. Some members of the Lord's church fail to appreciate the "Memorial Supper" of Jesus' sacrifice. We know this by the way they forsake the assemblies of the church.
- c. There is a distinct, clearly set forth pattern for acceptable Christian worship. We are taught by command, approved example, and by things necessarily inferred in the New Testament, exactly what our God desires by way of worship. We are taught to assemble together on the first day of every week (Cf: Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor 11:18; Acts 20:7), for the purpose of: 1) Breaking bread, (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-30); 2) Brethren leading in fervent prayers, (1 Tim. 2:8; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:15-17); 3) Preaching the gospel, (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 15:1 ; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:2); 4) Giving our offerings, (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7); 5) Singing praises to God (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15).

- d. When we try to change or improve on God's Divine Pattern, we corrupt our worship and render it unacceptable to God.
7. This church taught the wrong plan of salvation.
- a. Penitent alien sinners were taught that salvation from sins came when they prayed through at an altar of prayer for God's forgiveness and acceptance. They teach that salvation comes at the point of faith. That repentance from sins precedes saving faith, and that the Holy Spirit baptizes saved individuals into the spiritual body of Christ. They use for a proof text (1 Cor. 12:13). Then they teach that saved ones should "join the church", be "voted on", if accepted, they must receive "water baptism" to be identified with the literal earthly church.
  - b. Pentecostals often differ on the "baptismal formula" said over the one being baptized. Some argue hard and long for "Jesus only", while others argue just as firmly for the "Father, Son and Holy Ghost" formula. Jesus never commanded us what to say, but He told us what to do (Mat. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38). When we do what Jesus said, we will baptize "in His name" or "by His authority" (Cf: Acts 4:7; Col. 3:17).
  - c. Some "church of God" groups teach that one must receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and "speak in tongues" before one can be eternally saved. No one today can duplicate the ability to speak in a language (tongue) without previous training in that language. The use of the miraculous gift to "speak in tongues" was for the profit of "unbelievers" (Cf: I Cor. 14:22). The ability to speak languages miraculously began with the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:4-11). These were known languages (tongues, dialects), and were not the "gibberish" that is known neither to God, men, nor angels. If the Pentecostals have the ability to duplicate the "tongues" of the church in the first century, why then do they send their missionaries to foreign language classes, or else use an interpreter when speaking to foreigners? Pentecostals use "tongues" as a sure evidence that one

has received the “baptism of the Holy Ghost.” They teach it is a sign for the “believer”, while the New Testament shows it was a sign for “unbelievers.” The sign/gift of tongues ceased when the “perfect” (complete) revelation of the New Testament was completed (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Jude 3; Jam. 1:25). We can only drift into confusion and frustration when we try to claim for ourselves things promised to inspired men in the first century church.

### III. CONCLUSION.

1. Many honest truth seekers are still in the spiritual confusion caused by religious error.
2. Many members of the Lord’s church today have studied themselves out of denominations. Others were led out by faithful gospel preachers who had the courage to “...earnestly contend for the faith...” (Jude 3), by debating with false teachers.
3. Some have the idea that it is “unloving” to point out religious error. I am so thankful that true Christians loved my soul enough to point out my errors, and to “...speak the truth in love...” to me. That they did not let my ugly and abrasive attitude discourage them from praying for, and teaching me the truth.
4. I traveled far and wide quoting: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). All the while, I was in bondage to a false religion, and to Satan, who promotes religious division and doctrinal error. It was not until I obeyed from the heart the truth that I was set free (Cf: Rom. 6:17-18).

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Charles Huff preaches for the Pleasant View Church of Christ  
153 Glendale Road  
Limestone, TN 37681  
423-257-3914  
email: [ccahuff735@cs.com](mailto:ccahuff735@cs.com)



# SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

*Jim Dearman*

## I. Introduction.

1. “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:1-3 NKJV).
2. In Romans 10:1-3, Paul refers to his Jewish brethren in the flesh who possessed a great zeal for God. He bears witness to their fervor but laments their lack of faith. Biblical faith comes from hearing the Word of God, and these people, though zealous for their religion, did not base their belief upon the knowledge of God’s Word. They had ignored the righteousness of God and initiated, in its place, a system that could not make men righteous. Why? It had its foundation in the former dispensation and in the traditions and teachings of men rather than in the revealed truth of the New Testament.
3. This tragic situation in which the Jews found themselves is descriptive of the denominational division of our time. There are hundreds of religious groups claiming to worship and serve one God while teaching diverse doctrines. Their zeal and sincerity cannot be challenged, but their teaching must be challenged and countered by all who know and love the truth.
4. The sincerity of those who espouse the Seventh Day Adventists doctrine is not being scrutinized in this discussion. Their zeal is a matter of record and cannot be denied.
5. However, as Paul expressed in the passage already cited, zeal without knowledge will not suffice. “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). God is concerned with sincerity of spirit, but He also insists upon compliance with His commands regarding worship and service. Jesus further declared: “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). The truth frees while error enslaves, and no amount of zeal can cancel the consequences of being in bondage to the false doctrines of men.
6. What will zeal without knowledge cause people to do? In the case of the early Adventists, it caused them to follow a fellow zealot named William Miller, who predicted specific dates for the Lord’s return. Miller’s followers sold their possessions, donned their robes of white, and moved to higher ground to await the

return of the Savior. The Lord did not return the first time, as Miller had predicted. Further failure forced a deeply disappointed Miller to virtually disappear into obscurity until his death in 1849.

7. However, that would not end the Adventist movement. It would take on new life through the leadership of Ellen G. White, who, along with her husband, James, had been avid advocates of Miller's teaching since 1842. While other Adventists groups were formed after "The Great Disappointment," as the miscalculation of 1844 was called, the Seventh Day Adventists became the most prominent of the Adventist groups.

## II. Discussion.

### A. Historical Background.

1. HOW DID ELLEN G. WHITE BECOME SO PROMINENT IN THIS MOVEMENT?
  - a. At the age of nine, Ellen G. White was struck in the nose by a stone thrown by a playmate and nearly died as a result. From that time on, she suffered hallucinations and hysteria. At the age of seventeen, during one of these periods of extreme illness when it was thought she might not live, she claimed to have her first vision. D. M. Canright quotes Mrs. White's own recollections in his book renouncing Seventh Day Adventism. Canright firmly asserts that it was in a physical condition Mrs. White herself described as "very poor" that she "listened to the startling announcement that Christ was coming in 1843" (D. M. Canright, *Seventh Day Adventism Renounced*, Tenth Edition, Fleming H. Revell Company, p. 154). Her perceptions of hell at this time was so vivid and frightening that she would perspire. This hysteria about hell no doubt led to the view she later espoused that there is no eternal punishment for the wicked.
  - b. Concerning the source of Mrs. White's so-called visions, D. M. Canright concludes: "Dreadful sick, almost dead, then a vision—this is the story, times without number, from her own pen. That tells the story. The vision is the result of her physical weakness" (Canright, p. 155).
  - c. Canright also includes the testimony of three physicians who concurred with his conclusions about the source of Ellen White's alleged visions. One of them, W. J. Fairfield, himself a Seventh Day

Adventist, wrote to Mr. Canright, saying: “You are undoubtedly right in ascribing Mrs. E. G. White’s so-called visions to disease. It has been my opportunity to observe her case a good deal, covering quite a period of years, which, with a full knowledge of her history from the beginning, gave me no chance to doubt her (‘divine’) attacks to be simply hysterical trances” (Canright, p. 157).

- d. Another of the medical experts, Dr. William Russell, also a Seventh Day Adventist, concluded “... Mrs. White’s visions were the result of a diseased organization or condition of the brain or nervous system” (Canright, pp. 157-158). These were doctors who had personally examined Ellen G. White.
- e. Mrs. White claimed to have the first of hundreds of visions in 1844. She claimed the inspiration of God was responsible for them, and her followers accepted her claims for inspiration. However, it was well documented that her husband James, a young Millerite preacher whom she married in 1846, edited and revised her so-called visions, Mrs. White being a woman with limited formal education. D. M. Canright said: “I have repeatedly seen her sit with pen in hand and read her manuscript to her husband for hours, while he suggested many changes, which she made. She would scratch out her own words and put in his, sometimes whole sentences. Was he inspired, too?” (Canright, pp. 138-139). Had her visions and revelations truly been from God, no such editing and revision would have been necessary.
- f. The most influential of her alleged visions occurred in 1847, when Ellen White claimed she was transported to heaven. There she claims she was escorted into the holy place into the presence of Christ who opened the Ark of the Covenant for her. Inside, she claimed she saw the golden pot of manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of stone that folded together like a book. According to Mrs. White, Jesus unfolded the book and revealed the Ten Commandments. Around the fourth commandment, “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy,” was what she described as a “halo of glory.” Of course, based on this imaginary journey, she concluded the Sabbath had not been abolished by the cross.
- g. This is the basis for the Seventh Day Adventists belief that the Sabbath should be observed today. As David Amos writes: “She did not go to the Scriptures to learn that all today are to keep the fourth

commandment, but rather she relied on a so-called 'vision' to form her belief, after which she and her followers have turned to the wresting of the Scriptures in a failed attempt to support that hallucinatory trip to heaven!" Amos adds: "This is the total basis for Seventh Day Adventism. All of their theories and doctrines hang upon a sick woman's alleged dreams and unproven claims that stand in direct opposition to the inspired Word of God." (David Amos, "Seventh Day Adventism in Light of the Bible," in *World Religions in the Light of the Bible*, Duluth Church of Christ Lectureship, May 18-22, 2002, Duluth, Georgia, p. 182).

- h. It was not until 1860 that the Millerite movement, under the new leadership of its self-proclaimed prophetess, took the name "Seventh Day Adventists." Three years later, in 1863, following a general conference at Battle Creek, Michigan, the denomination was officially organized (Rod Rutherford, *Denominational Doctrines*, p. 59).

B. While some truths are held by this religious group, such as a belief in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible, they teach serious error on a number of subjects, including the Sabbath. In this study, we will concentrate on the Adventists error on this subject, since it is the prominent principle in their religion. If the Adventists argument for Sabbath keeping crumbles when contrasted with the Scriptures, the claim for inspiration by Ellen White collapses, as does the entire system of Seventh Day Adventism.

1. Of course, the claim of inspiration by Ellen G. White is clearly countered by New Testament passages such as 2 Tim. 3:16,17. There Paul assured us: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
2. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul also refuted the possibility of additional revelation beyond the revealed gospel of Christ. There he wrote: "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9).

3. If some Adventists should argue that Ellen G. White was merely an inspired interpreter of the Word, that claim also contradicts what Paul wrote to the Ephesians in the third chapter of that epistle: “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)” (Eph. 3:1-4). Later, in the same letter, Paul admonished: “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17).
  4. We conclude, therefore, from a truly inspired writer, that one may understand the Will of God by reading the New Testament, which is the final revelation of God to man. Ellen G. White’s claims for inspiration could not have been valid. Now we shall see that the inspired writers of the New Testament not only deny her claim for inspiration, but they also refute all her false teachings, including her claim that the Sabbath is still in force today.
- C. Concerning the Old Covenant, Paul wrote: “Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (Col. 2:14-17).
1. This is a powerful passage that any objective reader can understand. Paul teaches that the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross, and that those who serve God under the New Covenant, the Law of Christ, should allow no one to bind the ordinances of the former covenant on them. Specifically included in those things not to be bound today are “sabbaths.” Would this not mean the weekly seventh day observance? Of course it would.
  2. In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul contrasts the Law of Moses with the New Covenant, the Law of Christ. In verse 3, he reminds the Christians at Corinth: “Clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.” Paul calls the Old Law the “ministry of death,” pointing out that it was “written and engraved on stones.” This obviously includes the Ten Commandments.

3. Paul refers to the Law of Christ, the gospel, as the “ministry of the Spirit.” He also calls the gospel “the ministry of righteousness,” and contrasts it with “the ministry of condemnation” (verse 9). Again, the contrast is between the gospel and the Old Law. Then, in verse 11, Paul concludes: “For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.” Could there be any doubt that the Ten Commandments were under consideration here?
4. The Seventh Day Adventists not only doubt it—they deny it! They seek to avoid the horns of a great dilemma by claiming God gave two laws at Mount Sinai, the moral law (the Ten Commandments), called “the Law of God”, and the ceremonial law, called “the Law of Moses.” Therefore, they contend that any verses in the New Testament that teach the Old Law has been abolished refer only to the ceremonial law, and not to the moral law, the Ten Commandments. We shall now see that the Bible makes no such distinction between the Law of God and the Law of Moses. They are simply synonymous expressions for the same law.
5. Nehemiah 8:1-2 reads: “Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month.”
6. Notice that the expressions “the Book of the Law of Moses” and “the Law” are used interchangeably in these verses. Then, in verse 5, it is called “the book.” In verse 7 its is again called “the Law.” Then, in verse 8, it is called “the Law of God.” Further, in verses 13 and 14, the expression “the Law” is again used. Finally, in verse 18, we find: “Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.” Here the “Law of God” is used again.
7. All of these designations refer to one law, the Old Covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai. This one law is called both “the Law of Moses” and “the Law of God” in the same passage. There is no distinction between the moral and the ceremonial laws.
8. A passage in the New Testament also demonstrates this lack of distinction vividly. Luke 2:22,23 reads: “Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to

present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord)." Notice the interchangeable use of "law of Moses" in verse 22 with "the law of the Lord" in verse 23. What was written in "the law of the Lord" was that "every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord."

9. Now the Adventists claim the law of the Lord, or the law of God, is the Ten Commandments. However, here the "law of the Lord" clearly included something more than the Ten Commandments!
  10. In Nehemiah 9:13,14, we have a statement that shows the sabbath was included in this law that was called "the book of the Law of Moses," "the Law of God," and simply "the Law." The passage reads: "You came down also on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments. You made known to them your holy Sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, by the hand of Moses Your servant." There is another statement in this passage that contradicts one of the contentions of the Adventists.
  11. The Seventh Day Adventists contend that the Sabbath was instituted by God at the end of creation. However, this passage in Nehemiah denies it. "You came down also on Mount Sinai" verse 13 declares. Then, verse 14 makes clear that it was at that time that God "made known to them Your holy Sabbath." The children of Israel could not have kept the Sabbath before they knew about it! And they didn't know about it until Sinai!
  12. In reviewing the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5:2,3, Moses said to Israel: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive." Moses clearly affirms that the covenant that included the Sabbath commandment was made with Israel at Horeb (Sinai), and not with their ancestors.
- D. What then is the meaning of Genesis 2:2,3?
1. Those verses read: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." The answer is simple. Moses wrote these words in retrospect, long after the Sabbath commandment as part of the entire Law had been given at Sinai. Moses, in Genesis 2:2,3, does not say when God sanctified and blessed the Sabbath

day. We learn from passages like Nehemiah 9:13,14 that God did not make it known to Israel until much later. The first mention of it to the Israelites is in Exodus 16:23, where Moses told them: "...This is what the Lord has said: Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning."

2. So it was not until Sinai that the Sabbath was revealed and included in the Law that God gave only to Israel. Deuteronomy 5:15 tells the reason God gave the Sabbath to Israel: "And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day."
3. Further explanation for the giving of the Sabbath is found in Exodus 31:13-17. The last two verses of that text read: "Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."
4. God revealed that the Sabbath was a sign between Him and Israel, one nation. Foy E. Wallace, Jr. wrote: "I submit to you that if all nations were ever commanded to keep the sabbath—how could it have been a sign between God and one nation? It would have been a thing in general and not a thing in particular. It stood between God and Israel only. It stood in commemoration of Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, her emancipation from the serfdom and servitude of another nation" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *God's Prophetic Word*, Foy E. Wallace Jr. Publications, Fort Worth, Texas, Revised Edition, 1960, p. 326). This is a pertinent and powerful point about the limited nature and duration of the Sabbath.
5. However, someone may wonder how the Sabbath could be limited in duration when words like "perpetual," "everlasting," and "forever," are used in reference to it. These words are qualified by phrases such as "throughout their generations" in Exo. 31:16, and the expression "between Me and the children of Israel" in Exo. 31:17. In other words, the Sabbath was binding as long as God maintained His covenant with Israel made at Mount Sinai. Similar words are spoken about the Passover observance in Exo. 12:17: "So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance."



6. The prophets made it clear in their writings that the Sabbath, and the Law of which it was part, were to end. Jeremiah prophesied in Jer. 31:31-34: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”
7. In Hebrews 8:1-13, the inspired writer applies this prophecy to the two covenants. The New Covenant is contrasted to the Old Law given at Sinai, which included the Ten Commandments. The writer declares: “In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away” (Heb. 8:13). As a law, the Old Covenant was nailed to the cross, and as a civil system Judaism vanished away at the destruction of Jerusalem.
8. We now look at one final New Testament passage, Romans 7:1-7: “Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another--to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, You shall not covet.”
9. Paul argues that the Christian is freed, or delivered from the law. What law is it? It is the law that said, “You shall not covet.” That is the law from which

the Christian is delivered. He is no longer under that law. Where do we find the prohibition “You shall not covet?” It is the Ten Commandments. Therefore, we are delivered, or freed, from the Ten Commandments. Nothing can be said to counter the inspired apostle’s argument. The Ten Commandments have been nailed to the cross. The Law of Christ has been instituted, and by that law we must live. By that law all those in this final dispensation will be judged.

10. The Law of Christ establishes the first day of the week as the day upon which Christians are to meet to worship. Passages such as 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, and Acts 20:7 clearly show the first day of the week to be the Lord’s day. It was on the first day of the week that the Lord came forth from the tomb. It was on the first day of the week that the church of Christ was established (Acts 2). The Scriptures and secular history testify to the fact that the early Christians met on the first day of the week to engage in singing, prayers, giving, preaching, and the Lord’s Supper.
11. When Paul and his company came to Troas, as recorded in Acts 20:6,7, they waited seven days in order to worship on the first day of the week with the Christians in that location. The passage reveals: “But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”
12. Both the Scriptures and secular history tell us the early Christians met on the first day of the week. The Adventists claim the Pope of Rome changed the appointed day of worship from Saturday to Sunday, but the history of the early church proves otherwise. David Amos points out that the Roman Catholic officials deny this charge as well. Amos writes concerning the Catholic position on the matter: “Their teaching is that they worship on Sunday because of apostolic tradition as set forth in the Bible! Again the Adventists have wrested, not only the Scripture, but also even selected documents of the Roman Catholic Church” (Amos, p. 188).
  - a. To illustrate how far some will go in the wresting, or twisting of the Scriptures, to support their error, we notice a parable of Jesus in Luke 15:8,9. The verses read: “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!”

- b. An Adventist gave some material on this parable and other Scriptures to a member of the congregation where this writer preaches. The Adventist application of Luke 15:8, 9 represented the woman as the church, the ten silver coins as the Ten Commandments, and the lost coin as the Sabbath commandment. The material stated: “The sabbath was changed and lost by the early church. It has been rediscovered again and is being proclaimed again worldwide.”
- c. This parable has absolutely nothing to do with the Sabbath. It is one of three parables Jesus gave to teach the importance of reaching lost souls, not the lost Sabbath day commandment! In fact, all one has to do is read Luke 15:1-3 to see what prompted the parables and to know the purpose of them: “Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So He spoke this parable to them, saying.”
- d. Following this statement the Lord taught parables designed to remind the scribes, Pharisees, and all of us, of the preciousness of a lost soul and of the urgent need of saving souls. It was soul saving, not “Sabbath saving” that the Lord taught in this text. To apply any of this teaching to the Sabbath commandment, as this Adventist material did, is to plainly pervert the Lord’s teaching and to ignore inspiration’s explanation of why He taught these parables in Luke 15.
- e. At the outset of this study, it was established that zeal without knowledge is not sufficient to save. We do not doubt the zeal and sincerity of those who espouse Seventh Day Adventist doctrine. However, it is Adventist doctrine, rather than Bible doctrine, that has filled them with zeal. As Paul wrote concerning Israel: “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:2-3).

### **III. Conclusion.**

- 1. We plead with Adventists and all others in the institutions of men to lay aside their man-made traditions and teachings and to unite upon the Lord’s teachings, as He commands us to do.

2. The Lord said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted" (Mat. 15:13). Claiming to follow Christ while teaching doctrines contrary to His Word, regardless of one's sincerity and zeal, cannot save.
3. Jesus made this clear when He said: "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Mat. 7:21).

Jim Dearman preaches for the church of Christ in Greeneville, TN.  
401 Oak Hills Parkway  
Greeneville, TN 37743  
423-639-8215  
email: [jdearman@xtn.net](mailto:jdearman@xtn.net)

# JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

*Jonnie Hutchison*

## **I. Introduction.**

1. In this study it will be our aim to compare the teachings of that group of people known as the Jehovah's Witnesses with what the Bible teaches.
2. I have had the opportunity to study with several Jehovah's Witnesses down through the years.
3. In every case they have knocked at my door with pleasant smiles and a friendly demeanor with evident concern for my spiritual welfare.
4. They have set forth their teachings with apparent sincerity, zeal and much enthusiasm.
5. A couple of years ago I had the opportunity to engage in several sessions of study with the same Jehovah's Witness.
6. He and I studied their doctrine in depth and compared it with what the Bible teaches.
7. This man was as steadfast in his convictions as I was in mine.
8. During that study, I learned some things that I had not previously know about the Jehovah's Witnesses and I hope to impart some of what I learned in this study.
9. The Bible teaches the necessity of testing teachers who claim to be speaking for God – 1 John 4:1.
  - a. The reason for that testing is because "many false prophets are gone out into the world."
  - b. The standard of testing is the one divine standard which is the Word of God.
  - c. The Bereans tested the teaching of the apostles by "searching the scriptures daily whether these things were so" Acts 17:11.
  - d. This is what we must do to teachers who claim to be speaking for God today.

10. Let me begin our study of the Jehovah's Witnesses by examining:

## II. Discussion.

### A. SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THEIR RELIGION.

1. First, consider their zeal in teaching.
  - a. Jehovah's Witnesses are known for their door to door efforts to teach their doctrine to as many as will listen.
  - b. Probably all of us have had visits from Jehovah's Witnesses.
  - c. What you may not know is that Jehovah's Witnesses come to your door because of requirements from the Watchtower Society (the governing body of the JW's), that each JW spend at least five hours a week at assemblies and several hours a week knocking doors.
  - d. In addition, they must keep a record of the hours they spend and submit them to the elders of the local assembly hall at designated intervals.
  - e. In the year 2000, the Watch Tower Society claimed a world-wide membership of over six million people in 235 countries, speaking 340 different languages, taking in some 300,000 new members each year. They engage in 4.8 million Bible studies a year with 1.2 billion hours of witnessing. They have over 500,000 full and part-time missionaries.
  - f. In the year 2000, just in the United States alone, it was reported that 988,000 Jehovah's witnesses spent more than 181 million hours in field service (ie. Door to door witnessing and Bible studies).
  - g. Yet, their willingness to spend the time and expend the necessary effort in teaching their doctrine is why the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to have success in converting people to their particular doctrines.
  - h. Many of us could learn a lesson from this example of zeal in teaching.
  - i. If we have the truth shouldn't we be doing all that we can to see that truth is presented to others?

- j. If we know the way of salvation should we not desire that every other person know it too?
  - k. God does not specify a certain number of hours that he requires of us to spend in knocking doors or in teaching the gospel to others but He shouldn't have too if we are truly converted.
  - l. We should want to share the message of salvation with others.
  - m. And if we do we will spend the time and expend the effort to teach others the truth.
  - n. We have our marching orders from Jesus – Mark 16:15-16.
2. Second, there is the obvious sincerity and genuine conviction that they are right.
- a. Often members of the churches of Christ are accused of believing that they are the only ones going to heaven.
  - b. We understand that the Bible teaches that all the saved are added by the Lord to His church – Acts 2:47.
  - c. That Jesus is the Saviour of His spiritual body, the church – Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23.
  - d. The Jehovah's Witnesses also believe something similar about themselves, except they believe that only Jehovah's Witnesses will inherit and live forever upon the earth with the exception of a 144,000 who will live in heaven.
  - e. They are as sincere in believing this doctrine as we are in believing one must be a member of the Lord's church to be saved.
  - f. Of course it is not sincerity or believing something to be true that determines if it is truth – John 17:17. The standard of truth is what the Bible teaches – Rom. 3:4.
  - g. We respect those who will stand by their convictions but unless those convictions are truly founded in the Word of God conviction becomes self-deception.

- h. We are saddened at the lack of sincerity and conviction among some in the church of the Lord. It must be the case that one be sincere and truly convicted of the truth if he would please the Lord – Jos. 24:14; Phi. 1:10; 1 Cor. 5:8.
- 3. While we respect the zeal, sincerity, and conviction of the Jehovah's Witnesses, we are convinced not all of their doctrines are taught in the Bible.

## B. THE DOCTRINAL ERRORS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.

- 1. The name "JEHOVAH'S WITNESS."
  - a. Not called by this name until October 9, 1931 at the Annual Convention in Columbus, Ohio.
  - b. Before that date they were known as Russelites, then called Millennial Dawn, and then the International Bible Students Association.
  - c. The founder of the present day group, known as Jehovah's Witnesses, was Charles Taze Russell, who in 1878, broke with the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.
  - d. One JW publication states that "witnesses have been on earth as an organization for 5,000 years." (Mede, p. 118). Obviously not true – their own traceable history proves otherwise.
  - e. Jehovah's Witness try to prove their name to be scriptural with an appeal to the Old Testament – Isa. 43:10-12.
  - f. Note, the passage says, "Ye are my witnesses" not, "Ye shall be my witnesses."
  - g. These words addressed to Israel, God's chosen people in the Old Testament – (see verse one).
  - h. There is nothing that warrants the conclusion that because God said to Israel "Ye are my witnesses," that followers of God today should adopt "Jehovah's Witness" as an official name.



- i. Jehovah's Witnesses try to prove their name to be scriptural with an appeal to the New Testament – Acts 1:8.
  - 1) These words were addressed specifically to the chosen apostles of Jesus – (See Acts 1:2-8).
  - 2) The apostles were to be witnesses of whom? “Ye shall be witnesses of me” (Christ).
  - 3) If these verses constitute authority to assume a name by which to designate a religious group, shouldn't the name be “Christ's Witness” rather than Jehovah's Witness?
  
- j. The emphasis in the New Testament is on the name of Christ.
  - 1) John 1:11-12; 3:18; 20:30-31; Acts 4:12; 8:12; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 5:20; Phi. 2:9-11; Col. 3:17; 2 The. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:14.
  - 2) In the New Testament followers of Christ are called:
    - a) Disciples – Acts 6:1; 9:1; 14:22.
    - b) Members – Rom. 12:5.
    - c) Saints – Phl. 1:1.
    - d) Christians – Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16. We honor Christ by wearing His name.
  - 3) Where in the New Testament is a Christian ever called a “Jehovah's Witness?” Where is the Bible authority?
  
- k. In addition the Jehovah's Witness as an organization refer to themselves as “The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.”
  
- l. In the New Testament the church is called:
  - 1) “the church” – Acts 2:47; 5:10.
  - 2) “the church of God” – Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:1.

- 3) “the churches of Christ” – Rom. 16:16.
- 4) “the body of Christ” – Col. 1:18.
- 5) “the church of the first born” – Heb. 12:23.
- m. One may search his Bible through, and he will not find the “Watchtower Bible and Tract Society” even one time.
- n. Obviously, that organization known as Jehovah’s Witness is not the church we read about in our New Testaments.

### C. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES.

- 1. The New Testament contains the divine pattern for the organization of the church which Jesus built.
  - a. Any religious organization that differs from that which is revealed in the New Testament cannot possibly be the New Testament church.
  - b. The pattern for the organization of the church is not in the New Testament by accident nor is it something that is optional depending upon ones personal preferences and desires – Heb. 8:5.
- 2. How are the Jehovah’s Witnesses organized?
  - a. First, a centralized earthly headquarters in the form of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society located in Brooklyn, NY. All publishing and distribution of Jehovah’s Witness material originates from this location including the monthly “WatchTower.”
  - b. Second, the “WatchTower Bible and Tract Society” consists of a president, and a group of men called the “Faithful and Discreet Slave Class.”
    - 1) The “Faithful and Discreet Slave Class” consists of teachers and administrators, whom the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe have been specially anointed by Christ to reveal God’s will.
    - 2) They base this “Faithful and Discreet Slave Class” upon the teaching of Mat. 24:45-47. NWT “Who really is the faithful and

discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time! Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to YOU, He will appoint him over all his belonging.”

- a) The WatchTower for July 15, 1960 claims, “The ‘slave’ class has served as God’s sole collective channel for the flow of Biblical truth to men on earth.”
  - b) The “Faithful and Discreet Slave Class” according to JW teaching, have been appointed to feed the Jehovah’s Witnesses their spiritual food.
  - c) As a matter of fact the “domestics” (or JW rank and file) are required to eat whatever the “Faithful and Discreet Slave Class” feeds them without question – they believe that no one can really understand the teaching of the Bible apart from the teaching of this special slave class.
- 3) Mat. 24:45-47 is not teaching that there should exist “a faithful and discreet slave class” apart from other faithful servants, but is contrasting the faithful servant with the evil servant – vrs. 48. The faithful and wise servant will be blessed at the Lord’s coming while the evil servant will be punished.
- c. Third, there is a local organization in the WatchTower Bible and Tract Society.
- 1) It consists of “Kingdom Halls” which are built as the number of converts increase in a community or local area.
  - 2) The Kingdom Hall consists of Jehovah’s Witnesses called publishers (“Jehovah’s Witnesses are actively involved in a world-wide teaching campaign about God’s Kingdom. We call ourselves ‘publishers.’”).
  - 3) Those who are actively engaged in full time volunteer work are called Pioneers. Other members are known as Servants, and there are men appointed as Elders.

3. Contrast the Jehovah's Witness organization with the New Testament Pattern.
  - a. Christ is the head of His church – Eph. 1:22-23.
  - b. Authority given to the apostles to bind and loose what had already been bound and loosed in heaven – Mat. 16:18-19.
    - 1) Church to keep the apostles doctrine – Acts 2:42.
    - 2) Apostle's doctrine revealed in the New Testament of Jesus Christ.
    - 3) No additional revelation needed after completion of written New Testament. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Gal. 1:6-9.
  - c. No organization larger than the local church – No centralized earthly headquarters.
  - d. In New Testament each congregation consisted of (Phi. 1:1).
    - 1) Elders – Acts 14:23.
    - 2) Deacons – 1 Tim. 3:8, 12.
    - 3) Saints or members – Eph. 5:29-30. Also called Christians – Acts 11:26.

#### WHAT THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TEACH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ was the first created being brought into existence by Jehovah.

- a. In the Jehovah's Witness book, Let God Be True, we find these words, "Happily in the New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures (published in 1950) renders John 1:1, 2: 'Originally the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. This one was originally with God.' Thus the Word of Logos came into existence long before one of God's other creatures made a devil out of himself ....
- b. This statement teaches that Jesus Christ the Son of God came into existence rather than always having existed.

- c. Again in the Jehovah's Witness publications *The Truth Shall Make You Free*, page 47 and *The Kingdom Is At Hand*, pages 46-49, the authors write in reference to Jesus Christ that he was "A mighty god, but not the Almighty God who is Jehovah ... in other words, he was the first and direct creation of Jehovah God ... he was the start of God's creative work."
  - d. And finally, from the official website of the Jehovah's Witnesses on the internet we find this statement, "Thus, Jesus had an existence in heaven before coming to the earth. But was it as one of the persons in an almighty, eternal triune Godhead? No, for the Bible plainly states that in his prehuman existence, Jesus was a created spirit being, just as the angels were spirit beings created by God. Neither the angels nor Jesus had existed before their creation."
  - e. What we find in these quotes from the Jehovah's Witnesses is their belief that Jesus Christ, rather than possessing all the divine attributes of Jehovah, including being eternal, was rather the first spirit being brought into existence by the creative act of God.
  - f. As a matter of fact, in the publication, *Aid to Bible Understanding*, page 920, they claim that "Jehovah God caused an ovum or egg in Mary's womb to become fertile, accomplishing this by the transfer of the life of his first son [identified as Michael the Archangel - JH] from the spirit realm to the earth."
2. What scriptural proof do the Jehovah's Witnesses give for teaching that Jesus is a created being?
- a. There are actually two major passages to which the Jehovah's Witnesses go to try to justify their teaching that Jesus was created by Jehovah.
    - 1) Col. 1:15. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the phrase "firstborn of every creature" refers to the creation of Jesus Christ.
    - 2) Rev. 3:14. The Jehovah's Witnesses tell us that the phrase "beginning of the creation of God" refers again to Jesus as the first created being.
  - b. Is that what these verses are teaching?
    - 1) If so, then did Jesus create himself?

- 2) If Jesus is the “firstborn of all creation,” and that means that God created Him first, then what is the meaning of John 1:3 which says of Jesus, “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.”
- c. Again in the context of Col. 1, we find a similar statement made in verse 16 about Jesus, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principles, or powers; all things were created by him and for him.”
- 1) Since Jesus made all things that have been made, and by him were all things created, then he could not have been created without his own involvement – but how can a non-existent being participate in his own creation?
  - 2) You see, to interpret Col. 1:15 to mean that Christ is the first created being, contradicts these passages which clearly teach that Christ was involved in every part and parcel of creation.
  - 3) Since he could not participate in his own creation, then it follows that he existed before anything was created and could not possibly have been the first created spiritual being.
- d. Actually the context of Col. 1 explains the meaning of the “the firstborn of all creation.”
- 1) After teaching in verse 16 that by Jesus were all things created, verse 17 tells us “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”
  - 2) You see, Jesus occupies a position of supremacy, of superiority over all of creation, since it was He who created all things- that’s the significance of the word “firstborn” in verse 15.
  - 3) Vine says concerning the Greek word that is translated firstborn, “in His relationship to the Father, expressing His priority to, and pre-eminence over, creation, not in the sense of being the first to be born.”
  - 4) And since Jesus occupies a position of superiority over all of creation because He brought it into existence, verse 18 tells us, “And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from

the dead.” Here again is emphasized the supremacy, the headship of Christ over His church.

- e. But what about the phrase in Rev. 3:14, that Jesus is the “beginning of the creation of God?”
  - 1) Vine says the Greek word translated “beginning” in this verse, carries the idea of “a beginning, the origin, the active cause, whether a person or a thing.” Thayer says, “that by which anything begins to be, the origin, active cause.”
  - 2) It would be consistent with what the rest of the Bible teaches concerning the active role of Christ in the creation to understand this passage to mean that Jesus Christ is the active cause or the origin of God’s creation.
  - 3) The NWT translates this passage, “the beginning of the creation by God.” The use of the word “by” implies their doctrine, that this phrase means that Jesus was the first to be created by God.
  - 4) However, I checked eight other translations, and none of them used the phrase “creation by God,” but all used the phrase “of God.” This shows the obvious bias of the NWT. It was written for one purpose and that is because the Jehovah’s Witnesses could not find their doctrine in the available reliable translations of the Bible.
- 3. Jehovah’s Witness teaching that Jesus is a created being is false because:
  - a. Jesus has all the divine characteristics and nature of God the Father. Phi. 2:5-8. When the Bible speaks of Jesus as being in the “form of God,” and being “equal with God,” what does it mean? Does it simply mean that both God and Christ are spirit beings? Is this what makes Jesus equal to God? If so, then every angel would also be equal with God for they too are spirit beings – and what about man, is he not made in the “image of God,” – does that mean that man is the “form of God”?
  - b. No, much more is involved than that – the phrase the “form of God” means that Jesus possesses all the essential qualities, characteristics, and attributes of Deity. The whole point of the inspired writers comments in Phi. 2:5-8 is to show the willingness of Jesus to make the great sacrifice he did and what he gave up when he became a servant and took upon himself the form of

man. Although JC has always existed with the Father and thus, had no beginning, when he left heaven, he came to this earth in the form of man to be born in the flesh, to live and to die in the flesh.

- c. The Hebrew writer affirms that Jesus is the perfect mediator between God and man because he has experienced himself what man experiences upon this earth. The question remains, how could Jesus be the perfect sacrifice for sin and the perfect mediator between God and man if He is merely a created being?
4. Isa. 43:10-11. Notice the phrase “before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.” JW’s affirm that Jesus was created “a god,” but Isaiah declares that not only was God not formed – he had no beginning, but has always existed – but no other God would be formed or brought into existence either. Talk about a devastating blow to the JW’s doctrine of the creation of Christ as “a god” – this is it! This is undeniable proof that Jesus Christ is eternal.

#### E. WHAT THE JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES TEACH ABOUT HELL.

- 1. J.W. Rutherford wrote, “Hell is not a place, but a condition. Those who go into the grave are not conscious there; but they have gone into the death condition. Their bodies decay and return to the dust....The doctrine of eternal torment is a wicked defamation of Jehovah. It is a foul stain upon his lovable name.”
  - a. Jehovah’s witnesses say, “In all places where hell is translated from the Greek word Gehenna (geena) it means everlasting destruction ... It is a picture or a symbol of complete annihilation, and not of eternal torment.”
  - b. They contend that when something is destroyed or annihilated that it ceases to exist – c.f. Mat. 10:28 – Jesus said that both body and soul are destroyed in hell – JW’s contend this is complete annihilation in the grave.
- 2. W. E. Vine says of the word translated “destroy” in Mat. 10:28, that it refers, “...not to extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well being.”
  - a. Jesus spoke of a “lost” sheep in Luke 15:4 – Same word translated “destroy” in Mat. 10:28. Yet, the lost sheep was not annihilated for it was “found.”
  - b. Destruction does not always mean annihilation in the Bible. C.f. Jer. 17:18. “Destroy them with double destruction.” How is it possible to annihilate twice?



3. The Bible teaches the existence of eternal punishment in hell.
  - a. Mat. 25:46 – words “everlasting” and “eternal” same Greek word. The punishment to last as long as the life.
  - b. Rev. 20:10. Devil to be cast in the lake of fire and brimstone and tormented day and night “forever.” C.f. with Mat. 25:41.
  - c. Mark 9:42-48. Hell described as a “fire that shall never be quenched.” Hell is something into which one may go. That means it is a real place and the eternal destiny of the wicked. Psa. 9:17.
  
4. What about Ecc. 9:5? “Death is a state of non-existence.” NWT substitute’s word “conscious” for “know”.
  - a. Keep passage in its context. Where is it that the dead know not anything? Under the sun.
  - b. The dead do not know what is taking place in this life for they have passed from this life – they have no more any portion in that which is done under the sun.
  - c. Yet, the dead are conscious of their existence after death – Luke 16:20-28; Mat. 17:3.

E. WHAT JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES TEACH ABOUT THE SOUL.

1. “There is no indication in these passages that the soul is some shadowy entity that lives on after death.... So the word ‘soul’ as used in the Bible refers to a person or an animal, or to the life that a person or an animal enjoys.”
2. Sometimes the word soul is used in reference to the whole person yet some passages make a distinction between the soul and the body of man.
  - a. Job 34:14, “his spirit and his breath.”
  - b. 1 Cor. 6:19-20, “in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
  - c. Mat. 10:28, “destroy both soul and body in hell.”

- d. Luke 24:39, a spirit does not have flesh and bones.
- e. 1 Pet. 3:4, the spirit is the hidden man of the heart.
- f. 2 Cor. 4:16, there is an outward man which perishes and an inner man which does not. What is it?

F. JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TEACH THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST HAS ONLY A LITERAL 144,000 MEMBERS WHO WILL ENTER HEAVEN.

1. This is the heavenly class – the rest of the redeemed will live on the earth forever. – Rev. 7:1-6; 14:1-10. Where does the Bible make such a distinction between a heavenly class and the rest of the redeemed – Cf. Mat. 25:31-32; 2 Cor. 5:10.
2. If the figure of 144,000 is taken literally then so should the rest of the chapter. That being the case:
  - a. No married person could be included in the 144,000, “for they are virgins” (Rev. 14:4).
  - b. No women could be included in the 144,000 for they are identified as males (Rev. 14:4).
  - c. No Gentile could go to heaven (only those of the children of Israel were sealed).
3. The Bible teaches that the earth will literally melt with fervent heat and the very elements or building blocks that make up matter will be dissolved at the second coming of Christ – 2 Pet. 3:10-12. It's amazing that the JW's want to make 2 Pet. 3:10-12 figurative, but the 144,000 in Rev. 7 and 14 literal. The 144,000 in the book of Revelation is simply a figurative reference representing all the saved.

G. WHAT JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TEACH ABOUT SALVATION.

1. “If you want to be protected during the coming judgment, you must exercise faith in Jesus. You must become his disciple and submit to him as king. With this protection, you have the hope of life forever in paradise. Jehovah wants you to have it, but you must work to prove your faith. (Jam. 2:20, 26) Once you have made your commitment, meet with the presiding overseer of the local Jehovah's Witness congregation. He can tell you how to properly worship Jehovah. Then you can be baptized. You must follow the example of Jesus in baptism and obedience. (Mat.

3:13-17; 1 Pet. 2:21; 3:27) Staying close to God's organization can give you the loving support and encouragement you will need. (I The. 5:11) We are members of the only visible organization Jehovah has on earth. You must also take in knowledge of God. A greatly neglected fact by virtually all churches is that we are to honor His name. (Mat. 6:9) God's name is Jehovah. Like Jesus and his early followers, you must proclaim God's kingdom. (Mat. 4:17) This includes standing up to persecution. (Acts 5:41) When people slam doors in our faces, it validates our ministry and proves their condemnation. We still follow the pattern of the early disciples, going "from house to house" with the good news of the kingdom. Remember, only one family survived the flood. Only one ark was an ark of safety. Only one organization, God's visible organization, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, will survive the great tribulation. You must be part of the organization bearing witness to Jehovah in order to receive His blessing. The choice is yours. Chose wisely."

2. What the Bible teaches.
  - a. Hear the gospel and believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God – Mark 16:15-16.
  - b. Confess faith in Christ – Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37.
  - c. Repent of sins and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins – Acts 2:38.
3. Jehovah's Witnesses teach ones hope is earthly – the Bible teaches that genuine hope will be realized in heaven – Col. 1:5.
4. Jehovah's Witnesses reject the purpose and place of baptism and ignore and demean the shed blood of Jesus Christ – The Bible teaches we are saved at the point of baptism in contacting the death and thus the blood of Christ – Rom. 6:3-5; Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16.

### III. CONCLUSION.

1. Friends we do not question either the sincerity or the zeal of any Jehovah's Witness.
  - a. Yet, it is obvious from our study that there are many problems that exist with their doctrine.

- b. I wish it were not necessary to expose religious error and that everyone would embrace the truth as it is revealed in the Bible.
  - c. However, the worth of the soul and the importance of salvation and love for the lost make it necessary to expose religious error for what it is.
2. Jehovah's Witnesses are forbidden to read and study material of other religious groups.
- a. That is the means by which the cultic leadership of this group keeps precious souls in the dark.
  - b. Rather than being the source of "new light" they have turned their eyes and ears from divine truth to embrace the darkness of human religious error.

Jonnie Hutchison preaches for the church of Christ in Taylorsville, NC  
208 Liledoun Rd. SW  
Taylorsville, NC 28681  
828-632-2998  
email: w4aw@charter.net

# The Community Church

1. The biggest "church" in the U.S. is in IL, the Willow Creek Community church (17,000 members).
  - a. Acceptance regardless of beliefs as long as you love Jesus. ("Doctrine really doesn't matter here.") It is the inevitable outcome of the "New hermeneutic" and the "Unity-in-diversity" movement.
  - b. Don't have to believe in the virgin birth, inspiration, heaven or hell, baptism, even God! (even have Sat. and Sunday worship).
  - c. Numbers are kept high by big facilities, entertaining worship, social club type fellowship.
  - d. It's target audience are the baby boomers who are upper middle class and have families
  - e. It brings the "Madison Avenue marketing approach" to the worship service for the purpose of meeting "felt needs."
2. Because of their success there is now a growing trend in the U.S. toward "community churches" and the "Willow Creek model." (Although the handbook for this model is **The Purpose Driven Church** by Rick Warren. This book is to the Community Church Movement what **The Master Plan of Evangelism** was to the Crossroads movement.)
  - a. The Handbook of Denominations In the United States says there are now 250,000 in 400 churches (Sadly some former churches of Christ are in that number).
  - b. Each church is adjusted to the "felt needs" of a different community so there is much variety among Community Churches. It is impossible to discuss a conclusive listing of its faith and practices.
3. The justification behind it all is that people are tired of religious division and want unity.
  - a. The Bible certainly teaches religious division is wrong (Jn. 17:20-21; I Cor. 1:10-15)
  - b. Since these divisions are caused by different doctrines, it would seem to be a logical solution to do away with the doctrine altogether or minimize them into insignificance.
4. But is this the answer? "Are doctrines really necessary?"
  - a. They only divide us why not do away with them.
  - b. The problem of division is very real, but this solution is not the answer.

## I. **There is no possibility of getting along without doctrine in the religious world, for whatever men believe is their doctrine.**

- A. This is even true in the non-religious realm, for example;
  1. In the economic realm, I believe in the free enterprise system. This is a doctrine I hold to be true and right.
  2. In the political realm, I believe that the democratic system as practiced in The US is the finest form of government yet devised. This too, is a doctrine.
  3. In the realm of ethics, I believe that honesty, integrity, truthfulness and fair play are the fundamental principles that all men should accept and practice. (In other words, whatever men believe becomes their doctrine.)
- B. In the same way, in the religious world, there is no possibility of carry on the Christian religion without doctrines. It is just a question of which doctrines.
  1. For example, these community churches advertise the fact that they have no doctrinal requirements, but they do have a very obvious doctrine.
    - a. Their doctrine is that doctrines are not important.

- b. They believe this and they fervently and aggressively teach it.
  - c. The opposite doctrine is that doctrines are important. But both are doctrines.
2. Since it is not possible to live one's life without certain beliefs or doctrines; since it is impossible for a church to exist without doctrine; it is imperative that we have the right doctrine (Having the wrong doctrine can cost you your soul!)

## II. Does the Bible say doctrines are necessary?

- A. I Tim. 1: 3, 10
- B. I Tim. 4:13, 16
- C. II Tim. 4:2-4
- D. Tit. 2:1
- E. Rev. 2:14-16

## III. The first century church debated which doctrines were right and necessary.

- A. Within a few short years after the church began there came a crucial debate to whether or not certain requirements of the Old Testament Law of Moses should be bound on Christians.
  - 1. Judaizing teachers vs. Paul and others (Col. 2:14).
  - 2. Acts 15 discusses this debate and how it was decided we are no longer under the law.
  - 3. The books of Hebrews and Galatians continued the fight against this false doctrine (Gal. 5:4).
- B. Next arose the problem of Gnosticism.
  - 1. A blending of Greek and pagan philosophies with Christianity.
  - 2. Taught salvation came from special, secret knowledge.
  - 3. Man and his world are evil and God is good, therefore Jesus was not a man or else He was not God. Not possible to be both.
  - 4. John 1:1-3, 14; I John 1:1-3 (John evidently thought doctrine was important.)
- C. The bigger lesson here is that truth cannot fellowship error.
  - 1. There can be no spiritual fellowship between New Testament Christians and individuals or groups that
    - a. Teach any anything other than the pure gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - b. Worship in any manner than that authorized in The New Testament.
    - c. Organize themselves differently from the pattern found in Scripture.
  - 2. The effort of the community church to bring about a state of unity apart from a mutual submission to the one faith of the gospel by all who are involved is doomed to failure in the eyes of Almighty God regardless of how many members they have or how fast the congregation grows.

**IV. The basis for unity then is finding out what God's doctrine is and then following it.**

- A. II Jn. 9
  - B. Gal. 1:8-9
  - C. Jude 3
  - D. II Tim. 3:16-17
  - E. The inspired New Testament is man's tool for measuring every religious doctrine.
    - 1. We don't have to guess. We simply have to ask, "What does the Bible say?"
    - 2. We only need to follow those doctrines that are of God.
    - 3. The Bible tells man how to:
      - a. Be saved.
      - b. Worship.
      - c. Organized the church leadership.
      - d. Decide all matter pertaining to faith and practice.
1. In the final analysis, Community churches such as Willow Creek and other churches of like disposition, the deciding factor is not what does God says, but what will work to bring in the most people.
- a. Bible study is shallow, superficial, and overshadowed by show and spectacle.
  - b. Feel good replaces the do good, and tolerance is emphasized to the point they will tolerate everything but the intolerant.
  - c. The church belongs to Christ not the community!
  - d. The church answers to Christ not the community!
  - e. The church is here to convert the community not please it!
  - f. The Community Church Movement is another example of a religion that attempts to appeal to the selfishness of the "me generation."
2. But to be the church God wants we must exalt the inspired word of God.
- a. It is God's statement of His will for men.
  - b. We must return to the Bible, speaking where the scriptures speak and being silent where they are silent.
  - c. The Bible alone is God's authoritative statement of His will and it alone will guide us into the right beliefs and doctrine.
3. We will continue to grow when we let people know we love Christ. We will continue to grow when we want others to love Christ.
- a. But if we love Christ we will love His doctrines.
  - b. Jn. 14:15

# THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*Clifford Newell, Jr.*

## **I. Introduction.**

1. It is an honor, indeed, to be associated with the West Jefferson Church of Christ and its lectureship program.
2. This theme: Is the church of your choice the right choice, is a needed discussion concerning the truth about religious churches.
3. It is our task this hour to examine the "Christian Church" in view of the Sacred Scriptures.
4. By the term "Christian Church" We mean that they are a full fledged denomination and this will be seen because of those with whom they fellowship.
5. Let us observe the following:

## **II. Discussion.**

### **A. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST WAS ESTABLISHED.**

1. The Lord's church was built by Christ and purchased with His own blood, (Mat. 16:18 and Acts 20:28).
2. It was established in Jerusalem with Christ as its foundation (Isa. 2:2-3).
3. There were certain divinely appointed names by which it and its members were known, (Rom. 16:16 and Acts 11:26).
4. The church was governed wholly by divine authority, (Eph. 1:22-23).
5. The church had a specific form of government, (Acts 20:28).
6. The church had a definite conditions of membership, (Mat. 28:18-



20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47).

7. The church had a specific pattern for worship, (John 4:24).
8. The church received those added by the Lord, (Acts 2:38, 47).
9. The church's only rule of faith and practice was the Scriptures, (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
10. The church was united, (Acts 2:38-47; Eph. 4:1-6).

#### B. THE CHURCH BEGAN TO FALL AWAY.

1. The prediction that such would happen.
  - a. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30).
  - b. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
  - c. 2 The. 2:1-12.
2. There was a change in the church government, (Acts 20:28).
3. There was a change in the name by which the church was known. According to McClintock and Strong, "a human name for the church was introduced, and the way was paved for the use of other human names" (McClintock and Strong, Vol. II, p. 389).

4. There was a change in the subject of baptism, in that infants were baptized as well as believers. However, the Scriptures teach, (Mark 16:15-16).
5. There was a change in the way one was baptized, i.e., sprinkling and pouring were substituted for immersion (Rom. 6:1-4).
6. There was a change made with the introduction of human creeds (John 6:63).
7. There was a change made in the worship with the addition of mechanical instruments of music (Eph. 5:18-19 and Col. 3:16).

#### C. THE RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.

1. The restoration came about because it sought to restore, not just reform.
2. It came about because it was an undenominational movement.
3. It came about as a New Testament movement.
4. It came about as a doctrinal movement.
5. AND THEN, SOMETHING HAPPENED!
6. An attitude developed toward the Scriptures which caused the development of "The Missionary Society," introduction of "The Mechanical Instrument Of Music," and "Unity Efforts."

#### D. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

1. According to Dr. Bill Humble, "the United States Census Bureau in 1906 listed the Christian Church and the Churches of Christ separately in its census reports" (The Story of the Restoration, p. 63).
2. The case is that for three decades the controversies grew between these two groups.

3. And after the Christian church was established on its own, it divided with a very liberal element know as “The Disciples of Christ.”
4. Because of these developments, and others, the Christian church and the Disciples of Christ have become full fledged denominations!
  - a. Ray Downen of Joplin, MO, wrote, “We have in our midst today a vigorous group who are of the opinion that the brotherhood only includes those who exactly agree with their inferences and practices. One able advocate of this position is Thomas B. Warren, who claims that those who share his views are ‘the only Christians’” (Spiritual Sword, April, 1985, p. 15).
  - b. Fred Blakeley wrote a review of Warren’s book, CHRISTIANS ONLY—THE ONLY CHRISTIANS. He said, it is “A Church of Christ Manifesto” (Spiritual Sword, April, 1985, p. 15).

#### E. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

1. The matter of authority in regards to the Bible is certainly lacking.
  - a. The Christian Church teaches that the Bible only authorizes by imperative statements or commands.
  - b. The Bible teaches (Col. 3:17), by direct statements (Acts 2:38), example (Acts 20:7), and by implication (Acts 8:35-36).
2. Authority and the role of women in the church.
  - a. The Christian Church has women teaching men, women aides or societies, women leading singing, and women serving as deacons (Interview with Mack A. Bennett).
  - b. The Bible teaches that women are not to usurp authority over the man (1 Tim. 2:12) whether by teaching, leading singing, or serving as deacons!

3. Authority and Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage.
  - a. “Is it not possible that one, recognizing the sins of his divorce, repenting, asking forgiveness of God and His people, as well as of those whom he has injured can become a ‘one-woman-man’”? (Clinton R. Gill, Christian Standard, Oct. 16, 1988, p. 11).
  - b. The Bible teaches, “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Mat. 19:9).
4. Authority and the oneness of the church.
  - a. The Christian Church has let down her standard and now accepts anyone, as long as he is a believer in Christ, into their fellowship. Come to us and be Christians only, for, after all, we are the only Christians! That is arrogant, wrong, and sectarian. This statement was made by Rubel Shelly in Centerville, TN and has been used by the Christian Church as the truth! Fred Blakeley wrote, “Christians Only—The Only Christians is a book containing “A Church of Christ Manifesto” (Spiritual Sword, Vol. 16, No. 3, April 1985, p. 15).
  - b. However, the Bible teaches, The Bible only makes Christians only and the only Christians. Obedience to the Bible makes nothing but Christians. And there is no way to become a Christian except by believing and obeying the Bible (Rom. 1:14-17).
5. Authority and partaking the Lord’s Supper other than on the Lord’s Day.
  - a. The Christian Church has no objection to and has participated in taking the Lord’s Supper at weddings, on Good Friday, Christmas Candle Light Service, and some have takec it on Saturday night (Interview with Mack A. Bennett).

- b. According to the Scriptures, the Lord's Supper is part of worship and is authorized to be eaten on the Lord's Day. "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" (Acts 20:7).
6. Authority and the organization of the church.
- a. The Christian Church has advocated for some time that women can do virtually anything that a man can do in worship. This is advocated both in Blakeley's paper, "The Banner Of Truth" and by Ray Downen, a Christian Church preacher. Both of these characters deny that Colossians 3:17 speaks to the point of Biblical authority. Downen says, Paul is not speaking of authority relative to what we say or do as demanded in Colossians 3:17.
  - b. They operate like a corporate Chairman of the board (Darryl K. Harrison).
  - c. The Christian Church in Hopwood, VA has a woman elder serving that congregation (Wesley Simons and Bill Haywood visited with her).
  - d. The Scriptures authorize the church of Christ to be organized as follows: Christ is the Head, Elders are the overseers of the body. The elders can and often do enlist the help of special servants (deacons) and (ministers) to aid them in this task. And in every case those to whom they receive help is from men who function in some capacity. Consider, 1 Tim. 3:1; Tit. 2:11-15.
7. Authority and mechanical instruments of music.
- a. Time would fail to describe the changes that have taken place within the Christian Church regarding mechanical instruments of music.
  - b. Ira M. Boswell believed that the mechanical instrument was

inherent in the word sing [psallo]. Therefore, he could worship with or without its use.

- c. Don DeWelt believed, that the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God is a matter of option—not a matter of obligation.
- d. Given O. Blakely believes that you do not have to have authority for what you practice in worship.
- e. However, the Bible teaches, that there is absolutely NO AUTHORITY for mechanical instruments of music in worship! (Eph. 5:18-19 and Col. 3:16).

8. Authority and membership within the Christian Church.

- a. Errett Gates called the Christian Church a denomination, (Errett Gates, *The Story of Churches*, p. 321-322).
- b. This is an undeniable fact; due to the embrace of denominations who have been accepted by the Christian Church.
- c. The Scriptures teach, that those who were obeying the gospel were added by the Lord to the church (Acts 2:47).

### III. Conclusion.

- 1. Friends, we have sought to demonstrate that serious error is always changing to keep up with the times.
- 2. Certainly, that is true with the Christian Church and how they have wavered through the years regarding various positions.
- 3. However, if one will return to understand and accept Bible authority for what is to be done, both in practice and living, denominationalism will cease.
- 4. May God richly bless us as we earnestly contend for THE FAITH!

Clifford Newell, Jr. preaches for the East Bristol Church of Christ in Bristol, VA.  
25 Risto Road  
Bristol, VA 24201  
(276) 466-0950  
cdnewell@earthlink.net

# PRIMITIVE BAPTIST

*Wesley Simons*

## I. Introduction.

1. We have fought many hard battles with the Primitive Baptist.
2. They claim to be the only true Baptist.
3. They wrote a tract answering me and my comments on Arise To Truth on how one gets into Christ. I have been one of their targets.
4. We will take a fair look at what the Primitive Baptist teach and believe.

## II. Discussion.

### A. THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ENDORSE ALL FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM.

1. "Total Depravity of Natural Man - All men are sinners by nature and are dead to spiritual things while in their natural state.  
Bible Answer: What about baby Jesus? Mat. 18:1-3.
2. Personal and Unconditional Election - All who are to possess spiritual life were individually chosen by God to receive such life; moreover, this choice was not based upon any merit seen or foreseen in the elected; rather, this election was motivated by the sovereign love of God.  
Bible Answer: Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
3. Special Atonement - The saving benefits of Christ's death were intended for the elect only; furthermore, His redemptive work was alone sufficient to secure their salvation.  
Bible Answer: Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.
4. Irresistible Grace - All of the elect will be quickened by the Spirit of God at some point in their natural lives.  
Bible Answer: Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to



you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

5. Preservation of the Saints - The blood of Christ is sufficient both to procure and secure salvation of all for whom it was shed. Therefore, all of the elect will finally be saved."<sup>1</sup>

Bible Answer: Gal. 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

## B. HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH.

1. "There is no such thing as a 'denomination' known as The Primitive Baptist Church. This term is often used in the generic to speak of all 'Primitive Baptist Churches' -- just as the term 'The American Housewife' is used to speak of all 'wives'. Primitive Baptists have no headquarters, and their only Head is Jesus Christ who reigns in his kingdom on his throne of Glory. Primitive Baptists have always existed on the face of this earth, under one name or another, since Jesus Christ called out the FIRST BAPTIST church on the banks of the river Jordan. For he said, 'Upon this rock (i.e. Himself) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' The term 'Old Line' is synonymous with many other names such as 'Old School', 'Old Path' or 'Hard Shell', which were adopted by Primitive Baptists when they separated themselves from the Arminian Baptists in 1832. The Arminian Baptists who followed after the man-made innovations of Andrew Fuller and William Carey became known as the 'New School' or Missionary Baptists. (See Resolution: The Black Rock Address - Old Line Primitive Baptist Answers)."<sup>2</sup>
2. The aforementioned history is false. There is not one Baptist church mentioned in the new testament. Furthermore, Jesus did not establish His church on the banks of the Jordan River.
3. Their claim to be the New Testament church is false.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Old Line Messenger.*

<sup>2</sup> Elder Bob Allgood, In: *The Old Line Primitive Baptist.*

4. Their View On Instrumental Music.

a. Musical Instruments.

“Our worship service is patterned after the New Testament example and authority and consists of congregational singing, prayer and preaching. Musical instruments are not used in our worship services as there is no New Testament command or example for them. We believe in singing and making melody in our heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).”<sup>3</sup>

b. Many of their songs are Bible verses.

5. Their view on premillennialism.

a. They are opposed to the literal 1000 year reign on earth by Jesus upon the literal throne of David.

b. They claim the highest authority for such is the Scofield Bible notes.

c. They are right on this point.

d. Mark 9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. Col. 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

C. Questions And Answers From The Primitive Baptist.

1. “What is the basic difference between Primitive Baptists and other religious societies?

Answer: The basic difference is that Primitive Baptists believe in salvation by grace. There are really only two positions that a person can occupy on this matter. One is that salvation is by grace, and the other is that salvation is by works. It cannot be a combination of the two. A person may say that he as repentance, faith, baptism, or hearing the gospel, as a condition for obtaining it, then this position must be put on the works side. Primitive Baptists believe that salvation is of the Lord, that it is by His grace, and that

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<sup>3</sup> Elder Bob Allgood, In: *The Old Line Church*.

nothing needs to be added to it.” (All questions and answers in this section come from the same source. See footnote).<sup>4</sup>

Bible Answer: John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2. “What is their position on predestination?”

Answer: They believe that God has predestinated a great number to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8: 28-30) .While some object to this doctrine because they say it is unfair, Primitive Baptists rejoice in it, for they see that had it not been for predestination, the whole human family would have been lost forever. Predestination is not the thing that condemns a man, or puts him in a ruined condition, but the very thing that gets him out of such a state. Predestination concerns not "what" but "whom." It is the great purpose of God to lift a people up from sin and corruption and make them like Jesus Christ. That's glorious!”

Bible Answer: Heb. 5:8-9 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; [9] And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

3. “Did not Jesus die for the whole human race?”

Answer: No, the Scriptures will not support that idea. Jesus said He came into the world to do the will of His Father, and that will was that He should save all who were given Him (the elect) even before the world began (John 6: 37-39). Jesus came to save HIS PEOPLE from their sins, and He did it (Mat. 1: 21; Rom. 8: 33, 34). He died for His sheep, not for goats (John 10: 15). He died for sons, for the sanctified, for the brethren, for the church, and for the children (Heb. 2: 9-15). He saw the travail of His soul and was satisfied (Isa. 53: 10-12).”

Bible Answer: Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

4. “Do Primitive Baptists deny that Christ died for the world ?”

Answer: No, they believe that the world for which He died was the world of His elect. The world of souls for which He died do not have their trespasses imputed to them and therefore cannot be condemned (2 Cor. 5: 18-19).”

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<sup>4</sup> What Do Primitive Baptist Believe, In: *The Old Line Messenger*.

Bible Answer: John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

5. “Do you not then teach that some might want salvation but could not have it because they are not one of the elect?”

Answer: No, the man who wants salvation already HAS it. The man who hungers and thirsts (desires it) after righteousness is a blessed character (Mat. 5: 2-6). The alien sinner doesn't want salvation, he doesn't fear God, and he doesn't love God; therefore we conclude that the man who wants salvation, fears God and loves God is a subject of grace (Rom. 3: 11, 18; 1 John 4: 10).”

Bible Answer: Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

6. “Why then do you preach, if you are already sure that all of the elect are going to be saved in Heaven?”

Answer: For the comfort and instruction of the Lord's people (Isa. 40: 1-2, 9; Eph. 4: 11-16).”

Bible Answer: Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, 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 shall be damned.

7. “Don't you believe that the preaching of the gospel is God's ordained means of bringing eternal salvation to the sinner?”

Answer: No, only by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit can eternal life be brought to the dead sinner (John 3 : 6-8) .The gospel brings life and immortality to light, but doesn't produce life (2 Tim. 1: 10).”

Bible Answer: Acts 11:14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

8. “How then do you explain I Cor. 1 :21 and passages like it?”

Answer: The text says, "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." Please notice, that the one saved by the gospel is a believer, one who believes in God, one who has already been born again ; he is not an alien sinner.”

Bible Answer: Acts 16:30-31 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

9. "Why is it that Primitive Baptists do not send out missionaries?"

Answer: First, they believe that since preaching is not designed to make people ready for a home in Heaven, it is not necessary to send men across the seas in order to save souls."

Bible Answer: 1 Peter 1:22-23 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

10. "Is it true that Primitive Baptists wash feet?"

Answer: Yes, Jesus said we ought to wash each other's feet, and Primitive Baptists do so. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well ; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John 3: 13-14)."

Bible Answer: They wash clean feet. Jesus washed dirty feet. No new testament church washed feet as an act of worship. It was never an act of worship, but it was an act of service.

11. "Do Primitive Baptists actually believe they are the only ones going to Heaven?"

Answer: Absolutely not; in fact they allow for a larger number being in Heaven than most religious societies. Ideas like this have been started by the enemies of the church and not by her friends. Jesus is the firstborn among MANY brethren. There will be a people in Heaven out of every nation on earth (Rev. 5: 9-12). No one will be there because of what he believed, but many will be there in spite of it. One's doctrinal views or church affiliation has nothing to do with his destiny."

Bible Answer: Rev. 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

12. "Can you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you are saved?"

Answer: In response to this question we would ask another; does any man have access to the Lamb's Book of Life? Of course there is but one answer. No man knows the names which are recorded there, so we must say with Paul, "In hope of eternal life" (Tit. 1: 2) .We are confident that the God Who cannot lie is going to save those He loved before the world began, and we have the sweet hope of being in the number. When Jesus said one of His

disciples would deny Him and was a devil from the beginning, they all asked, "Lord, is it I?" We must acknowledge that if some can be deceived, thinking they are a child of God but are not, we could be in that number. A humble expression of hope in the mercy of God is far more befitting the little child of grace than a presumptuous boast that he knows he is secure."

Bible Answer: 1 John 2:3-4 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

13. "Why do you not preach that God loves everybody?  
Answer: Because the Scriptures do not teach it. God loves His people but does not love every man in Adam's family (Rom. 9: 11-13)."  
Bible Answer: John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
14. "Since you believe that your destiny is in the hands of God and that you can do nothing about it, does this not cause you a great deal of anxiety?  
Answer: No, there is far greater peace and comfort in knowing that our case is in the Lord's hands than in thinking it is in our own (Tit. 3: 5-7)."  
Bible Answer: Acts 2:40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
15. "For what purpose were the Scriptures written?  
Answer: The Scriptures are written that the child of God 'may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' The Scriptures do not bring eternal salvation but are able to make us 'wise unto it' (2 Tim. 3: 15-17)."  
Bible Answer: Jam. 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.
16. "Do you call upon men to repent and believe?  
Answer: Yes, the burdened sinner ought to repent and believe the truth. The one who thus repents, believes, and is baptized is going to be saved from the distress he feels and from much error and confusion (Mark 16: 16). The salvation involved here is not that which takes a man to Heaven, but that which saves his life here in the world (Acts 2: 40)."  
Bible Answer: Luke 13:3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
17. "Do Primitive Baptists preach infants in Hell ?

Answer: No, the doctrine preached by Primitive Baptists is the only message which leaves any hope for infants, the feeble-minded, and the heathen, most religious groups preach that one must hear and understand the gospel, actively obey the gospel, and manifestly believe on Christ, in order to become a child of God. But the great message of grace which is so firmly believed and preached by Old Baptists, declares that one may be a recipient of the mercy of God without hearing the report of it through the gospel and even without fully understanding what has taken place in his heart. If infants, the feeble minded, and the heathen must hear the gospel preached by man and actively repent and believe the truth, then there is no hope for them. But since salvation is by the sovereign grace of God through the work of His Son, we know that He will save His own regardless of their circumstances in life (Rom. 8 :34-39; Rom. 11:28; 2 Tim. 2 :13, 16-19)."

Bible Answer: We do not teach that infants and those who are mentally retarded must obey the gospel. They are safe. They have never been lost. However, I have gotten those in this camp to admit that it is a possibility that some infants will be lost. Some teach that there will be babies in hell not a span long. There is a time where babies do not know the difference between right and wrong: Isaiah 7:14-16, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

18. "Do we practice close communion?"

What is Close Communion? It is the partaking of the communion service, as instituted by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with only baptized believers who have been baptized by ministers of the same faith and order. The Primitive Baptist practice close communion and adhere to the words of Paul who said "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."<sup>5</sup>

Bible Answer: Do they practice close giving? Do they practice close singing? According to them this would yoke one with unbelievers. The Bible does not teach close communion. After all, they cannot tell you who are among the elect. Therefore, they really could not practice true close communion. What a hopeless dilemma!

### III. Conclusion.

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<sup>5</sup> Elder Brian Moore, In : *The Old Line Messenger*.

1. As we search for the true church, the Primitive Baptist can be eliminated because it does not have the identifying qualifications.
2. Read the Bible to find the true new testament church.
3. All responsible people who have lived in the Christian age and have not obeyed the gospel and been added to the church are people who are lost.
4. All people in man-made churches are lost.
5. All responsible people today are either in the world or in the church.
6. May God help us to be just Christians, members of the church about which we can read in the Bible.

Wesley Simons preaches for the Stoney Creek Church of Christ, Elizabethton, TN  
2338 Highway 91  
Elizabethton, TN  
423 474-2248  
hwsimons@preferred.com



# THE SOUTHERN AND MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

*David Irick*

## I. Introduction.

1. It is not the intention of the West Jefferson Church of Christ, or this author, to misrepresent the religious groups under consideration. It is our desire to deal fairly with what they believe, gathering information from reputable sources. However a word of caution must be made on this subject. Southern Baptist churches are autonomous (self ruled or governed). While influencing and being influenced by national, state and local associations and conventions, they are not bound by or ruled by them. Therefore it is possible for one to be a member of a Southern Baptist church and not believe some particular doctrine that is supported by the main stream Southern Baptist church. Too, please be aware of the vast division among Baptists. Therefore it is important to keep in mind the things stated apply to the Southern Baptist Church and for the most part the similar Missionary Baptist Church and not necessarily to Freewill, Primitive or other Baptist Churches.
2. Please realize that I have no personal animosity toward any Baptist. Many wonderful people who are genuine in their religious efforts to serve Christ make up the Southern and Missionary Baptist church. Therefore nothing stated in opposition to some doctrine is born out of malice or ill will, but out of love for the Master and the love of the souls of men whom I believe to be in danger.
3. The differences in doctrine between the Baptist church and Church of Christ cannot be ignored. We cannot simply 'agree to disagree' about doctrinal differences and accept each other in fellowship! While there are many points of agreement between us, the points of disagreement on such vital issues as the scheme of redemption, worship, organization of the church, and so forth, leave no room for fellowship. If the Baptist positions we will examine are correct then the Church of Christ is wrong and must change in order to be right with God. Logic demands us conclude the same if the Baptist church is wrong.
4. Can unity be achieved? Yes! But only when we remove emotions and selfish interests and proceed with the desire of honestly knowing the truth through diligent, rational, study of God's Holy Word. "...Speak Lord for thy servant heareth..." (1 Sam. 3:9).

## II. Discussion.

- A. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH.

1. The 'Baptist' Church Began Somewhere Around 1607-1609 AD.
  - a. "The earliest Baptist churches (1609-1612), although comprised of English speaking congregates, flourished in Holland, where religious toleration was much greater than in England. Among their leaders were John Smyth, who led the first congregation of 36 men and women, and Thomas Helwys, who returned to England in 1612 to establish the first Baptist church in England."<sup>1</sup>
  - b. "The first known Baptist church was organized in 1607 by John Symth in London"<sup>2</sup>

B. The Southern Baptist Church Is Dated From 1845.

1. "The issue of slavery reached a peak in 1845 when the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society determined that it could not appoint any candidate for service who held slaves and when the American Baptist Home Mission Society decided separate northern and southern conventions were necessary. The Southern Baptist Convention was formed in response."<sup>3</sup>
2. "Since its organization in 1845 in Augusta, Georgia, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has grown to 15.9 million members who worship in more than 41,500 churches in the United States. Southern Baptists sponsor about 5,000 home missionaries serving the United States, Canada, Guam and the Caribbean, as well as sponsoring more than 5,000 foreign missionaries in 153 nations of the world."<sup>4</sup>
3. Why Begin 'Another' Church Without Authority From King Jesus?
  - a. Mat. 16:18 (Jesus established his church).
  - b. Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 1:18 (The church is the same as his body).
  - c. Eph. 4:4, I Cor. 12:27 (By whose authority do we call ourselves something other than what Jesus' church was called in the Bible? Where did Jesus give the authority to divide his body?)

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<sup>1</sup> New Winchester Missionary Baptist Church Web site ([nwmbc@vl.net](mailto:nwmbc@vl.net))

<sup>2</sup> David Benedict, History of Baptists, pg.304

<sup>3</sup> New Winchester Missionary Baptist Church Web site ([nwmbc@vl.net](mailto:nwmbc@vl.net))

<sup>4</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church ([sbc.net](http://sbc.net))

- d. Matt. 15:13 (Did Jesus plant the Southern or Missionary Baptist Church or did man?)
- e. Where in the Bible do we read of the Baptist Church? Were Peter, Paul, James or John members of the Baptist Church? Must one be a member of the Baptist Church to go to heaven? If you answer 'no', then will you not agree that the Baptist Church is something other than Christ's church and not essential?

C. DOCTRINES AND VIEWS OF THE SOUTHERN AND MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH.

- 1. They View The Scriptures To Be Divinely Inspired And Our Sole Source Of Authority In Religion.
  - a. "The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation."<sup>5</sup> (Emphasis mine DAI)
  - b. This is a most noble view of the Scriptures! It is this view that should lead us to unity. No member of the Baptist Church who believes this about the Scriptures should shy away from 'proving all things' they believe with the Bible. Holding this view will necessitate abandoning any view without authority and adding any doctrine when authority is found. If those of the church of Christ hold this view and the Baptist hold this view it will lead to profitable study! Will you study with us? (II Tim. 3:16-17, 1 The. 5:21, Acts 17:11-12)
  - c. Consider authority for 1). Mechanical instruments of music in worship, 2) The Baptist Church, 3). Giving men the title 'Reverend', 4). The sinners prayer, 5). Taking the Lord's Supper quarterly, monthly, etc. 6). Teaching that baptism is not essential to man's salvation. etc.

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<sup>5</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church (sbc.net)

2. The Structure Of The Southern Baptist Church.
  - a. National Convention (made up of messengers from congregations), state and local associations and then local congregations.
  - b. The Southern Baptist Convention does not ordain ministers, assign staff to churches, levy contributions to denominational causes, dictate literature and calendar, or assign persons to churches according to place of residence. These are local church matters.
  - c. "Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."<sup>6</sup>
  - d. Using the N.T. church as our pattern do we see them having conventions and associations on a national, state and local level?
  - e. Do the pastors in the Baptist church meet the qualifications as given in I Tim. 3 and Titus 1? Is there a plurality of pastors in a congregation?
  - f. Again, why does the Baptist church omit the office of elders/bishops (plural) within the local church organization? (Acts 14:23, Phil. 1:1, I Tim. 3:1)
3. The Scheme Of Redemption Taught In The Southern And Missionary Baptist Church.
  - a. Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. <sup>7</sup>.
  - b. We are all sinners who have missed "the mark" and are in need of forgiveness. Read Romans 3:23; 6:23. Even though you are a sinner, God loves you. Read John 3:16; 10:10. God wants to forgive you of your sin. Read Romans 5:8.
  - c. To accept this forgiveness, you must place your faith in God's Son, Jesus, who died for you so that you might have forgiveness. Read John 14:6. Through prayer, you can ask Jesus for forgiveness and invite Him

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<sup>6</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church (sbc.net)

<sup>7</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church (sbc.net)

to live in your life. Read Rom. 10:9-10. If you are not a Christian, why not ask Jesus to come into your life? If you desire to do that right now, pray to Him, asking Him to come into your life and forgive you of your sins. Say something like this: 'God, I know that I am a sinner. I realize that you sent your son, Jesus, to die for my sins. Right now, I ask Jesus to come into my life and forgive me of my sins. With Jesus' help, I want to live for you from this day on. Thank you for sending Jesus to die for me. Amen. If you prayed this prayer, you will want to tell others about this decision you have made. Share it with a Christian friend, your pastor, or others who will want to know and who can help you as you begin to grow as a Christian-what is known as discipleship. Also plan to join a local church and go forward during a church worship service to let people know that you are a Christian.'<sup>8</sup>

- d. We agree with the Baptist Church in emphathizing Jesus, his blood, and the wonderful grace of God in salvation. No one can be saved without this!
- e. Yet, they fail to teach that baptism is for the remission of sins as did Jesus and the disciples. (Mk. 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, 22:16, Rom. 6:3-6, I Pet. 3:21, etc.) This does not mean we are saved by water, nor does it mean we are working our way to heaven. Jesus placed baptism as a requirement in becoming a Christian. We must submit in humble obedience.
- f. Again, where does Jesus and the disciples teach us to say a 'sinner's prayer' for salvation?

D. Southern Baptist's Teach That Once A Person Is Saved He Will Always Be Saved.

"All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church (davidchapel.org)

<sup>9</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church (sbc.net)

- E. They Teach That Baptism Is A Church Ordinance, But Is Not Essential For The Remission Of Sins.
1. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper."<sup>10</sup>
  2. Baptist emphasizes living a pure life, but logic of this doctrine demands them to conclude with the teachings of Mr. Sam Morris, a Baptist Preacher. "We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul. The way a Christian lives, what he say, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul....All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit, from idolatry to murder, will not make his soul in any more danger...The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul."<sup>11</sup>
  3. Dr. Albert Garner, President of the Baptist Seminary at Henderson, Texas and others, endorsed this statement. As Christians, we do have security as believers. (2 Pet. 1:5-11). But the Bible is clear that a person can fall away from God and be lost. (Mat. 26:24; 1 Cor. 5; 9:27; Gal. 5:4; Heb. 3:12, Jam. 5:19-20; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; Mat. 13:1-23, etc.).

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<sup>10</sup> Official Web site of Southern Baptist Church (sbc.net)

<sup>11</sup> Sam Morris (Then Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Stamford, TX)

### III. Conclusion.

1. The Bible is not responsible for leading men to religious confusion. God never demanded unity (1 Cor. 1:10) and then gave us a book that leads one man to become a Baptist and another to be a member of the church of Christ and believe opposite things.
2. In truth, it is ONLY the BIBLE that can lead us to unite in service to King Jesus. Will you not study with us to find and follow the truth of God's Word?

# AN EXAMINATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM

*Don Blackwell*

## I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Frequently you hear the statement, "Attend the church of your choice."
2. You see it on bumper stickers, in newspapers and other places.
3. But any time we talk about something of "my choice," I get into trouble.
4. Pro. 16:25, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."
5. When someone says, "Attend the church of your choice," he implies that there is more than one church to choose from.
6. The Bible clearly says otherwise.
7. Eph. 1:22-23, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
8. Eph. 4:4 says there is "one body."
9. If the body is the church, and there is one body, then there is only one church.
10. Today we want to talk about the question, "Is the church of your choice the right choice?"

## II. Discussion.

### A. THE ORIGIN OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

1. In Acts 2 the Lord established his church.
2. They had all things in common (Acts 2:44).
3. They continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine (Acts 2:42).



4. But as has been the case throughout history, things rarely continue that well for long.
  5. In fact, a few years later the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30).
  6. Peter wrote, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them....And many shall follow their pernicious ways...” (2 Peter 2:1-2).
  7. Paul wrote to Timothy, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving....” (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
  8. Notice particularly the spirit said that some who would depart from the faith would forbid marriage and abstinence from meats.
  9. Both of these facts are relevant to the Roman Catholic Church.
- B. IT WASN'T VERY LONG UNTIL THESE DEPARTURES FROM THE FAITH BEGAN TO TAKE PACE.
1. The first major departure was in how the church was governed.
  2. In the New Testament, Christ is the only head of the church and each congregation is ruled by elders (Also called bishops, pastors, shepherds, and overseers).
  3. No one elder had any special authority over others.
  4. But soon men exalting one elder above other and reserving for him alone the title of bishop.
  5. Soon individual bishops were presiding over several congregations within a district (they call a diocese).

6. Eventually these “bishops” began meeting to discuss problems.
7. This meeting resulted in the formation of human rules to be followed by the churches.
8. By this time men had drastically departed from God’s word.
9. This departure continued until finally in A.D. 606, when Boniface III took on the title of Universal Bishop.
10. Ultimately the title of Pope was used in reference to this exalted Roman Bishop.
11. In 1054 the Roman Catholic Church split over what has been called the Iconclastic Controversy (the use of icons or images in worship).
12. As a result of this split, the Eastern portion of the church came to be known as the Greek Orthodox Church.
13. In the 16th century, the Protestant Reformation resulted in the formation of many new churches, breaking away from the powerful Roman Catholic Church.
14. The Roman Catholic Church holds the distinction of being:
  - a. The oldest denomination in the world.
  - b. The mother of all other denominations.
  - c. The largest denomination in the world.
  - d. The most powerful denomination in the world.
  - e. The most corrupt denomination in the world. (Rutherford)

C. TRUTHS TAUGHT BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

1. Before we begin to discuss the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, it seems good to point out that even though it has many errors, it does teaches some truth.

2. It believes in the one God of heaven and the 3 persons of the Godhead.
3. This can't be said for all religions.
4. Many people believe in multiple gods, gods other than the God of the Bible, or even no God at all.
5. Jesus is the Son of God.
6. Christ is deity.
7. One religious group (Jehovah's Witnesses), denies this basic truth.
8. The Bible is the Word of God.
9. Believe in Resurrection of the dead, and eternal reward and punishment (Heaven & Hell).
10. They uphold family values and support the sanctity of the home.
11. Stand for morality.
12. Oppose abortion.

#### D. ERRORS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

1. Claims to be the one true church of the New Testament.
  - a. Pope Leo X – “Where the necessity of salvation is concerned all the faithful of Christ must be subject to the Roman Pontiff, as we are taught by Holy Scripture, the testimony of the holy fathers, and by that constitution of our predecessor of happy memory, Boniface VIII, which begins Unam Sanctam.” (Pope Leo X, Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517) Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta, Edidit Centro di Documentazione, Istituto per Science Religiose, Herder, Bologna, 1962, no. 40, pp. 619, 620.) (Via: <http://www.bible.ca/catholic.htm>).
  - b. Pope Pius IX - “It must be held by faith that outside the Apostolic Roman Church, no one can be saved; that this is the only ark of salvation; that he who shall not have entered therein will perish in the flood.” (Denzinger1647). (Via:<http://www.bible.ca/catholic.htm>).

2. We ask then, “Is it true that the Catholic Church is the one true church of the Bible?” How do you distinguish if something is genuine? You must determine it’s marks.
3. If I was looking for my car in a parking lot, I would look for it’s distinct characteristics.
  - a. Type of car.
  - b. Color of car.
  - c. License plate.
4. If I were trying to identify genuine currency:
  - a. Color.
  - b. Type of ink.
  - c. Detail.
5. My approach to the church will be similar, because for a church to be the true church of the New Testament it must be identical to the New Testament pattern.
6. The Roman Catholic Church is NOT.
7. Church of the NT was established in Acts 2 (AD 33), while the Catholic Church was established in AD 606.
8. Church of the NT was established in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-2), while the Catholic Church was established in Rome.
9. Immediately we can see that the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of the NT.
10. The Catholic Church believes the Bible to be inadequate.
  - a. The Roman Catholic Church believes the decrees of the Pope and Traditions to have equal authority to the Bible.

- b. James Cardinal Gibbons wrote, “Do not tell me that the Bible is all-sufficient; or if you believe it is self-sufficient, cease your instructions.” (The Faith of Our Fathers, by James Cardinal Gibbons, p. 67) (Willis 353).
  - c. He also stated, “We must therefore conclude that the Scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of the highest importance and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation.” (The Faith of Our Fathers, by James Cardinal Gibbons, p. 73) (Willis 353).
  - d. “Like two sacred rivers flowing from paradise, the Bible and Divine Tradition contain the Word of God...of the two, tradition is to us more clear and safe.” (Catholic Belief, by J. Faa Di Bruno, p. 33) (Rutherford).
11. The Bible however tells us that with the scriptures, we have all that God intended for man.
- a. 2 Tim. 3:16-17, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
  - b. 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3.

E. Holds to doctrines that blatantly contradict the Scriptures.

- 1. Calling priests father.
  - a. This is one of the most amazing and blatant violations of the Holy Scripture committed by any religious group.
  - b. Mat. 23:9, “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”
- 2. Separate priesthood.

- a. The Roman Catholic Church adopted a system similar to that of Judaism in which “priests” were considered to be God’s representatives.
  - b. These priests have the power to pronounce the forgiveness of sin.
  - c. The Bible teaches that all Christians are priests. 1 Pet. 2:5, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”
  - d. There is only one mediator between God and man and that is Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. 2:5, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”
3. Forbidding to marry.
- a. Although marriage is not forbidden to all Catholics, priests and nuns take a vow of celibacy.
  - b. It is interesting that the Bible plainly warns that one of the departures from the faith would involve some who would forbid marriage (I Tim. 4:13).
4. Baptism by sprinkling.
- a. Baptism can be an immersion or sprinkling.
  - b. The Bible clearly says otherwise:
    - 1) Baptize means immerse.
    - 2) Rom. 6:4, “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism...”
    - 3) Acts 8:38 – They went down both into the water.
5. The Pope.
- a. The Catholic church teaches that Peter was the first Pope, and that the church was founded upon Peter.

- b. The Bible, however, says that Christ is the only foundation of the church (I Cor. 3:11).
- c. This Catholic doctrine comes from a false teaching of Mat.16:18 where Jesus said, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
- d. Since Peter means “rock,” some have assumed that the church was built upon Peter.
- e. We’ve already established that Peter can’t be the foundation if Jesus is the foundation.
- f. This false interpretation is exposed when one understands that Peter is “Petros” which is a “small stone,” but “the” rock that the church is built upon is “petra” a ledge of rock.
- g. Rod Rutherford lists the following reasons why Peter could not have been the Pope.
  - 1) He was “an elder” not “the elder” I Pet. 5:1.
  - 2) He refused homage or worship Acts 10:25-26.
  - 3) He was a married man Mat. 8:14, 15; I Cor. 9:5.
  - 4) Christ is the head of the church Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18.
  - 5) There is no historical proof that Peter was ever in Rome.
- h. It is strange, if Peter were in Rome, that Paul did not mention him when writing to the Romans (Rom. 16).
- i. Even if the tradition of Peter’s being in Rome were true, it still does not prove he was pope.
- j. Christ, not Peter, is the rock upon which the church is built. I Cor. 3:11). (Rutherford, Denominational Doctrines, p. 18-19).

- k. It is significant that the name Pope does not even appear in the Bible, and is a doctrine foreign to it.
  - l. The Catholic Church has created this position and has exalted a man to a position reserved only for the Lord.
  - m. The New York Catholic Catechism, under: Pope, says, “The Pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth...by divine right the pope has supreme and full power in faith and morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by one, God himself on earth.” (Website by David J. Riggs, Roman Catholic Faith Examined, <http://www.bible.ca/cath-pope-outrageous-claims.htm>).
  - n. It is shocking that any man would claim for himself this position which God has given only to Christ (Eph. 1:22-23).
6. The worship of Mary.
- a. This is known as “Mariolotry.”
  - b. The Roman Catholic Church refers to Mary as “the mother of God.”
  - c. They believe she is to be worshipped and that she functions in a mediation role between God and man.
  - d. The Book, “Glories of Mary” says:
    - 1) Man cannot be saved without praying to Mary (254, 255, 189).
    - 2) She alone can obtain pardon (51, 71, 83).
  - e. The Bible says there is one mediator (1 Tim. 2:5).
  - f. It is also taught by the Catholic church that Mary was a perpetual virgin.



- g. Mat. 13:55-56 teaches that she had additional children after the birth of Jesus.
  - h. Mat. 1:25; John 7:3-5.
  - i. "Ave Maria ("Hail Mary") is a very important part in the life of a Catholic. In this prayer, she is called Holy Mary, Mother of God. The Bible calls Mary the mother of Jesus, but she did not give Him His Deity. To worship Mary, therefore, as the "Mother of God" is to worship the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:25), (Jones 345).
  - j. Jesus did not elevate Mary over others.
  - k. John 2:3-5; Luke 11:27-28.
6. 7 Sacraments (rites by which one obtains grace). The following is an explanation of what the Catholic Church believes in relation to these sacraments.
- a. Baptism.
    - 1) Catholics teach that sprinkling will suffice.
    - 2) Supposedly takes away Original Sin, plus mortal and venial sins.
    - 3) Teach that it is for babies and a saint's name is given at baptism. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson20.html>)
  - b. Penance.
    - 1) Penance is the Sacrament by which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.
    - 2) The priest, by the power given him, actually takes the sins off your soul (called "absolution"). (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson24.html>)
  - c. Confirmation.
    - 1) Special bestowal of the Holy Spirit.

- 2) Gives you the strength to be a good Catholic.
  - 3) Can get to heaven without Confirmation, but more difficult.
  - 4) Given by a bishop.
  - 5) In the traditional rite, the Bishop, holding his hands over those to be confirmed, prays for them and then makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of each one with the holy oil of Chrism. He then taps each person lightly on the cheek. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson21.html>)
- d. Holy Eucharist.
- 1) The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament in which Jesus Christ is really and physically present under the appearances of bread and wine.
  - 2) The priests change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.
  - 3) Communion is said to be necessary but once a year. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson22.html>)
- e. Extreme Unction (Anointing the Sick).
- 1) Gives health and strength to the soul and sometimes to the body to persons who are in danger of death.
  - 2) After praying over the sick person, the priest anoints (makes the Sign of the Cross with the Holy Oil) on the person's eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands, and feet.
  - 3) Extreme Unction takes away--all your venial sins and your mortal sins if you are unable to confess them but are truly sorry for them.
  - 4) Extreme Unction may be given even after a person is apparently dead. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson27.html>).

- f. Holy Orders.
  - 1) Holy Orders is the Sacrament which gives a man the powers of the Catholic Priesthood.
  - 2) Only a bishop can give the Sacrament of Holy Orders. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson28.html>).
  
- g. Matrimony.
  - 1) Matrimony is the Sacrament made by Jesus Christ to sanctify (make holy) the lawful union of a Christian man and a Christian woman.
  - 2) Only for those who have been baptized and are free to marry.
  - 3) A Catholic who goes through a marriage ceremony before anyone other than a Catholic priest is not married.
  - 4) This Sacrament unites them in an indissoluble (unbreakable) union until death and makes "Sanctifying Grace" grow in their souls
  - 5) It gives them special helps to perform their duties as married people and to overcome the difficulties that may come into their married life. (<http://www.olrl.org/Lessons/Lesson31.html>).
  
- h. The doctrine of Purgatory.
  - 1) The doctrine of purgatory essentially holds that those who are not good enough to go to heaven when they die go to a holding place where they suffer and are purged from their sins.
  - 2) After their purging, they may go to heaven.
  - 3) The Bible nowhere teaches such a doctrine.

- 4) Catholics have taught that indulgences could be purchased to shorten the length of time one would have to spend in Purgatory.
- 5) The Bible teaches that when one dies, his eternal fate is sealed. Luke 16:19-31 (there is a great gulf fixed). Hebrews 9:27.

7. The Catholic Church gave us the Bible.

a. Brother V. E. Howard has penned these great questions for consideration:

- 1) If the Bible is a Catholic book, why does not the name and identity of the Catholic Church appear in the Bible?
- 2) If the Bible is a Catholic book, why is there no mention of the pope, with the honor and reverence given him?
- 3) If the Bible is a Catholic book, why is there no reference to Peter as the Vicar of Christ on earth?
- 4) If the Bible is a Catholic book, why does the Bible not mention praying to Mary? Would a Catholic book have said, "There is one God, one mediator, also between God and Men, the man, Christ Jesus?" The Bible says so (I Tim. 2:5).
- 5) If the Bible is a Catholic book, why did not the Catholic name appear before the Fourth Century, yet the entire Bible was written between 1500 B.C. and 96 A.D.? (Jones 346).

b. The answer is obvious. The Bible is not a Catholic book.

### III. CONCLUSION.

1. To answer our original question, "Is the church of your choice the right choice?"
2. If the church of your choice is the Catholic Church, the answer is "no."
3. The Roman Catholic Church does not match the marks of the Church of the New Testament.

## Endnotes

### Sources:

1. Jule L. Miller and Texas H. Stevens - The History of The Lord's Church, 1969.
2. Website – “Our Lady of the Rosary Library.”  
(<http://www.olrl.org/sacramen/>).
3. Website – “Roman Catholic Faith Examined.”  
(<http://www.bible.ca/catholic.htm>)
4. Rod Rutherford – Denominational Doctrines - Lecture No. 6 – The Roman Catholic Church.
5. Kenneth Willis – 1999 MSOP Lectureship “Catholic Traditions and Pope Authority Error.”
- . Jeremiah Jones – 1999 MSOP Lectureship “Roman Catholic Church Error.”
7. King James Bible.

Don Blackwell now works for “Truth For The World”

# CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

*Jimmy R. Canup*

## I. Introduction.

1. God gave a pattern for the church.
2. Bible example - Heb. 8:5, Moses and the Tabernacle.
3. New Testament pattern for the church.
  - a. Plan of salvation.
  - b. Organization of local congregation.
  - c. Worship and work.

## II. Discussion.

### A. NAME - CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.

1. Jesus was called a Nazarene in fulfillment of prophecy - Mat. 2:23.
2. Church of the New Testament designated as belonging to Christ.
  - a. Mat. 16:18; Rom. 16:16.
  - b. Names and designation are important.
  - c. Acts 4:12

### B. CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE CAME INTO EXISTENCE ABOUT 1907.

1. This was the result of the merging of three independent holiness groups.
2. The Lord's church came into existence about 33 A.D. (This time element in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy).
3. Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44.

C. DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.

1. Nazarene manuel - rewritten and modified version "Methodist Discipline."
2. A man written creed.
3. Bible is all sufficient.
4. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3.
5. God gave warnings: Mat. 15:8-9; Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19.
6. Why have man written creed books?
7. If it contains more than the Bible - too much!
8. If it contains les than the Bible - too little!
9. If it contains same as the Bible - don't need it.

D. BAPTISM PRACTICED BY THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.

1. Pouring, sprinkling or immersion.
2. Bible baptism consists of a burial.
3. Rom. 6:3-5; Acts 8:35-39.
4. Total immersion in water - eliminates pouring and sprinkling.

E. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.

1. Confession of faith and an agreement to observe the rules and regulations of the church.
2. Membership in the church as revealed in the Bible.
3. Acts 2:37-47.
4. No one can vote another into, or, out of the church of Christ.

5. Same plan of salvation also makes one a member of the church having been added by the Lord (Acts 2:47).

E. CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE BELIEVES IN DIVINE HEALING.

1. This would be in the realm of miracles.
2. Miracles have ceased.
3. I Cor. 13:10.

**III. Conclusion.**

- I. Began With Heb. 8:5.
2. Only way to please God - follow pattern in the New Testament.

Jimmy Canup preaches for the church of Christ in Fries, VA.  
P.O. Box 891  
Fries, VA 24330  
540-236-6880



# THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*Michael Jordan*

## I. Introduction.

1. I want to thank Milton Mathers and the Elders here at West Jefferson for the invitation to come and share with you in this lectureship the teachings of the Episcopalian Church.
2. Lectureships such as this are greatly needed in the brotherhood and should be supported with every ounce of our being.
3. It is my honor to stand before you and boldly proclaim the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of Christ and the error that is running ramped in our world today.
4. I trust that this study tonight will be of help as we combat the wiles of the devil and all of his followers.
5. In preparing for this lecture, I made the statement to Milton that all of the speakers before me have already touched on my lesson and that it will be a review of all of the denominations.
6. When you look at the different religions and their teachings, it is a blend of confusion, and each has a different way of being saved, and becoming a part of their religion.
  - a. For example, in contacting the Winston-Salem Dioceses for the Episcopalian Church, I was told that I would need to join their religion, and then they would teach me what I needed to know.
  - b. We will see later in the lesson why this statement was made.
7. We will attempt in this lecture, to give a brief history of this religion, and then look at their belief and how it relates to the Bible and it's teaching.

## II. Discussion.

### A. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EPISCOPAL RELIGION.

1. In studying the history of the Episcopal religion, it is said that Henry VIII started this religion after disagreeing with the Catholic Church and their teaching.
2. Henry VIII wanted his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled so he could marry Anne Boleyn.
3. At this point we have to agree with the pope in that the only reason for divorce is because of adultery.
4. Where does the scriptures teach that a marriage can be annulled? I have searched and it is never taught.
5. We must also point out that Henry VIII was infatuated with her; Bible language is, he lusted after her and was willing to do anything to have her.
6. Jesus said in Mat. 5:28-29, "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
7. After Henry VIII had convinced the English Parliament that the Catholic Church was wrong, it was decided that the religion of that day would become the Church of England, and Henry VIII was made the head of that church.
8. The Bible says that Christ is the head of the Church (Mat. 16:18).
9. During the reign of Henry VIII, Thomas Cranmer wrote two books, "The Book Of Homilies" and "The Forty-Two Articles."
10. "The Forty-Two Articles" was later reduced to "Thirty Nine Articles."
11. This is now known as the "Common Book Of Prayer."
12. The Episcopalian Religion is based on the "Apostles' And Nicene Creeds" and "The Thirty-Nine Articles" of the Church of England.
13. The Church of England brought their religion to America and the Bishop of London had control over the church.

14. It was not until the Revolutionary War that the connection with the Church of England was severed and became known as the Protestant Episcopal Church.
15. The name Episcopal was taken because of the form of government it undertook, taken from the Roman Catholic Religion.
16. So hence, the church body was governed by bishops or overseers.
17. We know from our study of Greek, that the word “overseer” comes from “episkopos.” So the name “Episcopal” was taken.
18. Today, Episcopalian clergymen deny that Henry VIII founded the Episcopalian Church.
19. They will simply affirm that it was during his time that “freedom of the English Church from the authority of the Bishop of Rome was achieved, and that ended a long period of protest and agitation against the Roman pope’s usurpations of authority.”
20. Although among the Episcopalians there is unity, there is difference in opinion about the way their worship services should be done.
  - a. The Anglo-Catholics favor services more ceremonial.
  - b. The Evangelicals prefer their services like those of the protestant churches.
  - c. The Episcopalians practicing as Anglo-Catholics, allow private confessions to be heard by the “priests” whom they call “Father.”
  - d. They have accepted the establishment of monastic orders which have currently 11 orders for men and 15 for women.
21. In 1873, a group of eight clergymen withdrew from the Episcopal Church and became known as the Reformed Episcopal Church.
22. They mainly rejected the idea that the bread and wine became the literal body and blood of Christ and the doctrine of baptism is essential for salvation.

23. They have remained small and have about 9,000 members.
24. There are so many different teachings that time will not permit us to talk about them. So we will hit just a few of the main issues.

B. THEIR TEACHINGS VERSUS THE BIBLE'S TEACHING.

1. Episcopalianism Teaches: the church should be governed by the episcopacy.
2. The Bible Teaches: no such thing as Diocesan Episcopacy (one bishop ruling over several churches) in the New Testament.
3. Bishops, Shepherds, Overseers, and Pastors, are names used for the same office in the New Testament (Acts 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5-7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).
4. Each New Testament congregation had a plurality of overseers, bishops, or elders, but never an elder or elders over more than one congregation (Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2, 22-23; Acts 16:4; Phi. 1:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Tim. 5:17).
5. Episcopalianism Teaches: their bishops are successors to the apostles.
6. The Bible Teaches: an apostle was a witness (Luke 1:2; Luke 24:23; Acts 1:1-3, 19-22; Acts 10:39-41; 1 Cor. 9:1; 1 Cor. 15:5, 7-8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 John 1:1).
  - a. A witness cannot have a successor, but another witness can testify.
  - b. There was only one case of a successor in the Bible, and that is in Acts 1:15-26.
  - c. None today, or immediately following the days of the apostles, could meet the requirements of an apostle, or the successor to an apostle.
  - d. Therefore, apostolic succession is UnScriptural.
7. Episcopalians teach that the authority of the Church is to be found in the canon law and prayer book rubrics.

1. The Bible Teaches: that the Bible alone is sufficient (Isa. 8:20; Mat. 28:18; John 12:48; Rev. 22:18-19).
2. Episcopalianism Teaches: that the twelve “Great Facts Of The Apostles’ Creed” are to be obeyed.
3. The Bible Teaches: that the Bible and the Bible only, is the Christian’s rule of faith and practice (2 John 9-11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
4. The “Apostle’s Creed”, so-called, was not written by the apostles.
5. Episcopalianism Teaches: what the parents promise for the child at his or her baptism, the child is bound to believe and obey.
6. The Bible Teaches: that the parent is not authorized by the Bible to make promises for what a child shall believe or obey.
7. In Mat. 15:7-9; Mark 7:6-7, we are told to beware of doctrines and commandments of men that make void the Word of God.
8. Every person is accountable for his own deeds and choices (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12; 1 Pet. 4:5).
9. Episcopalianism Teaches: that Christ taught us the “Lord’s Prayer,” and we should pray it today, including, “Thy Kingdom come,” because the kingdom only came “imperfectly” on the Day of Pentecost . . . it is a prayer for the church extension for a Second-Advent.
10. The Bible Teaches: that the Disciples were never instructed after the day of Pentecost, to petition God that the kingdom might come in any sense whatsoever.
11. The Kingdom “came with power” on that Day, and nothing failed that God designed. (Isa. 2:2-4; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-47).
12. Episcopalianism Teaches: that after the Hampton Court Conference (1604), two sacraments are held to be “necessary to salvation” - Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.  
“Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given to us.” Baptism makes infants children of God, members of Christ; imparts remission of sins.”

13. The Bible Teaches: there is no such word used in the Bible as Sacraments, so let's consider Baptism as administered by them is sprinkling or pouring of water upon an infant for his salvation.
  - a. Much water is required (John 3:23).
  - b. They went into the water (Acts 8:36).
  - c. They were buried in water (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3-4).
  - d. They also came up out of the water (Acts 8:38).
  - e. Notice, never was water brought to a person for baptism; they were brought to the water.
  - f. If water is all a person receives in baptism for his salvation, then this is water salvation.
  - g. This is all a baby receives, for it is too young to be taught, to believe, to repent, or to confess.
  - h. Faith and repentance are pre-requisites for all candidates of baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
14. Episcopalianism Teaches: infants are born in sin, in a state of sin, inherited from their parents; "being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath."
15. The Bible teaches:
  - a. Infants do not sin (Rom. 4:15).
  - b. Sin is a transgression of law (1 John 3:4).
  - c. Sin is always an act of the mind or body, hence cannot be transferred to or inherited by another (Jam. 1:14-15).
  - d. Children do not bear the guilt of their parents' sin (Eze. 1:38; Eze. 18; Eze. 33).
  - e. Children are a gift from God (Psa. 127:3; Mat. 18:3; Mark 10:14).

- f. Of such is the kingdom of God (Mat. 18:3, 10; Mark 10:14).
  - g. People go astray, they are not born astray (Psa. 14:3; Isa. 59:2).
  - h. We are the offspring of God (Acts 17:29).
  - i. God is the Father of our Spirits (Heb. 12:9).
16. Episcopalianism Teaches: that we are justified by faith only. “Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.” (Article II, Prayer Book)
17. The Bible teaches:
- a. Faith without works is dead (Jam. 2:17).
  - b. Faith without works is as dead as the body without the spirit (Jam. 2:26).
  - c. If faith alone will save, then the devils will be saved (Jam. 2:19).  
Would this not be a universal salvation?
  - d. Justification is by works and not by faith only (Jam. 2:24).
  - e. Faith only gives us power to become sons of God (John 1:12).
  - f. We are justified by God – Rom. 8:33; by Christ – Acts 13:39; by Faith – Rom. 5:1; by Christ’s Blood – Rom. 5:9; by the Name Of Jesus – 1 Cor. 6:11; by Grace – Tit. 3:7; by Works – Jam. 2:24.
18. Episcopalianism Teaches: that there is no salvation in a name.
19. The Bible teaches:
- a. Adam and his wife wore the same name (Gen. 5:2).
  - b. Adam is a figure of Christ (Rom. 5:14).
  - c. Adam’s wife, then a figure of Christ’s wife, the church (Eph. 5).

- d. Adam and his wife wearing the same name pictured Christ and His wife, the church wearing the same name.
- e. Prophesied that a new name was to be given by the mouth of the Lord when salvation went out from Jerusalem, and the Gentiles saw His righteousness. This prophecy was fulfilled in Acts.
- f. We are married to Christ, and should wear His name (Rom. 7:4).
- g. King Agrippa knew the followers of Christ wore the name Christian (Acts 26:28).
- h. The Holy Spirit, through Peter, commanded us to suffer in the name Christian (1 Pet. 4:16).
- i. There is no salvation in any other name (Acts 4:12).

### III. Conclusion.

1. There are many others that we could look at, but the time has come when we shall end this lesson.
2. May God bless us as we study and expose error that is taught.

Michael Jordan preaches for the South Stokes Church of Christ.  
P. O. Box 483  
King, NC 27021  
(336) 969-5498  
email: [sccc@mindspring.com](mailto:sccc@mindspring.com)  
Website: [www.southstokeschurchofchrist.org](http://www.southstokeschurchofchrist.org)



