

THE BAPTIST LANDMARK

“REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK, WHICH THY FATHERS HAVE SET.” PROVERBS 22:28

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WHY BE BAPTIZED?

by H. B. Little

Why should a person be baptized? There are several scriptural reasons for a person to be baptized. Here are a few of them:

First, our Lord and Savior commands it. Before His ascension and with all authority in heaven and earth, the risen Savior commanded His church to “Go... and teach all nations, baptizing them...”, Mat. 28:19. If He orders His church to baptize disciples, He commands disciples to be baptized.

Second, when a person is properly baptized, God takes great pleasure in the act. Our heavenly Father delighted in the baptism of His Son. As the Lord Jesus came up out of Jordan River, having been dipped in it, His Father praised the act saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Mat 3:17.

Third, when a person is properly baptized, he unites with a visible, local church. Luke writes of a great number joining the Jerusalem Church by baptism. He says, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.” Act 2:41. They were added to the church by the baptismal act.

Having presented a few reasons a person should be baptized, I would like to discuss the following question: Should a person be baptized in order to receive the forgiveness of sins? In other words, are sinners forgiven in the baptismal act? The scriptural answer is NO.

The New Testament contains examples of sinners forgiven with no mention of baptism. Let’s consider the example of the lame man and his persistent friends. “And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” Mat 9:2. Here, a man through faith in the Great Physician found forgiveness while lying on his bed, not in the waters of baptism.

Let’s also consider the example of the woman who washed the Lord’s feet with

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REFORMATION IN THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

by M. A. Brawner

The city of Halifax, North Carolina, which is seat of Halifax County, is located about 20 miles south of the Virginia State line. The Kehukee Association of Regular Baptists was organized in Halifax County about 1765, eleven years before the Declaration of Independence was signed. The history of this old association was written by Burkitt and Read in 1803. Bro Lemuel Burkitt was the Clerk of this Association for over 30 years.

The Separate Baptists came into the regions of Virginia, North and South Carolina some years after the association was organized. They were very effective in witnessing souls saved followed by Churches being organized. Elders Shubal Sterns and Daniel Marshall were instrumental in this work. The Regular Baptists of the Kehukee Association desired a union with these Churches and sought how such a union could be established. The following history has been extracted from this material to show what efforts took place and the corrections required among Churches in order that scriptural fellowship could be established.

The Kehukee Association, desirous of fellowship and a general communion between these two parties, sent Elders Jonathan Thomas and John Meglamre to the Separate Baptist Association, which was holden in one of the northern counties in Virginia, to endeavor to effect an union. Accordingly their Association delegated Elders Elijah Craig and David Thompson to the Kehukee Association, which was holden at Kehukee meeting house, in Halifax County, North Carolina, August, 1772, and rendered their reasons why they could not commune with the Regulars. Their reasons were as follows, viz. 1. They complained of the Regulars not being strict enough in receiving experiences, when persons made application to their churches for baptism, in order to become church members. 2. They refused communion with Regular Baptist churches, because they believed that faith in Christ Jesus was essential to

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THE MARKS OF A CHRISTIAN

by F. L. Ray

Some time after Christ ascended back to the Father the word Christian was used for the first time “...And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” Acts 11:26. Evidently they were called Christians by their enemies because they were followers of Christ; really, the word Christian means Christ-like. John says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John 3:2. Therefore, we must all agree that we should be as much like Christ while we live here in this world as possible. Paul said, “...for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Gal. 6:17. Again we find the Lord speaking and saying, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” We believe that every born again child of God should come out from among the world and stand identified with the people of God who are in the world but not of the world. “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” John 17:16. It seems that believers and unbelievers are so mixed up together in the worldly things until it is hard to tell one from the other. Paul gives us some good instructions in the following scripture. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” 2 Cor. 6:4, and in verse 17 he says “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.”

Perhaps the greatest mark of a Christian is love, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to the other.” John 13:35

“We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.” 1 John 3:14

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.” 1 John 5:14

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"But the fruit of the spirit is love." Gal. 5:22. Paul tells us in the 13th chapter of 1 Cor. that love is the greatest of three things, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; the greatest of these is charity." verse 13.

It seems to me that love is the unmistakable mark of Christians, such mark would be the same on all continents under the sun. It would be the same among all nations, kindred and tongues. The same among the rich and the poor, among the learned and the unlearned. Love enables a Christian to be gentle, kind, meek and lowly.

Love will serve. Love must sacrifice. Love ignores criticism. Love sits by the one who weeps and weeps. Love stands by the one misunderstood. Love walks the long road of lonely hidden service and inspires every traveler.

In this world of hate, Christians are dominated by love. In this age of selfish egotism the Christian goes the second mile and speaks words of cheer and lifts burdens that belong to others. Love suffers long and is kind—kind to the unthankful and unholy. Love pierces the hard armor of degrading sin and brings to the deluded soul a message of God's wonderful salvation.

God has set his mark on His people—that mark is love for others. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." John 15:12. "Beloved let us love one another: For love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, He that loveth not knoweth not God; God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved if God so loved us, we ought to love one another." 1 John 4:7-11.

Note from the editor: The above article was taken from the August 1961 issue of the *Baptist Progressor* published in Lafayette, Tennessee.

Brother Fountain L. Ray was a Missionary Baptist preacher, author, and debater. He pastored several churches in Tennessee and Kentucky. He authored a short volume titled *Having Done All to Stand, Stand Therefore*, published in 1972.

In *Twentieth Century Baptists*, H. C. Vanderpool writes the following account of Brother Ray's tireless ministry.

The Lord laid his hand upon [Brother Ray] to carry the gospel to the world. After exercising his gifts in this work, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by New Bethel Baptist Church in Davidson County, Tennessee, on November 17, 1939.

He has pastored the following churches in Enon Association: Union, 1939-48; Pleasant Valley, 1940's for 4 years and also Oak Grove 1 year in the 40's; Ebenezer, 1947-53; Cornwell Chapel, 1950-53; the following churches in Wiseman Association: Union Hill, 1940-1953; Concord, 1941-1947; in Siloam Association: Siloam Church, 1951-1953. He began his pastorate at McFerrin Baptist Church in East Nashville in 1950, part time, and later went to full time. He is still their full time pastor, this, 1962, being his twelfth year.

While Bro. Ray has gone on to be with our Lord, his works do follow him.

SINGING IN OUR CHURCHES

by D. S. Patterson

We did not have kindergarten when I started to school, so I went into the first grade at Lafayette Elementary School in Lafayette, Tennessee. My teacher was Mrs. Ruth Law. At the beginning of the school year, one day, she placed some symbols on the blackboard. They were a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and so on through our english alphabet. When she asked us what these were, we did not know. Soon we learned that these symbols were letters which could be used to spell words. Later we learned to put those words together to write sentences, paragraphs, and so on.

I am sure all of us have heard the term "reading" music. It is called "reading" because music is very similar to our English language in the way it is read. Music is written in a series of symbols. When learned, it can be read and sung for the benefit of the church. The songbooks used by the majority of our churches are printed with shape notes. Shape notes, when placed on the music staff are easier to read than the round notes in the old hymn books.

Shape notes were used as early as the 11th century by Italian monks. They used

the 6 note series which make up the first six notes of our major scale. In 16th century England, they only used four of these notes: mi, fa, sol, and la. In 1801, two Americans, William Little and William Smith, printed *The Easy Instructor*, using the four shape note system. This system of shape notes was used widely and is still used today by the Sacred Harp Singers. In 1846, Jesse B. Aikin started printing books with seven shapes. We use the same ones today. In the 1860's after the Civil War had ended, singing schools using the seven note system of shape notes began to spring up in all parts of the south. People quickly learned the singing symbols and began to "read" the music. With the rebuilding of the south after the Civil War, singing in the churches was a very important part of that rebuilding. Shape note songbooks soon began to be published in all parts of the East, mainly New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. However this trend soon moved south and more people began to take an interest in shape note singing.

In 1864, James David Vaughan was born in Giles County, Tennessee. After attending several "Normal Schools", as they were known then, Mr. Vaughan published his first songbook in 1900 in the community of Minor Hill in Giles County, Tennessee. In 1903 Mr. Vaughan moved to Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, in neighboring Lawrence County. In 1903, Mr. Vaughan began to publish new shape note songbooks every year. In 1910, wishing to increase songbook sales, Mr. Vaughan formed six quartets, sending them throughout the south, singing songs out of his new shape note songbooks, and, of course, selling those books. His sales increased about 600% in the first year alone. Thus small communities and towns were exposed to the shape note system of gospel singing.

Our churches benefited from these books because, as people started learning this system, teachers were hired to teach singing schools and general music. Soon the students became teachers themselves. Many of our churches had singing schools taught in their church every year. This trend of holding singing schools seems to have halted for some reason in the last 25 to 30 years. Accordingly, the quality of singing in our churches has declined. There are still qualified men to teach music in your church. Please consider having someone teach a singing school for you.

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qualify a person for baptism, yet many of the Regular churches had members in them who acknowledged they were baptized before they believed. Pages 20-21

Elder Lemuel Burkitt, who pastored one of the Regular Baptist Churches during that period, followed by writing:

These, with a few other non-essentials, were the reasons they refused communion with us: but the most weighty reason was, "the Regulars holding persons in fellowship in their churches, who were baptized in unbelief," which was a matter of some consequence, and operated strongly on the minds of many belonging to the Kehukee Association. Accordingly, in 1774, the church in Bartle, under the care of writer Lemuel Burkitt, held a conference, and declared they would commune with none who confessed they were baptized before they believed in Christ. And the reasons why they did so were, because they believed that from the practice of John the Baptist, from the commission given by our Lord to His apostles, and the conduct of the apostles in executing that commission, that repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, were required as a prerequisite to baptism of all they baptized. If so, it appears reasonable that even adult persons themselves, if baptized in a state of impenitency and unbelief, are no more the proper subjects of the ordinance than infants, as the age of the person does not qualify him for baptism, but his faith in Christ. Page 21.

Elder Burkitt goes on to describe that a Declaration of Non-Fellowship was implemented based on unscriptural baptism, also known as alien immersion.

These things had such weight on the minds of the members of that church (the Church in Bartle), that they declared in open conference, non-fellowship with all churches and persons who held and maintained the contrary doctrine. And some of the members of that church, who were baptized in unbelief, came forward and petitioned for baptism, and were baptized upon confession of their faith in Christ...The church at Sandy Run had no sooner set up a bar of communion against such churches and members, than they received information that the church in

Sussex, in Virginia, under the pastoral care of Elder John Meglamre; the church in Brunswick, under the care of Zachary Thompson; the church in the Isle of Wight, under the care of David Barrow, had done the same. All these churches belonged to the Kehukee Association. Page 21.

The following is a record of what took place during the very next associational meeting of the Churches composing the Kehukee Association in 1775. The history records a division taking place between these churches on the grounds of valid baptism. A complete reading of the account is encouraged but the following is provided in order that the basic material can be considered:

In October, 1775, the Kehukee Regular Baptist Association, according to their annual appointment, by their delegates, met at the Falls of Tar River...We argued that, it was well known, that we all held faith in Christ essential to qualify a person for baptism, and, if so, they who were baptized before they believed, were not baptized agreeable to God's word; and, as their baptism is not valid, they remain unbaptized members; and not to commune with unbaptized persons was a principle of the Association on which we were at first established. We, therefore, argued that we were the true Association who had not departed from their original principles. After some desultory conversation, the Association divided, and those churches which had begun the reformation sat and held an Association in the meeting house; and the other party went, into the woods, the first day, and held an Association, and the second day, removed to a private house in the neighborhood.

Elder Burkitt explains why the sound Churches decided to withdraw fellowship from the other Churches in their association.

One particular reason why those churches were at first dissatisfied with others, and were so forward in setting up a bar of communion against churches and individuals, who held members in fellowship who were baptized in unbelief, was, because several of those churches, that at first belonged to the Kehukee Association, were gathered by the Free-will Baptists, and as their custom was to baptize any persons who were willing, whether they had and experience of grace or not, so, in consequence of this practice, they had many members, who were

baptized before they were converted; and after they were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and joined the Regulars, openly confessed they were baptized before they believed: and some of them said they did it in hope of getting to Heaven by it...We, therefore, in conscience thought, and that from God's word, that we ought to withdraw from every brother that walked disorderly, and we were under very great impressions to begin a reformation in the churches. Pages 22-23.

The Henry Abbot affair is an example of a preacher and the church he pastored being reformed before being accepted into the fellowship of sound Churches.

A church in Camden county, N.C., by their delegates, presented a letter to the Association desiring admission. On examination they were found to be an orderly church, and they were received. This church was one of those which was formerly in union with us before the reformation took place, and was a very ancient, respectable church. It appears that this church had for some time believed the principles on which the reformation was grounded at first. But they did not so readily accede to the measures which were fallen on at the Falls of Tar River, because their pastor, Elder Henry Abbot, was baptized in unbelief, and had not seen it his duty to comply with baptism since he was converted; but before this Association, which was holden at Fishing Creek, he complied with his duty, and a reformation in that church, in this respect, took place, and they have again united with us. Blessed be God for the union of saints. Page 32.

A brief review of this case seems to be in order. The Church, which once stood sound, had fallen into error regarding baptism. Specifically, the pastor was a man who was unbaptized. However, seeing that they were among those who were numbered in the Declaration of Non-Fellowship, they went through a reformation. That is to say, their pastor was baptized and those who were retained as members in the Church were likewise baptized. This was required in order to be received back into the association. Reading through the actions required and answers to queries by the association makes it easy to reach this conclusion.

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Elder Burkitt looks back on the results of the reformation in the Churches and restoration of fellowship.

This division, our readers may be well assured, afforded great grief to many truly pious and godly souls; but, that God, who works all things by His divine providence, according to the counsel of His own will, was pleased to bring order out of confusion, and good out of evil, for by these means He was pleased to effect a reformation in the churches, and bring about a glorious revival of religion throughout the churches in general. Page 22

God, who does NOT change nor respect persons, no doubt would be willing to grant similar blessings for such actions among His Churches in this very day.

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her tears. While eating a meal at the home of a Pharisee named Simon, the Lord Jesus said, "I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head...Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven." Luke 7:44,47. Here, a humble woman found forgiveness at the feet of the Savior, not in the act of baptism.

The New Testament contains several sermons instructing sinners to seek forgiveness. Preaching to Gentiles at Caesarea, Peter taught forgiveness for all that believe on the Savior. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. Reasoning with the Jews in a synagogue in Pisidia, Paul preached the same message. "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38-39.

Notice the words of the two apostles. "Whosoever" believes shall find forgiveness. "All" that believe are counted righteous. Whosoever and all that believe include the believing Jew and the believing Gentile. They include the believing

publican, the believing thief, and the believing persecutor. All believers include the baptized believer and the unbaptized believer. All who believe are forgiven.

The reader may ask, if all believers are forgiven, how should we interpret Peter's sermon on the Pentecost following Christ's resurrection? Luke writes of it, "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." Act 2:38.

For a plausible answer to this question, I refer the reader to Ben Bogard's "The Baptist Way-Book". Brother Bogard (1868-1951) was a Baptist preacher, author, editor, teacher, and debater. Explaining this verse, he writes:

When Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said: "Be baptized for the remission of sins," he used the word "for" in its secondary sense, which means "with reference to"—"be baptized with reference to the remission of sins." A man is put in the penitentiary "for" stealing, that is, "on account of" stealing: certainly not "in order to stealing." So we are baptized "for" remission of sins, but not in order to the remission of sins.

If the "for" in Acts 2:38 means "because of" or "with reference to", a person must be forgiven before being baptized. If this is true, how can a person be forgiven in baptism when he is baptized because he has been forgiven? It is evident that baptism does not bring forgiveness to the sinner. Baptism should be observed by a person already forgiven.

There are several good reasons for baptism. God commands it. He is pleased when it is properly performed. A proper candidate is placed in the church by it. However, a person must find forgiveness prior to being baptized. It cannot replace the faith by which forgiveness can be found.

OUR NEW WEBSITE

We are excited to announce the launch of our new website. The web address is www.thebaptistlandmark.com.

The site contains an archive of all our previous publications. There you can read, download, and search through all our articles. The site also has a contact page for correspondence. We hope to unveil additional items soon. Feel free to visit our site and share it with others.

GOOD BAPTIST BOOKS

C. H. Spurgeon once said, "Visit many good books, but live in the Bible." As Christians, we ought to know the importance of *living* in the Bible. We ought to read it often, for it is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Yet as Christians, how often do we *visit* good Baptist books? Have you read any Baptist books? Have you read any books about our Baptist history and heritage? Do you know where to find such books?

If you are looking for good Baptist books to read, here are a few volumes that can be purchased through The Baptist Landmark.

Trail of Blood, by J. M. Carroll. This book contains a brief history of the Baptists and a nice chart mapping our lineage from the New Testament age. Format: Paperback. Length: 60 pages. Price: \$3 + shipping

Baptist Succession, by D. B. Ray. This book sets the record straight on the 1641 Discovery, the Roger William's Church, the matter of John Smith, and others. It also introduces the reader to the Waldenses and other ancient Baptists. Format: Hardback. Length: 396 Pages. Price: \$10 + \$3 shipping

History of the Welsh Baptists, by J. Davis. This book contains the history of the Baptists in Wales from the year 63 to 1778. Interestingly, some of the oldest churches in the South trace their origins to a church which migrated from Wales. Format: Hardback. Length: 204 pages. Price: \$5 + \$3 shipping

Orders can be taken by mail or email.

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