

THE BAPTIST LANDMARK

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

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THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

by M. A. Brawner

True, Old-Time Baptists have a wonderful heritage made possible solely by the grace of God and the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. These people called Baptists in the year 2022 have an unbroken lineage that goes back through the dark ages of history to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ was on the Earth during His personal ministry. It was during this time that He took material that John the Baptist had prepared and organized His own Church. After the Lord had organized this Church, He solemnly stated that He would be with it “always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Those who sincerely trust the Lord Jesus Christ, believe what He had to say about His Church. The Lord said the gates of hell would never prevail against it, so those who trust Him believe that Church has remained in the world from that time to this very day. How could they believe otherwise?

The doctrine of the Bride of Christ is all about this particular Church and those faithful members who make it up. It states that there have been people being born again since Adam’s fall. The new birth experienced back through time, all the way to the fall, is the very same new birth experienced today. According to the history found in the Bible, the Creation took place right at 4,000 BC dating back over 6,000 years from today. The Lord established His Church around 30 AD making it nearly 2,000 years old. (These dates are given to simplify the point.) This means the history of the new birth is over 4,000 years older than the Church. The doctrine of the Bride states it is impossible for any person to be part of something that wasn’t even organized at the time they lived in the world. The salvation of these people down through time is solemnly confirmed while them being part of the Bride is simply beyond reason.

The teaching of the Bride also points out that there have been those who started out as followers of Christ who turned back. They were born again, entered His

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ETERNAL SECURITY

by H. B. Little

Eternal security is the belief that all true believers are forever saved from hell the moment that they believe. Eternal security is sometimes referred to as “once saved, always saved.” Eternal security is taught in the Bible. Eternal security does not mean that the believer should live any way he wants to live.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because it teaches that salvation is a gift. Consider Eph 2:8-9. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Paul says the believer is saved and that his salvation is not obtained by his merits. His salvation is a gift. A gift is something voluntarily transferred from one person to another without compensation. God freely gives salvation to those that trust in the Lord Jesus. This gift is imparted without any requirement of repayment, or future obedience of the believer. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because it teaches that salvation is by grace. Notice that Paul says “for by grace are ye saved.” Grace is the free and unearned favor of God. It is the antithesis—direct opposite—of works. Consider Rom 11:6. “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.” Salvation is obtained by grace through faith. When a person trusts in the Savior, he is saved by grace without works. If works are needed to obtain salvation, salvation can no longer be obtained by grace. This same principle can be applied to how salvation is “kept”. If salvation is kept by grace, the believer has eternal security. His salvation cannot be lost by his works. If salvation is kept by a good Christian life, or works of the believer, his salvation can no longer be by grace. Yet the Bible teaches that salvation is by grace. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because
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ARE WE?

by A. C. Perrigo, *Voice of Baptists*, 1980

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Mat 28:20.

The church by Jesus Christ does willingly accept the privilege and responsibility of preaching the gospel of Christ to every creature, believing it is the power of God unto salvation. The church by Jesus Christ does unselfishly invite the saved to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. BUT does the church by Jesus Christ extend the teachings of its head and founder to its own members with the same zeal and dedication as it makes and baptizes disciples? If you answer this question with a “no” or even, “I’m not sure” then we are in a difficult situation and face a problem tomorrow that can bring less truths to the unsaved multitudes of this world.

This effort addresses itself to the teaching ministry of the church by Jesus Christ. The purpose of this essay is to improve those things that should be improved, remove those things that should be removed, replacing them with things that can strengthen the things that remain.

OUR POSITION: The church is in the world today without the bodily presence of its head, founder and law giver. This in itself is nothing to be alarmed over because the church was taught and amply prepared to labor on under this condition. Jesus taught his church very carefully of his departing from them, (John 14-17) before he gave himself as a sacrifice for our sins. After the promised Comforter returned to the church, they understood completely why and how they were to go into all the world with the gospel of Christ. This work was done with such love, sincerity and zeal that people by the thousands joined with them (after being saved) in the work. The multitudes continued steadfastly in their (the apostles) teachings (doctrine) and became workers together with them for the Lord. The church by Jesus Christ has maintained this position (aided by the ever present Spirit of God) upon the earth

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Church by baptism, then turned away for whatever reason. The scriptures contain examples of this happening during the Lord's ministry in the world. See John 6:66 for one example. Some might ask whether these were truly born again people or only skin-deep believers. The scriptures refer to them as disciples. John 4:1 teaches that the Lord made and baptized disciples. It appears that those mentioned in John 6:66 were the type of disciples who departed from following the Lord during His personal ministry. The doctrine of the Bride acknowledges that there have been that type of child of God in the world ever since the Lord established His Church. It points out that these types of born again people have no chance at being in the Bride unless they repent and return to serving the Lord in His Church. Seeing that they are born again, they have escaped hell. Yet, they strayed from serving Christ during their life so they have no part in the coming marriage to Him. (This marriage of the Lord to His Bride is described in Rev 19:7-9.) Can anyone honestly believe the Lord would be wed for all eternity to such unfaithful people?

The doctrine of the Bride notes that there are people who have been born again down through time who never joined the Lord's Church at all. They humbled themselves like Paul out on the road to Damascus. Just like Paul, they cried out to the Lord in their hearts, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Being born again, they arose a new person. Yet, the cares of life, the influence of family and friends, the entanglements of the world, or a hundred other things came along to distract them from serving the Lord. Children of God can get caught up in ways that seem right to them but they fail to learn the true way of God. Concerns about careers or families or prestige get between them and allowing the Lord to lead them through life. Truth be told, they never take up the cross to follow the Lord. They said they would but they just failed to do it. Let us ask ourselves a simple question: if someone came to us and committed to build us a house then they never did the work, would we still feel obligated to pay them? Obviously not. So why would any reasonable person feel the Lord would reward such a person who got saved then never did the

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ETERNAL SECURITY

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it teaches that the believer has eternal life. Consider John 5:24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The Savior says the believer "hath eternal life." The believer has spiritual life from the moment he first believes. This spiritual life is everlasting. Everlasting means eternal, perpetual. It is constant, abiding. If the believer has everlasting life, that life cannot end. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because it teaches that the believer will not be condemned. The Lord says the believer "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." Condemnation means judgment. The believer will not be judged worthy of everlasting destruction. He shall not be condemned. This promise to the believer is unconditional. It does not say he will not be condemned if he is virtuous. It does not say he will not be condemned if he tries his best to live for God. It says he will not be condemned. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because it teaches that the believer who does not maintain good works shall be saved. Consider 1 Co 3:13-15. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Paul says every believer's works shall be tried in judgment. Some men's works will stand the test of fire. Those men will be rewarded. A reward is not a gift of grace. It is wages for work. The faithful believer will receive wages for his labors. Some men's works will not stand the test of fire. These works will burn. Notice, the believer will not burn. His "work shall be burned." And while the believer may suffer the loss of a full reward, "he himself shall be saved." He is saved despite his works. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, because it teaches that all believers shall

be in heaven. Consider 2 Th 1:10. "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." Paul comforts all those who believe. He says all who believe shall admire the Lord in heaven. He does not say all who believe and live godly. He does not say all who serve God by faith. He says "all that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." In other words, those that hear the gospel and believe will be in heaven. Therefore the believer has eternal security.

The Bible teaches eternal security, but it does not teach that a believer should live any way he wants to live. Those who do not believe in eternal security often accuse its adherents of believing that works do not matter. They say, "you Baptists believe you can live any way you want to live." Paul was accused of this very thing. He preached a free salvation obtained by faith and not by deeds of the law. And he was accused of teaching, "let us do evil, that good may come." Rom 3:8. The accusations against him—or us—could not be farther from the truth. Paul says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Rom 6:1-2. The believer in Christ is a child of God by faith. He ought to be an obedient child to honor his heavenly Father. He ought to let his light shine so the light of the gospel will shine into the hearts of others. But he need not work in order to keep his salvation. It is kept for him.

The believer has eternal security. His salvation is a gift, not a wage. His salvation is by grace, not by works. He has eternal life. He will not be condemned. He will be saved regardless of his works. He will be in heaven because he believed.

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THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

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work they promised to do by granting them to be part of the marriage as His Bride? They were rewarded with salvation here in the world, but they will miss the reward of the Bride in eternity.

When studying the doctrine regarding the Bride of Christ, the Church as it was just described must be held in mind. This is because it is only this Church that the Lord personally organized and can honestly be referred to as His Bride. There are a great number of organizations in the world today who are merely man-made but call themselves churches. A man or group of men organized these other institutions so they cannot be labeled as the Bride of Christ. The Bride was organized by the Lord nearly 2,000 years ago. None other can lay claim to such a lofty position.

What is the Bible doctrine regarding the Bride of Christ? This doctrine reveals that the Lord is espoused to the Church He organized. This eliminates forever the Protestant teaching that all born again people are part of the Bride. Some may say there are Baptists who believe all born again people make up the Bride. To this comment, we respond that only so-called Baptists who have adopted Protestant teachings believe such things. This makes them BINO's rather than true Baptists. A BINO is someone who is "Baptist In Name Only." BINO's left the ranks of the Baptists to unite with Protestants. The doctrine they believe and teach makes it impossible to identify them otherwise.

The Bride doctrine teaches that there is a clear distinction between being born again and a member of the Church the Lord established. Those who are born again are part of the Family of God. They are properly called Children of God in the scriptures. However, those children of God who have gone on and entered that historic, Old-Time Church established by the Lord are true Church members. It is through the baptism that only this particular Church can administer that brings children of God into its membership. There are those who will say, there are Baptists who believe the new birth puts a person into the Lord's Church by what is erroneously called a baptism of the Spirit. This teaching was made popular by Protestants in the 1500s in their fight against Catholics. It has as

much political basis as it does religious. Once again, this is just another Protestant teaching which has led many Baptists to become BINO's down through the years. Nevertheless, the Lord's Church has remained satisfied with teaching and practicing what her Lord entrusted to her nearly 2,000 years ago. For this reason, she continues to be His espoused Bride waiting for His return to receive her into His joy.

The doctrine of the Bride points out that there is a wedding day coming when the Lord will receive the Church He organized and present it before God the Father. At this time, there will be a marriage that will take place when the Lord unites for all eternity in holy matrimony to His faithful, espoused Bride. This will forever sort out these faithful children of God from all others who have been born again. Those who are wed to Christ served Him in His Church on His terms rather than getting tangled in the cares of this world and man-made churches. Is it truly hard to imagine that the Lord has something special planned for those who have faithfully served Him in the Church He set-up Himself? Surely we cannot group children of God who refuse to serve under the headship of Christ with those who have humbled themselves to serve Him and learn His ways in His Old-Time Church.

Some people say that the doctrine of the Bride is nothing more than a heresy held by the self-righteous. These same people love to say that Baptists who teach the Bride doctrine believe they are the only ones going to heaven. Others will suggest these Baptists claim a person must become a Baptist in order to escape hell. Any who have just read the preceding paragraphs know for certain that both of these claims are wrong. The Bride doctrine teaches no such things. Rather, it teaches God will reward the faithful who serve the Lord on His terms in His Church under His headship. Others who have been born again have escaped hell but they will be counted something other than faithful servants. Here is the real issue with those who despise the doctrine of the Bride. Once they are born again, they really want to go on and "do church" the way they want to do it without submitting to the structure the Lord put in place. They want to be called by the Lord's name to take away their reproach but they will be clothed in whatever they want to call baptism and feast on whatever

they want to teach as doctrine. Then, when they encounter the doctrine of the Bride, they feel convicted that the way they "do church" cannot be right if the doctrine of the Bride is true. Therefore, they despise it. I'm thankful for those who have had their eyes opened to this truth down through time and humbled themselves to depart from man-made organizations. They will be so glad when the Lord presents His Bride to God the Father while all others have to stand back and watch the joyous occasion unfold. May God help those who are part of this Old-Time Church serve faithfully to the day of the Lord's return.

ANTIQUITY OF BAPTISTS

Old-Time Baptists believe that the Baptist faith is as old as the New Testament. We believe the Lord Jesus setup up His church (a Baptist church) during His personal, earthly ministry. And we believe that Baptist Churches have been in this world ever since.

We are often accused by Protestants of being ill-informed or biased for believing that our faith and churches were not produced by the Protestant Reformation.

The following statements were made by Alexander Campbell. He is the founder of the "Church of Christ" denomination. He is a man whose scholarship very few would doubt. And he has written and said more against the Baptist people than he ever did for us. Yet after an honest study of our history he could not deny our antiquity.

"We can show that from the earliest times there has existed a people whom no man can number, that have earnestly and consistently contended for the faith once delivered to the saints."

"The church at Jerusalem was a Baptist church, and the church at Samaria was a Baptist church."

"There were Baptists in all ages that never acknowledged the Mother of Harlots." [by Mother of Harlots he means the Catholic Church]

"From the apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and their practice of baptism, have had a continual chain of advocates and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced."

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by faithful men committing to other faithful men those teachable doctrines of the Lord. Our present position can be held by our doing the same thing. Our present position can be given up by our failure to teach our people (the church) to observe all things that Christ commanded us to observe.

TEACHING: "Teach" applies to any manner of imparting information or skill so that others may learn. Let us review an example recorded in the scriptures of how important teaching really can be. God spoke from Mt. Sinai to the people of Israel. He spoke only once. He added no more and he wrote them in two tables of stone (see Deu 5:22). From that time on the continuation of the law became the responsibility of the people (see Deu 6:7). "And thou shalt teach them [the Law] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up". Israel picked up this responsibility and taught it from generation to generation to their people. Is not the teaching of Christ far more important to us than anything else today? Yet how little is known of what we should do and not to do for our Lord? Should we do less than the law required of Israel? Surely our desire would be to do more, regardless of what our efforts actually may be.

OUR WORK: How many Baptists believe that Jesus walks (bodily) through the world preaching his gospel today? How many Baptists assemble at the baptismal site today expecting to see Jesus perform an act of baptism (he didn't even do that while he was upon the earth)? How many Baptists expect Jesus to teach new converts to observe all his commands? God forbid but that a few may expect Jesus to do these things for us! Living members of the Lord's church are delegated to perform the works mentioned in the three questions. We are where we are because our being taught (see Heb 5:11-14). It is a very uncomfortable condition not to know what a Baptist is expected to do when we claim the privilege and honor of being a member of the Lord's church.

After the Lord Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, he chose some saved, baptized men and gave them this invitation: "Follow me, and I will make you

fishers of men." This invitation was with such love, firmness and authority that an immediate response followed. They dropped their fishing nets, tax record, etc. and learned from this man of Galilee. He taught them well, with authority and often by example. His departure back into heaven left this work with the church. Many of them were confronted and opposed by polished, learned men of the Pharisee and Sadducee sects in Jerusalem. Some were classified as unlearned and ignorant (by Jewish standards) yet it was acknowledged that these men had been with Jesus. Under threat, Peter and John confessed a truth that we all should consider today: they stated, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," (Acts 4:20). Who can do more today? Who would desire to do less? Unrelated experiences and unshared knowledge is forever lost at the death of the possessor. Man cannot yet transplant minds. Leave it with the living. Jesus has returned to the presence of the Father. Thank God for that reunion! All the eye witnesses of his person have long since gone the way of all the earth. Thank God for their teachings! Thousands of ancient teachers have gone into eternity since the death of the last apostle, yet the doctrines of God are still manifest to this world through the teaching of faithful Baptist people, thank God for their faithfulness. Has the abundance of Bibles caused us to do less oral teaching than our forefathers? It should allow us to do more, not less.

The church should continue a full time teaching ministry to instruct the body of Christ so that the church can observe all the commands of Jesus Christ. Sunday schools, Bible studies, teaching, preaching, etc. must be expanded to meet the needs of the church. Teacher qualities must be stressed. The qualification of an apt teacher for our pastors must receive a greater consideration than at the present time. We must not be satisfied with the pattern that our nation is setting before us today: lower standards will not bring higher achievements. Surely there are teachers and material for teachers among the Lord's church today. Let them teach and expound the ways of the Lord to our people both publicly and from house to house.

The word of the Lord should be read and discussed in our homes more and more. TV has become the center attraction in too many Baptists homes and that allows Satan to walk right in and teach us his

ways. He can be resisted. He doesn't have to make a Baptist "do it."

ARE WE ABLE: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." WHY? That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Now are we able to complete the work that has been assigned to us? Is the work complete until the entire commission that Jesus gave us has been fulfilled? We read of revival efforts, when they are going to start, who is involved in the work and then often we read of the results of these meetings (the number saved and baptized). How often have you read of a certain number that were strengthened by the teaching of the whole counsel of God? How often do we read of those baptized believers who were lost to the influence of Satan because of the failure of the teaching ministry of the church (the teacher and pupil have an equal responsibility herein)? Sometimes we read of how many members were lost by expulsion in the Associations; if these saved, baptized believers went back out into the world, it was due to a failure to observe all the wishes of Christ.

A recent report gave a staggering possibility. Some 2,336,944 people could come under the influence of the gospel through the preaching on TV. This work is done by our Baptist people, the possibility is there. In order to complete our responsibility to the Lord and the convert in fulfilling the commission, baptism would have to be offered. Teaching would have to be done so that they could become Baptists. Can you imagine what the impact of a few thousand Baptists would be? Let's take 400 ordained preachers as a conservative estimate. Equally divided that would mean each of us would have to baptize over 5,800 converts. How long would it take to teach these 5,800 people to observe the teachings of Christ? This really shocks the imagination of us all. Are we ready for so great a task? Can we do it? We are expected to cover all the earth with the truth, and follow that truth with baptism and instruction in righteousness. The Lord's work is a personal work. It cannot be left to other people (see Dan 2:44 and John 17). What church among us will take a member by proxy today? Will the answer be the same tomorrow as it is today? Let us not be as children in the market places, the Lord expects a complete work from his church. Let's face his work in full and teach those that we baptize.