

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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WHEN THE CHURCH HAD ITS BEGINNING.

Arthur C. Blackwell

This is one subject that men have differed on for a number of years. Not because the evidence hath not been set forth in the word of God, but because of doctrine and commandments of men that some have contended the church began with John the Baptist, when he was baptized in Jordan. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, PREPARE ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Jno. 3:1-3. The mission of John was to prepare a people to accept the Christ when he made his appearance. John did not teach the church was present when he was teaching and baptized, but it was at HAND. After John was imprisoned and beheaded, Jesus the Christ said in Matt. 16:18. I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH. In this passage the church is spoken of as YET BEING in the FUTURE. If the church was established in the days of John the Baptist how is it that Christ said I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH if it was already built. Hence, Christ was the builder not John. Death would not stop him from building it. Matt. 16:18 the gates of hell or hades shall not prevail against it. Thus the church was purchased with the blood of Christ. Acts 20:28. If there was such a thing as a church during the day of John the Baptist there was not a drop of blood in it. Not only that but no one had the right to teach in the name of Christ. But they were charged by See CHURCH on last page

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"IS IT I?"

Marvin Ed Berry --- Welcome Hill

We find in Matt. 26 in verses 20 to 25, that the twelve took stock by asking is it I. They showed personal concern. They did not accuse others. Let us ask the question, "Is It I?"

There are two major types of sins, by commission and by omission.

Sins by Commission

1. Drunkenness, Eph. 5:18, 1 Cor. 6:10.
2. Adultry, Matt 5:27.
3. Murder, Matt. 5:22, 1 Jno. 3:15
4. Sin of the tongue, 1 Pet. 3:10, Eph. 4:27, Jas. 3.
5. Stealing, Eph. 4:28

Sins By Omission Jas. 4:17

1. Failed to study, 2 Tim. 2:15, 1 Pet. 3:21, Acts 17:11, Ps. 1.
2. Failed to pray, 1 Thes. 5:17-18, 1 Tim 2:8.
3. Failed to be light of the world Matt. 5:14-16.
4. Failed to be example, 1 Tim. 4:12.
5. Failed to attend, Heb. 10:25.
6. Failed to give, Mark 12:41
7. Failed to obey the gospel Heb. 5:8-9.

WHY ARE YOU NOT A CHRISTIAN?

Acts 26:28

Orbie Robbins,

Elizabeth, Ark.

Perhaps no greater question ever presented itself to the mind of man and demanded attention, than the one question "Why are you not a Christian?"

But before we consider the reasons why many are not Christians it may be well to examine the inducements held out, and the advantages offered to those who of sins. 1 Jno: 2:12.

1. In becoming a Christian, we have the promise of forgiveness of sins. Jno. 2: 12.

2. A new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17

3. We are recognized as sons of God, 1 Jno. 3:1-3.

4. Heirs with Christ, with the promise of eternal life.

5. We are in Christ, Gal. 3:26-27

6. Where Salvation is located, 2 Tim. 2:10.

With these inducements held out before us for our good in this life the final question now comes "Why are you not a Christian?"

None of the many excuses offered are plausible neither will they stand to be examined the last day.

1. Sometimes we hear the excuse, "I am Waiting" for the operation of the Spirit. But has not the Spirit already operated on your heart? Did you ever think how and when the Spirit operated on the heart? Don't you remember that Jeremiah said the law must be written in our hearts? Jer. 31:31.

But you ask how does the Spirit write? In all writing we need (1) the writer (2) the pen (3) the ink (4) the paper. Then God is the writer for he said he would write. The apostles were the pen, or instruments in the hand of God'

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THE PURPOSES OF BAPTISM

Marion Farley — Dalas 17 Texas

I don't suppose there is a subject in all the Bible that has been discussed more, than that of baptism.

Some have gone so far as to teach that an infant isn't safe without it, while on the other hand, others (The Society of Friends) deny there is any importance connected with it at all, and do not administer it.

Somewhere between these two extremes, the true significance of the command can be found.

There are three phases of the same I would like to examine in the light of the scriptures, and this is the only way that any honest inquirer should be interested.

First is it Sprinkling, Pouring, or Immersion? I have absolutely no hesitancy in saying the first two are nowhere mentioned in the New Testament, neither is it even intimated that either was ever used for baptism.

Immersion and immersion only is sanctioned, being spoken of, as a 'burial' (Ro. 6:4), and a 'planting' in verse 5, also we read in (Mat. 3:16) where the Savior, came up out of the water,' as did the Eunuch in (Acts 8:39), we need no better authority for what we believe and do in religion, than examples given by the early disciples, and the Lord himself.

Next, who can be scripturally baptized? again we examine the teaching of the New Testament on this VERY, important subject.

We have a number of instances from which we should have no trouble whatsoever in determining

just who were commanded to be baptized in apostolic times, and if it was right then, it undoubtedly MUST be right now.

When Jesus gave the great commission to "Go-Preach," he himself limited the administration of baptism to believers. (Mk. 16:15-16).

On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, Peter was speaking to those who were old enough to feel their guilt for having a part in the murder of the Son of God, and told them to "Repent and be baptized" (Ac. 2:38), numerous others could be given similar to these but not, even one can be found where an infant received baptism, they could not be a scriptural subject, being unable to understand what it is all about, neither needing any of it's benefits, surely no sane person would contend that an infant that dies without being baptized (sprinkled) would have to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire, along with those who have committed all the sins known to mankind, we are assured the God whom we serve is not this kind of a Judge.

And last but not least, the purpose of baptism we shall now study should be of supreme interest to all who feel their dependence on God for their salvation, especially since so much importance is attached thereto.

First, baptism is a condition of entrance into the kingdom of Christ, we find two kingdoms distinctly set forth in the New Testament, being opposed to each other, one being the kingdom of Satan, the other the kingdom of God's Son.

Col. 1:13 teaches that we are, 'Delivered out, of Satans kingdom and 'translated' into the kingdom of 'God's dear Son,' baptism is the final step that makes one a citizen of God's kingdom.

Secondly it is FOR the remission of sins, I realize there is much false teaching in the world today to the contrary, but I still had rather take the apostle Peter's word concerning it than the OPIN-

ION of some men, or as for that matter, all uninspired men put together, it would be absurd for any person to claim that Peter didn't speak on this occasion under the direction of the Holy Spirit, or to insinuate that the Holy Spirit didn't know what baptism was for.

My understanding of the use of the conjunction AND in connecting two words, commands, or statements is, that it serves to make them of equal importance, example, 'Success depends on planning AND work,' or, 'Growing children need exercise AND sunshine,' most anyone can understand this kind of language but few seem to be able to see through a difficult?? statement like, "He that believeth AND is baptized shall be saved," or, "Repent AND be baptized—for the remission of sins," or, "Be baptized AND wash away thy sins," truly it seems to me that any person who has reached the age of accountability, and is of sound mind, who can't see this, either isn't being honest, or has been so blinded by false teaching, that he or she is in a very pitiable condition.

Excuses may seem plausible now, but in the day of judgment, every one will be without excuse, for then vengeance will be visited on all those who 'Know not God, and that obey not the gospel, why not obey it and be saved rather than disobey it and be lost?

I hope in this treatise on baptism, I have given you one the impression that we of the church of Christ, place any more emphasis on this command than we do any other command of the Lord, for most certainly we do NOT, for we believe and teach that before one can be scripturally baptized, that person must, hear the gospel in order for faith to be produced in the heart, (Ro. 10:14-17), in verse 10 the apostle Paul teaches us that confession is made with the mouth, Jesus said if we confess him, he will confess us, but if we deny him, he will also deny us (Matt. 10:32-33), Then in his

soul stirring address, as Paul stood in the midst of Mars hill, he testified to the Athenians that repentance was a command of God, we believe as did the Psalmist in (Ps. 119:172)" All thy commandments are righteousness."

Therefore we should never minimize a single command of God, may we realize more fully our grave responsibility of carrying out each and every one of them, through the faith we obtain by careful prayerful study of God's eternal truths, James said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally" (Jas. 1:5), we ask of him many things, but I fear we seldom ask him to give us 'an understanding heart,' as we find King Solomon did, this we should do often, for he still answers prayer, if we ask in faith, and, 'according to his will.'

THE CHURCH AT MOTEN

Floyd Lunn

The Moten church of Christ is located four and one half miles south of Mammoth Spring on the old Ash Flat road. This congregation was established about thirty years ago. The following preachers have held meetings at Moten: B. M. Lemmons, John Weaver, Ruel Lemmons, C. Rav Miller, Burl Curtis and Orbie Robbins.

At the present time seven families worship regularly at Moten, with an average attendance of sixteen. J. C. Atkins and T. S. Lunn serve as Elders of the congregation. Bros Keith Boler, Erwin Cowen and Clovis Ragsdale preach one Sunday each, every month. The church has contributed to mission work in Holland, Africa, and Italy as well as Radio programs in the United States. The church has supported the Fulton County Gospel News since its beginning, and sends the Christian Worker into the homes of each of its members.

HARDING COLLEGE PLAN TO ENLARGED BIBLE DEPT.

At the present time Harding College desires to expand its department of Bible into a School of Bible and Religion offering not only the Bachelor's Degree and the Master's Degree but offering three years of work beyond the Baccalaureate Degree and leading to the Bachelor of Sacred Literature Degree. This Degree is the equivalent of the B. D. Degree so far as the amount of academic work is concerned. The Board has also authorized the college to seek proper accreditation for the B. S. L.

To thus expand the Bible work at Harding College requires a Bible building in which our Bible work would be done, and in which the class rooms will be equipped with maps, charts and visual aid equipment. It also requires a much expanded religious library. It will also require some expansion of the Bible faculty. It is also desired to endow one Bible chair.

To do these things, it is estimated will require about \$650,000. The college will expect to raise much of this money out of the State. However, the present campaign is intended to raise \$200,000.00 in Arkansas. Approximately \$40,000 of this amount has already been pledged. This leaves approximately \$160,000 to be sought in this special effort within the bounds of Arkansas.

When this has been achieved the college will attempt to obtain the rest of the desired amount outside of the State of Arkansas. It is difficult however, to go to those outside the State for the greater part of the money until the college can report that the brethren within the State have shown their interest by making a liberal contribution toward this objective.

If anyone feels they can make a contribution for this work please

PREEMINENCE IN THE CHURCH

Clovis Ragsdale

In the book of third John we have the example of a man, Diotrephes by name, who loved to have preeminence in the church where he worshipped. John spoke out against this man, saying that he spoke malicious words about his brethren, and even withdrew fellowship from his brethren. Unfortunately the church today still has men within its ranks who love to run things their way and be the big boss in the work of the congregation. Many fine congregations have been divided and their work of saving souls hindered, when men of this type get enough power to have their way. The church is a glorifying body, but all of its glory is to be for God, through his son, Jesus Christ, and that excludes any glory for a mere human being. There are tasks in the work of the church which have to be performed by men, such as Elders, deacons, preachers, but these men need to realize the great responsibility of their position and this should cause them to be humble to a great degree. No greater work was ever delegated to men than that given the twelve apostles, and because they had some in their midst who desired preeminence, the Savior gave them a lesson on this subject, Matt. 18: 1-9, Mark 9: 33-37, Luke 9:46-50. In Mark nine, verse thirty five, notice the words of Jesus, if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. This was followed with the example of the little child. The work of the church is a work of service or of being a servant and is not to be used as a way of gaining glory. May we all put the cause of the church of our Lord before that of our own feelings at all times.

send the contribution to the editor of this paper or to Harding College Searcy, Ark.

CHURCH

Christ not to tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. Matt. 17:9.

After the death of Christ, Joseph of Arimathaea was looking for the kingdom of God.

And behold a man named Joseph, who was a counselor a good and righteous man (he had not consented to their counsel and deed.) O man of Arimathaea, a City of the Jews, who was looking for the kingdom of God. Lk. 23:50-51. The kingdom had not been established yet for he was looking for the kingdom. Joseph knew the kingdom or church was not established at that time for he was looking for it.

Even the apostles of Christ was yet waiting for the kingdom of church when they asked Christ after his resurrection, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, it is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:6-8. On the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles they convicted men of their sins, and told them what they must do to have their sins remitted. When they spoke by the Holy Spirit, saying Repent and be baptized everyone of you for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And they that were baptized were added unto them (church) about 3000 souls. Verse 47 the Lord added to THE church daily such as would be saved Acts 2:1-47.

I want to call your attention from Acts 2: the church or kingdom is spoken of as being present. In all of the other reference before Acts two it is always spoken of as in the future. Hence Peter guided by the Holy Spirit referred

to the incidents on Pentecost as the beginning. And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell on them, even, as on us at the BEGINNING. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit. If then God gave unto them the life gift as he did also unto us, when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God? Peter said the BEGINNING of the church was when the Holy Spirit fell on them at Pentecost.

If the church was established during the days of John the Baptist did not know it. Neither did Christ for he said I WILL BUILD my CHURCH. The apostles did not know of it for they asked the Lord doest thou restore the kingdom to Israel. Joseph of Arimathaea did not know it for he was looking for the kingdom of God. But from the day of Pentecost on we find the kingdom or church always spoken of as being present. Therefore the first pentecost after the resurrection of Christ is when the church of our Lord was established.

Any church that was established before the first Pentecost after Christ resurrection is too old. And those which have had their beginning this side of that day is too young.

CHRISTIAN

as taught by Paul 2 Cor. 3:3. The Spirit was the ink, 2 Cor. 3:3. The heart was the table, 2 Cor. 3:3. So on the day of Pentecost, God was the writer of the New Covenant, to do the writing the apostles were the pen in the hands of God.

But before writing with a pen it must first be filled with ink. So they waited until they were filled with the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:4. The paper was the hearts of the children of men. The Bible says when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, and wanted to know what to do. Acts 2:37.

So it is with you. Have you not

heard the story of the cross? If so, then wait no longer for the Spirit to draw, but come.

2. "But," say one, "I am waiting for a change of heart.

What kind of a heart have you, and how do you want it changed?

Have you not a heart that desires to become a child of God, one that wishes to do God's will, and wishes to go to heaven when you die? Then having that kind of heart, I ask you, what kind of change you would want to have?

3. Say another, "I am not good enough." Are you not a sinner? If true you are the kind that Christ came to save.

Remember he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Then if you are a sinner, are you not the kind to be saved? If true, what promise can you offer yourself in staying away?

4. I am not old enough," says one. Are you not old enough to know right from wrong? If you are will you not begin to do right to-day? There is danger in delay. The Prophet says, Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. Isa. 45:6.

Remember there may come a time when he may not be found, a time when he is not near.

Solomon tells us, Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not. nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

Remember that every day you travel on the broad way you have one day more of sins to give account of and one day less to repent. As we grow older, we find habits much harder to give up than it is to turn from them now.

While you are waiting to get older death may come and find you unprepared to meet God.

A Christian should be like a good watch — open faced, busy hands, pure gold, well regulated, full of good works.