



Why I am a BAPTIST.

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Are You SAVED?

He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

I John 5:12

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 3:36

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:31

How You Can Be SAVED:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 10:9-11

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.

John 3:16

believer has direct access to the Father through the High Priest Jesus Christ. The church, Holy Spirit, and the Lord himself also intercede. See Luke 11:1-4; Romans 8:26, 27, 34; 11:2; I Timothy 2:1; Hebrews 4:14; 7:25.

4. Baptists are the **TRUE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH** that Jesus built during his earthly ministry, and against whom he promised the gates of hell shall not prevail. See Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Ephesians 3:21.

5. Baptists are **INDEPENDENT** bodies, answerable only to the King of kings himself. Jesus is the church's only Head. The church is his body, that is, the body of believers is his possession. See Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:22, 23; Matthew 16:18. This is why true Baptists have always contended for separation of church and state. See Luke 20:25.

6. Baptists have **SUFFERED** for the truth and the testimony of Jesus Christ for nearly 2,000 years. See I Peter 2:21; 4:19; II Timothy 3:12; John 15:18; I John 3:13; Revelation 6:9.

7. Baptists defend **TOTAL SOUL LIBERTY** for every man, respecting a man's free will and right to believe or reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They do not force a man to believe the truth of God against his will. But, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. See Luke 19:10; Mark 2:17; Acts 28:24-28; II Corinthians 5:11.

THE END.

* For a concise history of where Baptists have been for the last two thousand years, I recommend a great little book entitled, *The Origin of the Baptists*, by S. H. Ford, LL.D., published by Bogard Press, 4605 North State Line, Texarkana, TX 75503, copyright 1950.

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pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). The Baptist way is the path that God has led me in. It is the path I have proved. It is the path that I rejoice in and love, as *love rejoices in truth* (I Corinthians 13:6; II John 1:4). Being mindful that sincerity cannot replace truth, I must have solid Biblical reasons for being a Baptist (John 17:17). Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar (Romans 3:4).

So, why am I a Baptist? Here are my reasons. May they be a testimony to our Saviour Jesus Christ.

I AM A BAPTIST BECAUSE ...

1. Baptists maintain the **BIBLE** is the sole authority for all matters relating to truth and doctrine. See John 17:17; II Timothy 3:15, 16. Tradition, politics, and the consensus of "doctors" have no advantage against "thus saith the Lord." See Psalm 119:140; Romans 3:4.
2. Baptists have the sole **AUTHORITY** to teach, preach, and baptize, according to the Great Commission of our Saviour, as given to the New Testament church. They are the keepers of God's word to God's people. They are the wise, winning souls to Jesus Christ. See Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 28:18-20; I Timothy 3:15. There is no universal or invisible "church." See Ephesians 4:8-16; I Corinthians 12:28. Only true churches have the authority to keep the ordinances delivered to them – baptism and communion.
3. Baptists defend the **PRIESTHOOD** of each believer, as each believer is answerable to Jesus Christ and sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. See Ephesians 1:13; Revelation 1:5, 6. Every

9. What do they teach is the biblical organization of the New Testament church? (A body of baptized believers who have covenanted together to carry out the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ; Ephesians 5; Malachi 2:14.)
10. Whom do they have for their authority? (The Bible shows Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the church, ruling by his word — with no headquarters, boards, etc., Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:23, 24.)
11. How are they organized and what is their government? (The Bible shows God-called and church-sent men are leaders of the flock, the church being followers; I Peter 5:2, 3; pastors/bishops and deacons; I Timothy 3:1-16.)
12. What are the group's ordinances and what are the purposes and effects of these? (Biblically, the true church has baptism and the Lord's supper as their ordinances. Baptism being for believers only, the Lord Supper for church members only; Mark 16:16; I Corinthians 11:17-34.)
13. How do they teach churches are started? (The New Testament shows that only true churches can start true churches; see the book of Acts; Genesis 1:11.)

The list could easily continue, but these basic questions are sufficient to separate most wolves from the sheep. By these questions and similar ones the true church can be identified, along with any unbiblical usurpers of this noble title.

Why am I a Baptist? Because true Baptist churches are true New Testament churches. As a wise man would not rely upon a counterfeiter's answer as to whether his currency is legitimate, so also should a wise man seek truth from "the

WHY I AM A BAPTIST.

The Baptist name has a long history, having its start with John the Baptist in the first century. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ, chosen by God to prepare the way of the Lord (Luke 7:27; John 1:6). Jesus said of John the Baptist these words:

And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appalled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

Luke 7:24-28

Here is what John the Baptist said of Jesus Christ:

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:29

There are two characteristics of John that Jesus reveals. First, he was a not person who was “shaken with the wind,” that is, John did not waver in preaching the truth, regardless of the consequences. He had what some call today *internal fortitude* – John stood for right against wrong, and it cost him his head (Mark 6:25-28). He had rather died than to compromise the truth. The second characteristic Jesus revealed was that John cared not whether people were impressed by him. He was “immune to public opinion,” as some used to say. He cared not about being *politically correct*, or being accepted by the powers that be. May God give us more men like John the Baptist!

While Jesus testified of the character of the *Man of God*, John testified of the *Lamb of God*. John preached salvation through Jesus Christ. John also recognized himself as merely a forerunner, destined to yield all to Jesus Christ. Notice what John said of Jesus in John 3:30: “He must increase, but I *must* decrease.”

In writing this paper on *Why I am a Baptist*, I am declaring plainly and unashamedly that I, too, am a Baptist. All glory and thanks be to Jesus Christ, who saved me, enabled me, and counted

church. And what are these biblical characteristics? What is the biblical model? Here are few questions to consider:

1. When does the group claim its beginning? (The true church had their beginning in the first century, Matthew 16:18)
2. Who is the group’s founder? (The Bible shows Jesus Christ alone to be the founder of the true church, Matthew 16:18.)
3. Where was the first of their group organized? (The true church had their beginning in Jerusalem, Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8.)
4. Of whom is their body comprised? (The Bible shows the true New Testament church to be comprised only of baptized believers, starting with Jesus and his apostles, I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:20.)
5. What do they teach is the way of salvation? (The New Testament teaches salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone as declared in the gospel – Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 1:16; I Corinthians 15:1-5.)
6. What do they teach is the proper mode of baptism? (The New Testament shows true baptism to be immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; Matthew 28:19, 20.)
7. Who do they say is the candidate for baptism? (The New Testament teaches this to be a believer only, never an infant or an unbeliever, Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36, 37.)
8. Who do they teach has the sole-authority to teach and baptize? (Jesus Christ gave this authority to the true church exclusively: the church that persevered through the ages; Matthew 28:18-20.)

sodomites in the land, than a place that preaches the gospel of the blessed Saviour.

And what shall we say of the religious denominations in the world that claim to be Christian? Are they? Does their history start with a man or the Son of Man? Did they persecute the true church? Are their hands stained with the blood of the true believers in Jesus Christ? Did they come out of the Mother of Harlots, bringing with them all kinds of vile heresies?

Where were these religious denominations a hundred years ago? Where were they five hundred years ago? Where were they a thousand years ago, when the darkness of the wicked lay upon the earth? Where were they fifteen hundred years ago? Where were they nineteen hundred years ago? Where have they been for nearly two thousand years? These are good questions. (See endnote * on page 10.) Those who received the promise of the Saviour, that the gates of hell shall not prevail, should have endured. And not only endured, but they must also have been faithful to carry out the commandments of the Saviour to preach, teach, and baptize — these commandments being committed to the true churches exclusively. And whom does history prove these people to be? *BAPTISTS!*

But history is not our final authority. We must have a far better testimony. We must have the testimony of the Scriptures. We must determine what God says the true church is. We must go to that blessed BOOK and search out the characteristics of a biblical church, a New Testament

me faithful, putting me into the ministry (I Timothy 1:12). And though I am a Baptist through and through (from the top of my head to the sole of my foot), I would cast aside my Baptist beliefs and that blood-soaked name, were the Holy Bible (King James Version — AV 1611) to show this were not the true way. I shall by God's grace take God's word as my *final authority*, not some Baptist way. But I have found no conflict between what the Bible teaches the church *is* and what the true Baptists *are*. From where came the Baptists? From the Lord himself.

Jesus promised he *himself* would build *his* church (Matthew 16:18); and that *his* church would be the pillar and ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15); and that in *his* church God would receive glory throughout *all ages* (Ephesians 3:21). Jesus also promised that against *his* church the gates of hell shall not prevail (Matthew 16:18). The gates of hell have tried to prevail against it, but Jesus' churches still abide. The world has hated the church since the beginning. The world hates the church because it first hated Jesus Christ (John 15:18, 19; 17:14; I John 3:13). We reason easily from these verses that those who persecuted and hated the true church of Jesus Christ must be of the world (or worse, John 8:44), and not of God. The Roman Papists (the mother of harlots) who were made drunk with the blood of the saints (Revelation 17:1-6), the Protestants (the harlots of their mother) who persecuted the church, and the Politicians who legislated against her and authorized the shedding of her blood, are not the true church, neither for the true church, but against it — they are of the world.

In every age since Jesus first built his church there have been those called-out assemblies of true baptized believers who have covenanted together with their beloved Saviour to carry out his commandments (John 14:15, 23). History proves there were these persecuted churches in every age since that first church in Jerusalem was started by the Lord himself. But we have a better and infallible testimony: the scriptures themselves, inspired by God, clearly prove the perpetuity of the church that Jesus started. God's word is more than sufficient, and having pre-eminence over all books or writings of man, is *the final authority*.

The testimony of scripture is clear: the church that Jesus built must abide still. And Jesus' church will be hated by the world. Her primary duty — to preach, teach, and baptize, according to the commandment of the Saviour — is still being fulfilled by her until that time when the Bridegroom comes for her (John 3:29; Ephesians 5:25; Matthew 25:1-13).

So, how does one identify which group that *claims* to be a true church is really a true church? I believe the answer is simple: If the group fulfills the biblical requirements of a scriptural church, then the group is a scriptural church. If the group does not fulfill the biblical requirements, or, more plainly, *if it does not match the biblical model for a church*, then it can not be a scriptural church. By merely comparing the *biblical model* with the facts concerning a particular group, one can discern whether or not it fulfills the biblical requirements.

The above-stated principle should not intimidate those who are a true church, but it will intimidate those who are not. All who claim to be a scriptural church should look forward to taking out the Holy Bible and, point by point, compare what "thus saith the Lord" to their own practices, beliefs, and history.

Does this mean that all non-biblical groups are wicked and cursed of God? Not at all. If they are a witness of the *true gospel* (read Galatians 1: 6-9), and if they magnify the Jesus Christ of the Bible, I believe God is pleased. But keep in mind that man-made organizations, no matter how righteous their intentions, will sooner or later apostasize, or become corrupted, because they do not have the promise of Jesus Christ that the gates of hell shall not prevail against them!

I do not say that these non-church groups should shut their doors, but I do not desire to be part of them. I will put my labour in that for which I gain an eternal reward (I Corinthians 3:5-15). I will serve in that God-built church the Saviour loves rather than in an organization built by man.

In their day the Salvation Army won souls, thinking that if they supplied that for the body (physical), the recipients would be more inclined to receive the gospel (that which is spiritual). Today, they are more of a resale business. (Remember what the Saviour said, Matthew 6:33, etc.) The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was intended to be a place where young men could be won to the Saviour. Today, they appear to me to be more of a place that attracts the