

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3**

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WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

By J. H. Smith
Santa Paula, CA

"Go to, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; Where as ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanish away." James 4:13, 14.

What is your life, this inspired writer asks; and he answers the question with an illustration, or a likeness: It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanishes. I believe we understand the nature of a vapour. I have stood and watched a little cloud appear in the sky. Stand for a while and see it disappear. This illustrates to us that life is for a brief time, and we can't know when it will disappear. So we had better not boast about what we are going to do tomorrow, for God only knows what will be then. Many people are making plans just like they are going to live forever on this earth; but even the cemeteries that dot this earth proves to us that we had better not make plans to live here always. But the wise person will prepare to live in the hereafter.

James goes on in his Epistle to say? "For ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." James 4:15. The Lord gives us our life, and we don't know when He will take it. We can't take our life in our own hands, even though you hear such an expression sometimes. In this verse, together with many, many more in the Bible, there is proof that God wants us to take Him in consideration in what we plan to do. But people just go on their busy way and forget that God even exists. Forgetting, of course, that one day that all of us shall give an account of what we have done with our lives.

Life is brief, so what are you doing with your life? There is a great saying, "Only one life will soon be past, and what's done for Christ will last." So many young people today have wonderful talents that God has blessed them with, but the majority use their gifts to entertain the world, to give pleasure to the flesh; but pleasures of the flesh are only for a season. It is better to suffer afflictions with the people of God, like Moses, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. (Hebrews 11:24-26)

What will you have at the judgement? There will be rewards to the faithful, not necessarily for just those who have made the biggest showing, because God sees not as man seeth; for He doesn't overlook the small things that are done in the name of Jesus; small, that is, in the eyes of men. Jesus said this: "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." Mark 9:41

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DID THE TWELVE APOSTLES CONSTITUTE THE CHURCH?



by W. T. Russell

Now at the 28th verse Paul begins to tell them about various gifts that God gave to the church. This is proven by verses 29, 30, 31. "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." If this does not prove that Matt. 12:28 has reference to gifts set in the church, then language doesn't mean anything.

Now Paul tells us in Eph. 4:11, 12, 13 the purpose of these gifts. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

All will admit, I am sure, that the apostles were officers placed in the church. If we all agree that the apostles were officers, then let us reason together. Is an organization first established, then the officers set in, or officers set in, then the organization established? Would a Governor be appointed to govern a state which does not exist? Would a king without a kingdom appoint ambassadors to represent a kingdom before it existed. I believe all can see how unreasonable this is.

So in view of the above facts, how could Christ have set the apostles as officers in the church if no church existed? Now if the apostles were 'the church', did not Christ set up an office instead of a church? If not over

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YOUTH DAY

It's time for Youth Day 1985. The old lodge of the historic Natchez Trace Park will again be the place. The date is set as always - the last Saturday in May or May 25, 1985. The day's activities will begin at 10:00 a.m. C.D.T.

We are expecting to eclipse the record attendance for the fourth consecutive year. All ages of youth are invited for this special day of fellowship and instruction. This year's theme will be centered around "DRUGS & ALCOHOL ABUSE." Sergeant Bud Hulsey of the Kingsport Police Department will be featured speaker. Bring your lunch. Soft drinks will be furnished. Hope your church will be represented this year.

VOICE OF BAPTISTS

(USPS 423-350)

P. O. Box 572

Huntingdon, Tenn. 38344

Kenneth W. Massey, Editor

STAFF WRITERS

James H. Smith, Santa Paula, CA

W. T. Russell, Nashville, TN

F. W. Lambert, Westmoreland, TN

Harold D. Carver, Buena Vista, TN

Jerry A. Reynolds, Bowling Green, KY

Stephen M. Skinner, Springfield, MO

Keith D. Frieze, Springfield, MO

CIRCULATION STAFF

Glynn and Linda Williams, Huntingdon, TN

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Did The Twelve Apostles Constitute The Church?

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whom do these officers preside? How could they preside over each other if all have the same rank in office and authority?

I believe that as John the Baptist was sent to make ready a people for the Lord, that Jesus used all the material prepared for him in the constitution of the church. Beside this, I believe he prepared people himself who went into the church, according to John 4:1. I would hate to limit the work of John the Baptist to the preparation of only twelve and one of them was a devil.

Yours for the TRUTH
W. T. Russell



"The depth of one's convictions measures the breadth of his influence."



RELIGIOUS DISCUSSION

Elder P. D. Ballard of Vian, Oklahoma will meet Jesse Whitlock in Blanchord, Oklahoma April 29 and 30 to discuss the following proposition:

"It is impossible for a born again, regenerated child of God to so apostatize as to be finally lost in hell

P.D. Ballard, Affirms
Jesse Whitlock, Denies

BELIEVERS ARE BAPTIZED— NON-BELIEVERS ARE CONDEMNED

By Jackie Wilburn
Carthage, TN

One of the most damnable heresies that is being taught in the world today is water salvation. Some refer to it as baptismal regeneration. Either way you look at it this doctrine is contrary to the scriptures and is damnable to the soul of man.

The apostle Peter warns us in his writing that false prophets and false teachers would come in among us and teach damnable heresies (1 Peter 2:1,2) And he said that many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

The young church had not been in existence very long when men started introducing heresy, and baptismal salvation was one of the first to come to the front. Peter said they would do this privately. Brother the devil's crowd is not ashamed to tell you that it takes the assistance of water in order to salvation. But the scriptures teach salvation in order to receive baptism. The man caught stealing was not sent to prison in order to steal but he was sent because of, or in reference to stealing.

The church that my Lord established in the days of his ministry (personal) knows nothing about water being essential to salvation. She does teach that the atonement of the blood of Jesus is enough to save every lost person in the world. Why does the Lord's church teach, preach, and practice this doctrine? Because it is the Doctrine of God and not the Doctrine of Sinful man. (1 John 1:7.) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. This being true there are no sins left for water baptism to cleanse, or good works to cleanse, or the Lord's Supper to cleanse, or church membership. The precious blood of Jesus wipes the account clear. As that blessed old song says "The Old Account Was Settled Long Ago."

Many people that belong to the Baptist Church are willing to sit by and let the world call them Protestants. I would like to make one thing clear and that is we are not Protestants, we are Baptists that never have been a part of the Catholic establishment and never will be. The irregulars that came out of the Catholic establishment and argued and protested with the Catholics are Protestants. The

founders of catholicism are the ones guilty of introducing infant baptism into the world and that very introduction has led a great multitude of people to take up with this damnable heresy.

No where does the scripture say be baptized or perish. It does say except ye repent you shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3-5). The scriptures say that he that believeth not is condemned already. (John 3:18) Where is the scripture that says he that is not baptized is condemned???

The son of man is to be lifted up in order to be saved. Baptism is the ordinance of the church and should be administered to believers only. How do we know this? (Matt. 3:8) Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. No one should ever receive baptism that cannot tell a personal experience of what the Lord has done for them. John the Baptist called people who had no fruits a generation of vipers. If the spirit of God has taken up its' abode in your heart you don't have to get in the water to know about it. Do we have proof of this? (1 John 4:13) Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and be in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

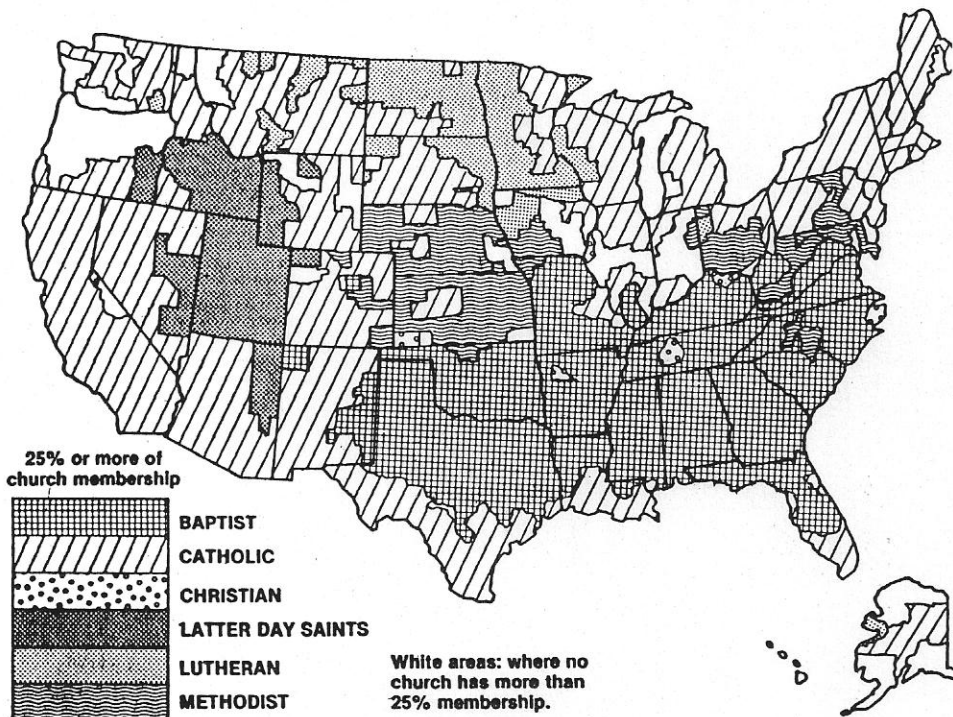
There is example after example in the Bible where people believed God and were then baptized. When God the Father sent his Son to fulfill the prophesies of old, he did not do the job halfway, He finished it. Just before He gave up the ghost while hanging on the cross He said "It is finished." This was what it took to save my soul and if you ever make it to glory you'll have to come the blood route. This route is safe, sound, and secure.

Some people think they have to ask the preacher or a member of the church if they are saved. They think the preacher has to baptize them before they are saved. When the Lord saved the Apostle Paul, "and when you are saved God reveals his son in you." He reveals His Son's righteousness to you and you can't reveal anything to Him such as telling Him how good you are or that you've been baptized—His righteousness is revealed to you by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 1:15-16) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; No one had to help God in the saving of this man's soul by administering baptism. He was saved before He ever was put under the water.

Man did not reveal Christ to the Apostle Peter. He knew Jesus before He ever met Him during the personal ministry of Christ. How did He know Him? Flesh and blood did not reveal Jesus to Him but the Father which is in Heaven. (Matt. 16:17) He knew by the power of God.

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MAJOR RELIGIOUS REGIONS



The distribution of religious denominations across the U.S. follows the approximate pattern of settlement. This can be seen most clearly in the Spanish-Catholic Southwest and in the Mormon region. The South is predominately Baptist, and the Methodist block and general diversity in the Central and Middle Western states leads in to a Lutheran-Catholic mix in the North. Despite a strong Puritan background, New England mainly Catholic.

SOURCE: Glenmary Research Center

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YOUR COMMENTS

We both enjoy the "Voice" very much and have enclosed a little money for the paper.

Robert & Ruby Jackson
Ochelata, OK

We are enclosing a small check to help with the costs of publishing "Voice of Baptists."

Reba M. Marion
Missouri

The church wishes to send you another check for your wonderful paper.

Fellowship Baptist Church
Indianapolis, IN
Billy R. Gregory, Treas.

Keep us on your prayer list. Our church needs a pastor so much. May the good Lord bless is our prayer.

Bethel Baptist Church
Corvallis, OR
Kayte Swanson, Treas.

Enclosed is a check for the "Voice". Please send it to my mother-in-law. Her address is enclosed.

Roy M. Corbitt
Bowling Green, KY

We look forward to receiving the "Voice of Baptists." Please continue sending it to us. You're doing a good job with the publication.

Wayne & Elizabeth Runner
Bowling Green, KY

We appreciate the paper. Thanks a lot.

Oak Grove Baptist Church
Chesterfield, TN

REVIVALS

MARCH 31

Beech Grove Miss. Baptist Church, Tipton, IN Church is located at the corner of Mill and Douglas Streets. Pastor Ronald L. Cook will be assisted in the preaching by Elder James H. Smith of Santa Paula, California. Everyone is invited!

APRIL 10

Independent Missionary Baptist Church, Huntingdon, TN. Preaching by Bro. Ronnie Stewart and Pastor Kenneth Massey. Services each evening at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome!

APRIL 28

Faith Missionary Baptist Church, 17900 Glendale, Roseville, MI. Pastor Dwayne Greer is to be assisted by Elder W. R. Overton of Madison, TN. We desire the prayers of all. A loving welcome is extended to everyone.

MAY 10

Old-Time Miss. Baptist Church, Elizabeth, WV. Bro. Nathan York of Indianapolis will be preaching. Services each evening at 7:00 p.m. Everyone welcome!

MAY 12

Grace Miss. Baptist Church, Detroit, MI. Pastor Kenneth Stapleton is to be assisted by Elder Charles Stapleton of Kingsport, TN.

"Many of the true heroes of the world are not athletic, have never seen battle's carnage, nor have been to Hollywood. They have been too busy plodding away on mission fields."

SERMONS DAY

Eastside Baptist Church of Franklin, Ky. will host the next Sermons Day. The date is Saturday, May 11, 1985 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Elders Jackie Wilburn and Tom Armstrong will bring sermons in the morning. Following lunch there will be time given to singing and another sermon in the afternoon by Elder Kenneth Massey.

A hearty welcome is extended to everyone.

What Is Your Life?

(Continued from page 1)

I believe that there will be saved people at the coming of Christ who will be ashamed. "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." I John 2:28 All born again people will be saved in heaven, but not everybody will have rewards. The apostle Paul said, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them also that love His appearing." II Timothy 4:8; To them that love His appearing, he said, and not to them who will be ashamed.

There is a story told about two brothers, their names were James and John. They grew up together and agreed to go along with each other in life and try to get ahead. Both of them were saved. God called John to preach, so he couldn't carry out the agreement with his brother James. They lived in the east, but James was interested in making money and moved out west. He became a banker and a rancher, a big success. When they were getting down in years James sent for his brother John to come to Texas to visit him; John was a poor man, but James sent him the money for him and family to come; he said he would like for them to be together once more before they died. John and his family went for a visit. The first day of their visit James took John out to look over his fine ranch, he took him down to his office to see it and the fine staff working for him. When day was done, they sat down in James's fine house and talked, and talked about old times when they were young men together back home; finally, when all the rest had gone to bed, and just the two of them left talking, James said to his brother: John, you have been a fool, I have been a success but you are poor; you can't even dress well, and your daughters must be ashamed of the way they are dressed. Just look what I have accomplished. There was a silence for a few moments, and then John, the Lord's servant, broke the silence, and asked his brother: James, what will you have at the judgement? James said: I will be a pauper! Judgement is coming, and what will you have? "For we all must appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." II Corinthians 5:10

FIRST SERVICE

The members of Independent Missionary Baptist Church are expecting to meet for worship in their new facility Sunday, May 12.

Believers are Baptized

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The Lord doesn't ask for the hands of men to baptize you in order to salvation. In fact He doesn't even need you or me. We need Him. (Acts 17:25) Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.

This being true then surely the Lord gives us eternal salvation without the assistance of man's hands.

(Acts 16:14) Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thy-a-tira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

Notice the fact that Lydia first heard and after she heard the gospel the Lord did the heart work. Her heart was touched by the Lord before she was ever baptized. After her heart was opened she then attended to the things which were spoken of Paul. But notice and rest assured that the heart work came first and that heart work was done by God. Lydia was a worshipper before she ever heard the preaching of the Apostle Paul. But she was not a born again believer. She was no more a fit subject for baptism than the pharisees and sadducees that came to John's Baptism. I fear that many people are in this same condition today, worshippers but not born again believers. Having a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof from such turn away. (II Tim. 3:5)

If you will notice in Paul's letters when He addresses or salutes a church or churches, or a brother in christ he always makes it a point to present the grace of God and then follows it up with peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Read (Romans 1:7) Grace brings peace. Grace comes from God not from water. We are buried with Christ in Baptism. We don't get with him in baptism we are buried with him. (Romans 6:4) The Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost not by water. (Romans 5:5)

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. (I Cor. 12:3)

The scripture is clear that grace brings salvation not water. (Titus 2:11)

There are other occasions in the Bible that prove beyond a doubt that only born again believers are baptized. The Holy Ghost fell while Peter was preaching to the household of Cornelius before he ever gave them the command to be baptized and the scripture says they magnified God and spoke in tongues before they were baptized and Peter said, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (Acts 10:47)

Spirit before water—believers baptism. Note: Do you believe a sinner could magnify God?

The Ethiopian Eunuch asked Phillip—What doth hinder me to be baptized? There's plenty of water here why don't you go ahead and baptize me? And Phillip 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) This man was a believer before he was ever baptized and what does the scripture say? He that believeth on him is not condemned but he that believeth not is condemned already. Because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. (John 3:18) John tells us who is condemned and who is not condemned and gives the reason why he is condemned and that reason is not because he has not been baptized, it's because of unbelief in the only begotten son of God. Every soul that goes to hell will go because of this reason. It won't be because he hasn't had water baptism but because of unbelief.

The Corinthians heard the preaching of Paul and hearing they believed, and were baptized. (Acts 18:8) They believed before they were baptized. The proof goes on and on and there are many more things that could be brought out but surely this is enough proof to show you that something has to be done to the heart of man before he can be a fit subject for Baptism.

In Paul's letter to the church at Corinth he spake these words. (I Cor. 1:14-18) I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Surely, surely if baptism had been necessary or essential to salvation God would have sent Paul to baptize. Paul later wrote and said I have begotten you with the gospel. If ever a soul is saved it has to be saved through the atoning blood of Jesus, not through a natural resource such as water. After you are saved present yourself before the true church that Christ organized and if you are received by them you will receive scriptural baptism.

"There are not enough preachers of the right sort, but there are too many of the other sort."

J. N. Hall
