

The Baptist Examiner

A nation-wide, independent paper, standing foursquare for the distinguishing doctrines of Baptists, and shunning not to declare all the counsel of God.

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

Vol. 1

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No. 15

The Church That Christ Loved

By C. R. Peterson, Home Missionary, Union of Regular Baptists of Michigan, St. Louis, Michigan.

"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."—Eph. 5:25.

What is this thing which called forth such infinite love from the Son of God? Is it a matter of small consequence? Are all of the 217 sects of this country churches? Is one church just as good as another, and are they all going the same way? These and similar ones are questions that repeatedly present themselves for consideration. Are the Scriptures sufficiently clear in their revelation concerning the church that we may be led out of the confusion and darkness that prevails today in Christendom? The writer believes they are. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Christ announced (Matt. 16:18) that he would build his "ekklesia," which Greek word is translated "church" in our Bible. Let us concede that in this first use of the word we cannot be sure of the meaning of it. But we find that Christ subsequently used the same word twenty-one times, and always to indicate a local assembly. It would indeed be a strange kind of exegesis that would make Him mean a local assembly in twenty-one instances, and an altogether different thing when he used the word in Matthew 16:18. It is simply unthinkable. Hence the theory of any kind of a church except a local assembly cannot be established from the words of our Lord himself.

It is also reasonable to believe that Christ had fully instructed his disciples concerning the church before his return to the Father. The history of their labors and achievements in establishing churches are recorded in the book of The Acts of the Apostles. Here we find the word "ekklesia" used twenty-four times, and in each case clearly indicates a local assembly, including the three times that the word is used to denote the Ephesian mob in chapter nineteen. There is but one kind of a church to be found in the book of Acts, and that is a local church.

Paul was undoubtedly called to be the teacher of the churches. His use of the word "ekklesia" throws additional light on the meaning of it. He uses the word five times in Romans, twenty-one times in 1 Corinthians, nine times in 2 Corinthians, three times in Galatians, twice in Philippians, twice in 1 Thessalonians, twice in 2 Thessalonians, three times in 1 Timothy, once in Philemon, and twice in Hebrews. Paul, therefore, used the word fifty times in these epistles, and with the possible exception of the Epistle to the Hebrews, used it always to mean a local assembly. It is very probable that it has the same meaning in Hebrews. In Heb. 2:12 it most likely refers to that meeting of the church when the Lord was present and instituted the Lord's Supper. Undoubtedly Heb. 12:23 looks forward to the time when the Lamb shall take unto himself his bride, in which case it will be a local assembly. There remain, therefore, of the Pauline Epistles only the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians upon which to build a theory of an "invisible church," or any kind of a church other than a local

assembly. "Ekklesia" occurs nine times in Ephesians and four times in Colossians. Twice in the letter it denotes a local church. Of the 115 times that the word "ekklesia" is used in the Bible, we have found that 104 times it refers to a local assembly. We have, therefore, only eleven instances left upon which to build a "visible" or "invisible" church theory. These eleven uses are in Ephesians and Colossians. Let us look then into these two epistles that have been compelled to yield so much.

In Acts 20:28 Paul addresses the Ephesian elders concerning the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, and charges them "to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood." Here he uses "the church of God" to designate the church at Ephesus—a local assembly. It seems unreasonable, then, to believe that when about four years later he writes an epistle to this church he should mean something entirely different when he speaks of "the church." At a still later date Paul writes to Timothy, whom he had left at Ephesus, concerning his behavior "in the house of God which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," manifestly the local assembly. According to the "invisible church" theorists, Paul must have suffered frequent changes of mind, holding first to the local assembly idea, then when writing the Epistle to the Ephesians suffered a complete change of mind and embraced the "invisible church" theory, and finally coming back again to the local church (1 Tim. 3:15). If Paul uses "ekklesia" in an abstract or generic sense in the letter to the Ephesians, he has not departed from his use of the term elsewhere, as it is always a local assembly where the abstract or generic must find its concrete expression. Dr. B. H. Carroll has well said: "Because each and every particular assembly is the representative, or type, of the general assembly, to each and every one of them are applied all the broad figures which pertain to the general assembly. That is, such figures as 'the house of God,' 'the temple of the Lord,' 'the body,' or 'flock' or 'bride of Christ.' The New Testament applies these figures just as freely and frequently to the particular assembly as to the general assembly. That is, to any particular assembly, by itself alone, but never to all the particular assemblies collectively." All of this finds confirmation when the Lord addresses the "church of Ephesus" (Rev. 2:1), as a local assembly, one of the seven CHURCHES of Asia. All that has been said concerning the epistle to the Ephesians applies equally to the epistle to the Colossians.

The word "ekklesia" appears once in James, three times in 3 John, and twenty times in Revelation. In all of these cases it designates a local assembly. Clearly, then, the Scriptures reveal the church as an organized assembly of saved, baptized people in a given locality, commissioned to carry on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ during his absence in person.

It should be borne in mind that there is a clear distinction in Scripture between the church of God and the family of God.

The new birth makes one a member of the latter, but not of the former. The Old Testament saints, the thief on the cross, and children dying in infancy are all in the family of God, but not in the church. There will be many in heaven who were never in the church (Rev. 19:9). All who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are saved, and will have their place in heaven. But the church, as the bride of Christ, is to be accorded a peculiar place with him who will then be **"King of kings, and Lord of lords."** She is to reign with him. Since the church is now a local assembly on earth, one must join himself thereto in order to become a member. He can do this only by baptism. Perhaps a personal experience will illustrate this point. When the writer was pastor at Cheboygan, Michigan, some years ago, a man made public profession one Sunday evening of being saved through Jesus Christ, and was received by the church "for membership after baptism." The baptism was to take place the following Lord's Day. On the Tuesday intervening he was stricken with apoplexy and died. None can question that he became a member of the family of God by virtue of the new birth, but the fact remains that he never was a member of the church.

We have in this country today 217 different kinds of "churches." Since God is not the author of confusion, he cannot be responsible for 216 of these (Matt. 15:13). What about the remaining one? Inspired Scripture tells us that there was a man sent from God. And the Lord himself called this man a Baptist. By authority from heaven, John baptized his disciples. This would make these disciples Baptists just as those become Baptists today who are baptized by a Baptist preacher. John's mission was **"to make ready a people prepared for the Lord"** (Luke 1:7). Out of this prepared material the Lord began to build his church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20). **It was Baptist then; it is Baptist now; and has been Baptist all the time between.** What it believed then it believes now, and has believed all through nineteen hundred years. No matter in which century you look at it, it has been the same in doctrine, belief and practice. Verily, the gates of hell have not prevailed against it. True, it was not called a "Baptist" church in the beginning. It was unnecessary to thus designate it, as there were then no churches of human origin. It would not be necessary to so designate it today if Luther, Calvin, Henry the 8th, Wesley, Alexander Campbell, Mrs. Baker Glover Eddy, Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson Hutton, and others, had not built rival organizations and called them "churches." These rival institutions have compelled us to bear a distinguishing name, and because it is necessary we are content to be known by the only name that the Head of the Church ever bestowed upon any one, viz: Baptist.

In addition to the establishment of His church, Christ also promised the perpetuity of it (Matt. 16:18). He has fulfilled this promise, as history adequately records. It is a gruesome story, this record of the martyrdom of forty millions of Baptists during these nineteen centuries. But it is also the history of the triumph of faith in the hour of bitter persecution. These heroic Baptists, persecuted by pagans, Catholics and Protestants, counted not their lives dear unto themselves, but they did esteem as of priceless value those things which the Lord had made known concerning his church. And the world owes a debt to these pioneers of soul-liberty and freedom which it cannot pay. They have preserved intact the faith once for all delivered unto the saints in spite of dungeons, fire and sword.

Christ's love for the church is further evidenced by his present ministry at the right hand of the Father. He is **"sanctifying and cleansing it with the washing of water by the Word."** But the Word would be ineffectual without the administration of the Spirit. Hence the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting church on the day of Pentecost, baptizing it for power to carry out the great commission given by the Lord. And it is only by this Divine power that the church can accomplish its three-fold task of making disciples, baptizing them, and instructing them. Whenever the church has been true to her mission, the living Lord has manifested his presence in the midst of the candlesticks, preparing her for her final and greatest triumph.

That triumph will come when His wife, having made herself ready, the Heavenly Bridegroom will descend from heaven to take her unto himself. Amidst the splendors of the glories of heaven, and the hallelujahs of the great multitudes, as the voice of many waters, the glorified Lord will present himself **"a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."** It is the consummation of the purpose of the ages; it is the hour of the church's triumph; it is the Lord's achievement of the joy that was set before him. **"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."** The sufferings of the present time will speedily be forgotten in the glory that shall be revealed. That hour seems to be at hand. The midnight cry, **"Behold the bridegroom cometh,"** is growing louder and louder. The signs of the times indicate the imminence of His coming. In spite of scoffing and apostasy, the true church loves his appearing. Arrayed in fine linen, purifying herself even as He is pure, she maintains her age-long vigil, sustained by **"that blessed hope."** He which testifieth these things saith, **"Surely I come quickly."** And the waiting bride replies, **"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."**

Mourners' Bench Discussion

Elder E. G. Sisk Makes Rejoinder and We Reply.

In our issue of Oct. 1 we published a defense of the mourners' bench by Elder E. G. Sisk, of Hopkinsville, Ky., and replied to same. Below we give Elder Sisk's rejoinder and our further reply.

"Bro. Simmons reminds me that I must be brief, fair, and not too strong, or I shall share a like fate as Bro. Barnes."

We didn't tell you not to be too strong, for we knew at best you would be very weak.

"You say that I gave no authority for my practice, but I notice that you divided my article into 61 parts and wrote nearly three lines to my one in reply."

Like all good debaters are supposed to do, we replied to everything you said. We didn't skip over about three-fourths

of your article as you did our reply. You made statements and offered little or no proof. We submitted proof in practically every section of our reply. Thus we required more space than you. Pastor Dew attempted to prove his statements, and, whereas he used 115 lines, we used only 90 in reply. Therefore, the fact that we had to use nearly three lines to your one is by no means a compliment to you. And the fact that you passed over three-fourths of our reply testifies that we used our lines quite effectively.

"You say, 'We are not opposed to sinners mourning when and where they please.' Then why not give them a seat?"

We do if they want one and there is one available. We have never forced any one to stand up in the services if a seat was available.

"If it is right for sinners to mourn, then it is right to have a mourners' bench."

Not so. A mourners' bench is a special bench or place to which sinners are asked to come. This is anti-scriptural.

"O consistency, thou art a jewel."

How do you know consistency is a jewel? You have never been close enough to it to inspect it.

"I affirm that Christ and the apostles furnished their mourners' the same kind of seats that their congregation had."

We affirm the same thing, and, therefore, do not have a special seat for mourners. Selah!

"We have as much authority to furnish the mourners a seat as we do the preacher, the deacons, or the congregation."

Certainly. And inasmuch as we let the preacher, the deacons, and the congregation sit where they please, we do the same with the mourners. Selah again!

"You say, 'A man can be saved without seeking.' You have denied these plain statements of God's word: 'Seek and ye shall find' (Matt. 7:7). 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found' (Isa. 55:6). 'If thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off forever' (1 Chron. 28:9). Remember, that the Bible is either all true or all false."

The first Scripture above was spoken to saved people. You wrest it as you do the other Scriptures. The other two Scriptures were spoken to Israel, a covenant people, and not to sinners of this dispensation. God's message to sinners of this dispensation is to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"You say, 'There can be a revival without a protracted meeting.' Whoever heard of such a thing? There could be no revival unless the people met somewhere, and if they continued to meet it would be protracted."

Everybody that has read history has heard of several revivals without a protracted meeting. A protracted meeting means a meeting in which services are held daily. It used to be the custom to hold services only two or three times a week. This was not called a protracted meeting.

"As to the advancement of that period, many of the preachers were preaching Calvinism. Their members were asleep on the job, with poor sinners going to hell. The preaching of this doctrine caused heavy losses among Baptists long before the split. In 1753 John Ryland estimated the number of Baptists in England and Wales at 5,000, and said they were far more numerous 65 years before.—Cook's Story of the Baptists, page 188. Such is the fate of any people that preaches Calvinism and fights the old time revival."

Be that as it may. It still remains that during the last quarter of the eighteenth century American Baptists were preaching unconditional election and, by your own admission, were not using the mourners' bench; yet Vedder says THIS WAS THE PERIOD OF THEIR GREATEST ACTUAL and RELATIVE ADVANCE. Selah some more!

"You say that you do not know of a church that fights the old-time revival. Every church on earth that does not use the old-time revival fights it."

We use the old-time revival; the same kind that Christ and the apostles used.

"The true cause of the split among Baptists in 1827-36 was pure unadulterated Calvinism. Some preached that the destiny of every accountable man was fixed in eternity, therefore we need no missions or revivals. Others preached that the destiny of every accountable person is fixed here in time by his own choice, therefore we need missions and revivals. Volumes have been written, but this is the whole thing in a nut shell."

As a whole, Missionary Baptists, at the time of the above-mentioned split, adhered to the doctrinal sentiments of Andrew Fuller. This means that they believed in unconditional election. Therefore, unconditional election could not have been the cause of the split.

"You asked me to prove that Baptists used the mourners' bench 100 years before the split. Morgan Edwards speaks of Baptists in N. C. as early as 1695. The Kehukee association of N. C. was formed in 1765.—Cook's History of the Baptists, pp. 216, 217. Burkitt and Reed in their history of this association, page 145, say, 'It was the custom of ministers of that date to invite penitents to come forward and kneel down to be prayed for.' W. A. Jarrell adds: 'Just as we do in our revival meetings now.'—Jarrell's Perpetuity, page 429. As it was the custom when this association was formed, surely it must have been from their beginning in 1695, which would have been 140 years before the split in 1835. So, according to these historians, whole associations of Baptists were inviting people to come forward and kneel for prayer long before you said the Methodists invented the mourners' bench in 1806."

You omitted to say that the date of which Burkitt and Reed speak is 1794. Perhaps this was an oversight on your part. Because the Kehukee association used the mourners' bench in 1794 is not proof that they used it at the origin of the association in 1765, and much less that the Baptists of N. C. used it in 1695. In your other article you said that Baptist left off the use of the mourners' bench a hundred years before the split. Now you are trying to prove that they used it during this hundred years. This is Sisk vs. Sisk.

"All true Baptists have used this method ever since the days of Christ and the apostles."

We challenged you to prove this in our reply to your first article, but you have not seen fit to attempt the proof yet. You have found the mourners' bench in 1794, but that is 1700 years this side of the apostolic period.

"You say that I talk much about the old-time revival. 'We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.'—John 3:11."

Here is our reason for rejecting your witness: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). And a further reason is this: "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

"I do not believe in these cold-hearted, dry-eyed, stiff-necked, so-called revivals."

We are not contending for that kind. We are just contending for the kind in which the preacher and others are content not to go beyond that which is written, and leave the work of the Holy Spirit to him.

"You say that our kind of revival is not old, but quite young."

Yes, so far as you have just traced its pedigree back to 1794."

"Well, I am perfectly willing to leave it for all Bible-reading men and women to decide which one of our revival methods corresponds with the Bible."

And to encourage folks to search the Bible, we will give a nice Bible to the first one that will find where any New Testament preacher ever invited sinners to come forward for prayer.

"God says: 'Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein. But they said, we will not walk therein.'—Jer. 6:16."

This is exactly what we are trying to get you to do. And you are refusing just as the Israelites did. So far you have succeeded in tracing your ways no farther back than 1794. And the best you have been able to say in a scriptural defense of your methods is that Christ and the apostles furnished mourners the same kind of seats the congregation had. And this is a complete surrender of your contention, for you furnish mourners a special seat.

"You almost blew up because I spoke of an altar."

No, we didn't almost blow up; we just completely blew up your heresy. Selah a whole lot more!

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COMMUNISM IN CHINA

Missionary T. L. Blalock, Tai An Fu, Shantung, China.

Just now the Chinese government is in a desperate struggle with the "Reds" in southern and central China. Changchei-Shek, the general in chief of the armies of China, is personally conducting a campaign against these Bolshevicks. He has under him 200,000 soldiers, and it looks as if he will need many more thousands before this, China's great menace, is checked and overcome. Literally millions of lives have been destroyed by these communists, and the value of property destroyed by them can not be estimated. Worse than all this is the fiendish cruelty that characterizes their movements. Along with it goes the most godless and savage immorality known to mankind. The people who follow them do it only through force of arms. In their armies and wherever they have authority over the people, the most grinding slavery and hardship exist. This is true in Russia as well as in China. Yet they claim to be the liberators of the world. Their mission is the liberation of the poor and downtrodden. Yet, when it comes, it is the very opposite. It is the most dire form of slavery and imperialism, or militarism ever known to the world. Under their sway neither mind, soul, or body has any choice but to submit to the "Red" Dragon of communism.

Recently a white man and his wife were arrested in Shanghai as Bolshevik agents. The papers found with them proved beyond a doubt that they were secret agents from Russia. Their business was the propagation of Bolshevism in the far east. It was found they had associates and allies in India, Manila and other places. Therefore, through the information found with them, other arrests have been made, and others are in hiding. This man and his wife claimed to be Swiss, also to be Belgians. But neither the Swiss nor Belgian consul recognized them. They were not able to produce any evidence that they are citizens of these countries. It turns out that they are well known in Moscow and highly honored there. Now they are in the hands of the military forces at Nanking, where they will soon be tried and most likely executed. At any rate the man will be executed and the woman imprisoned perhaps.

The "Third International" of Russia has its paid agents throughout the world seeking to foment trouble, and they are busy with dangerous propaganda. There is no doubt that their agents are scattered throughout the United States. It is estimated that there are now in America 5,000,000 Reds. It was far less than this number that created a reign of terror and

overthrew Russia and set up the present day "Red Dragon" form of government there. Let no one sleep and say there is no danger. Unless God's people awake and America gets her eyes open, there is danger ahead. It will be too late to awake after the storm breaks over our heads.

The allies of this "Red Dragon" are atheism, evolution, race hatred, social equality propaganda, crime, sensuality, unemployment, hard times, and business depression. Are there not enough of these when the pretext comes and the way opens to inflame the whole nation and bring about such a revolution of bloodshed and crime as was never known? Especially when they have held out before them the hope of a division of property and money for all. The foundation is surely already laid for a "Red" revolution. It can be averted only by awaking in time and crying from the house tops the danger ahead. Many may laugh at this, but, without a change in the tide of crime and lawless propaganda, their joy and laughter will be turned into bitterest gall. Our only hope is a revival of Bible teaching and preaching in schools, churches and homes, and by the wayside that will produce a revival of true religion, faith in the Bible, God, and His SON.

DOES PRESENT DAY CHRISTIANITY "WANT" AN ELIJAH

EDITOR D. H. JONES in "The Messenger of Truth."

In the Western Recorder of last week there appears an article under the heading, "Does Present-Day Christianity Need an Elijah?" Editor Masters says that the cue for the heading was taken from an article elsewhere in the same issue. The article from which the cue was taken was written by Pastor Eric C. Wiley, of the Hyde Park Church in Cincinnati. The heading of the Cincinnati Pastor's article is, "Oh, That God Would Raise Us Up an Elijah."

After reading the articles in the Western Recorder, another question has been turning over in my mind: "Does Present-Day Christianity WANT an Elijah?" What attitude would present-day Christianity take toward an Elijah? If Elijah were to come to this world today, what sort of reception would he be given by present-day Christianity? Who will say that his message would be received with greater appreciation than was his message to Ahab in the long ago (1 Kings 17:1)?

Elijah was "a man subject to like passions as we are," but he had faith in God. He entered upon his mission with the utmost confidence in the Word and power of God. Think of the figure he must have been when he appeared before the wicked king, and announced the fact that there would be no rain nor dew but according to his word. He gave no reasons, at that time, but simply stated the fact. How do you think a messenger like that would be received by present-day Christianity?

The utterances of Elijah the Tishbite were characterized by dogmatism. Hear him, in the presence of the king of Israel, as he asserts: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (1 Kings 17:1). In commenting on the phrase, "before whom I stand, Maclaren says: "That phrase, 'before whom I stand,' obviously means chiefly 'whom I serve.'" Elijah boldly declared that he was God's man in God's place doing God's work. What is the attitude of present-day Christianity toward that type of man? Is it not a fact that present-day Christianity considers it a mark of scholarship for a minister to speak with a great degree of reservation and uncertainty.

Elijah would not fit in with the worldly king and his regime. He had no time for the religion of the king and his prophets, and would not compromise with them for one min-

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Mourners' Bench Discussion

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"Paul says, 'We have an altar.'—Heb. 13:10."

This altar is not an earthly, material altar; but is a spiritual altar of which we partake by faith.

"Webster says an altar is a place for the offering of sacrifice; a place of worship. Paul tells Christians to, 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God.'—Rom. 12:1. What can the sinner offer on this altar? 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not dispise.'—Psa. 51:17."

These offerings are not made on an earthly, material altar.

"God said, 'Thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold.'—Ex. 25:17. 'I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat.'—V. 22. 'We were kneeling at the mercy seat when God came down our souls to greet.' Christ is our mercy seat. 'He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.'—1 John 2:2. Propitiation means mercy seat."

You say here that you were kneeling at the mercy seat when God came down your soul to greet. Then you say that Christ is our mercy seat, which is correct. Then later on you say that you were at the mourners' bench when you were saved. Therefore, you make the mourners' bench the same as the mercy seat. And since the mercy seat is Christ, the mourners' bench is Christ. Then since none can be saved without coming to Christ, none can be saved, according to your teaching, without coming to the mourners' bench. The only difference between you and the Roman Catholics is that they teach salvation through the church and you teach salvation through the mourners' bench. And whereas Campbellites teach salvation through baptism, you teach salvation through the mourners' bench. You are making your heresy plainer all the time.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

The throne of grace is not on earth. We challenge you to say that it is. And we dare you to say that the mourners' bench is the throne of grace.

"Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' This is why we invite poor lost men to an altar of prayer, to the mercy seat, and to the throne of grace."

Here you further affirm your heresy that Christ and the mourners' bench are one.

"You asked me to give you an example of Christ or the apostles praying for a sinner. Jesus prayed for sinners. 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.'—Luke 23:34. Stephen prayed for sinners. 'He kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'—Acts 7:60. Paul prayed for Agrippa and others. He said, 'I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.'—Acts 26:29. Paul exhorted that prayers, supplications, and intercessions be made for ALL MEN. Why? 'For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.'—1 Tim. 2:1, 3, 4. Again Paul says, 'Brethren, my heart's and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.'—Rom. 10:1."

We asked for one instance where Christ or the apostles ever prayed audibly for an individual sinner in the presence of that sinner. And you have failed to give one. In only one of the above places is a sinner mentioned individually, and in that place Paul merely told Agrippa what his desire was of the Lord. He did not here petition the Lord.

"Peter told Simon the sorcerer to pray and said in his sermon at Pentecost, 'Whosoever shall call in the name of the Lord shall be saved.'—Acts 2:21. Surely he would not command others to pray, then refuse to pray for them.

We have no hint that he prayed audibly for Simon on this occasion and we have no right to infer something of which no hint is given.

"Can you imagine Peter having that wonderful meeting at Cornelius' house and not having a prayer?"

We interpret the Scripture by what it says and not by our imagination.

"Do you think that after Saul had fasted and prayed three days that Annanias failed to pray with him?"

We do not go by what we think, but by what the Scripture says. If Annanias prayed for Saul after Saul reached Damascus, he was praying for a saved man and not a sinner.

"If you can hear convicted men praying for mercy and not pray too, you haven't the kind of religion I got. I have seen hundreds of people saved while some one was on their knees praying for them. God will answer our prayers for a poor mourner quicker than anything else."

Possibly it is true that we don't have the kind of religion you have. You seem to have gotten your religion through a mourners' bench. We got salvation through Christ. However, we pray constantly for the lost.

"If Christ and the apostles gave no invitation, but saw many saved, why don't it work for you today?"

It works for us today the same as it worked for them. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" then; the same now.

"We give invitations in our meetings and see many saved, but you say that every deceived person about religion that you ever saw professed in that kind of meeting. I guess it is so, for your kind of meeting there are none to be deceived."

In our meetings we see as many as are ordained to eternal life saved. Acts 13:48.

"You seem to think that Christ and the apostles had very little success. The 120 were preachers, of course. I never had even thought of them otherwise. Christ sent out 12 at one time and 70 at another time. Surely a few others were sent out later on. Then, do you think that all their converts were preachers and men? We usually get about one preacher out of 100 converts on an average. John the Baptist must have had several thousand saved, for 'There went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.'—Mk. 1:5. He baptized at other places also. Then we learn that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. John 4:1. The seventy brought back good reports. What became of all these folks? People who fail themselves, usually envy the success of others."

We will now note some more of your heresy. The 120 included some women. Acts 1:14, 15. Are women called to preach? In your book, which might be very aptly styled "The Comedy of Errors," you say the Scripture does not forbid women doing any kind of work but preaching. Will you now take that back and say they can preach too?

As to what became of the other folks mentioned, you are under as much obligation to answer that as we are. The thing we affirm was that Christ's church contained only 120 members after the ministry of three years in a virgin field with 82 helpers a part of the time. This we stick to.

As for our success in meetings, we are about as well satisfied with that as we ought to be in the face of the fact that we are imperfect in all we do. We preach the word, and God has promised that his word will not return unto him void. We are content to leave results with him. And we certainly do not envy you your success. We have no desire to be as effective in deceiving souls as you are, and we do not covet your ability to encourage the worldly and rebellious, thus strengthening

them against sound, faithful pastors, and thus splitting every church in which you can get a foothold, except in cases where you can carry the whole church off with your heresy.

"You made light of our old-time revivals, our altar work, our singing, our converts, and our shouting. So do all Hardshells and Campbellites. Why? They are either prejudiced, cold or lost."

This is your method of evading the questions we asked you and the Scriptures we put to you. As long as you think you are out in the open you bark bravely. When you get hemmed up you whine. We will just put our questions to you again and then add one for good measure. Why do you have folks singing while you are trying to pray for and instruct sinners? Why not have them sing while you preach? What kind of instructions do you give mourners? In case a mourner lingers on and on and doesn't get satisfied, what do you tell him to do? And here is the question we add for good measure: Is a joyful reception of the word of God an infallible evidence of salvation?

"Will you please tell us your Christian experience? Did you go up and give your hand and 'accept' Christ."

No, we didn't "accept" Christ. God accepted Christ as our substitute. We received Christ through the faith that was wrought in our heart by the regenerating Spirit of God. John 1:12; 6:65; Gal. 5:22. Having been saved by the grace of God, we, like Saul of Tarsus, assayed to join ourself to the disciples. Acts 9:26. Thus we were added to the church. Acts 2:47.

"Saul was converted after Ananias came and instructed him, then he was filled with the Holy Spirit, received his sight, and was baptized. Paul before Agrippa gives the whole story and not just what happened on the Damascus road. He had been blind, hungry, thirsty and praying for three days. Why? Every truly convicted man knows why."

Before Agrippa, Paul says that on the Damascus road, when he said "Who are thou, Lord?" Jesus replied: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."—Acts 26:15, 16. You might show us where Ananias instructed Paul how to be saved. And you might also explain 1 Cor. 12:3 in the light of the fact that Paul called Jesus Lord on the Damascus road.

"Peter told Simon the sorcerer to repent and pray to God. A man cannot repent without praying. You must promise God to give up sin and ask his forgiveness or you have not repented."

Prayer follows repentance. Show us where a sinner must promise God anything in order to be saved. This is some more of your salvation by works.

"You asked how do I know that Satan is against the mourners' bench. Because I have fought him over it for 45 years."

No, you are mistaken. You have been cooperating with the devil in the use of the mourners' bench for 45 years.

"He tried to keep me from going up for prayer, as he does everyone, and, after I had gone twice, he tried his best to keep me from going back again; but I told him that I was going to have religion or I would go to hell praying. I was saved that night."

"Again you slur me for saying that after 41 years of experience I considered the old-fashioned meetings the best and safest. Well after you study the Bible 30 years more, you may change your mind on some things."

When a man puts his experience up against the Bible, he needs to be shown his sin. This we tried to do by showing you that you claim to know more about evangelism than Christ and the apostles. If the next thirty years makes as big a heretic out of us as you are, the Bible won't be responsible for it.

"All the high pressure we use is what the Holy Spirit puts on, but that sure is some high. Sometimes it causes people to fall down under conviction, cry aloud for mercy, and rise shouting happy."

You insult the Holy Spirit and accuse him of equivocating when you make him responsible for your anti-scriptural, fleshly, emotional, deceptive methods of evangelism.

"You asked me what was the matter in those eight meetings where no one was saved. Brother, they were one man meetings. One man tried to do all the work. They left out the Holy Spirit and the people. No one was convicted and no one was saved, of course. It is not what one man can do, but what one man can get thousands to do that counts."—D. L. Moody. But you say, 'All the human persuasion in the world can't bring one soul to repentance and faith.' So, if only a few CAN and MUST be saved, then you are right."

Our question about the meetings was as to what should have been done besides preach the word faithfully, earnestly, and prayerfully, publicly and privately, and thus entreat the lost to be reconciled to God. You thought to evade our question. But you don't get by that easy. We want you to tell us if the above is enough? Or does something else have to be added? If so, tell us what it is and cite the scriptural authority for it.

You say that if only a few CAN and MUST be saved, then we are right in saying that all the human persuasion in the world cannot bring one soul to repentance and faith. All right, with this sweeping admission, we will prove that we are right. Jesus said only a few would be saved. Matt. 7:14. And Jesus, speaking of the lost sheep, said he MUST BRING THEM INTO THE FOLD. John 10:16. Furthermore, Jesus said: "All that the Father giveth me SHALL come to me" (John 6:37). This certainly means that those to be saved are few and that they MUST be saved."

"You ask, 'Did God in eternity know the destiny of all men.' Yes. 'If so, was there any possibility of the destiny of any man being changed from what God knew it would be?' No. 'If not, then was not the destiny of all men fixed in eternity?' No."

Let the reader take note of this. It is a wonderfully new revelation. "Fixed," as applied to events, has always meant that those events were certain, settled, and unchangeable, and it is now revealed that a thing can be certain and yet not be fixed! ! ! ! In other words, the destiny of all men in eternity was certain, and yet uncertain; settled, and yet unsettled; unchangeable, and yet changeable.

"You make no difference between God's foreknowledge and His decrees."

We said not one word in our questions about God's decrees. We asked you to tell us what or who fixed the destiny of men. Thus again you dodge and evade.

"God foreknows everything, but he has predestinated very few things. Has he predestinated everything that comes to pass, good and bad?"

Eph. 1:11 says that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. And Rom. 8:29 and Eph. 1:5 say that God predestinated all those who are saved before they were saved. "If he has, then he is responsible for evil."

Did God predestinate the death of Christ? 1 Peter 1:20; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28. If so, was he responsible for the evil in connection with Christ's death?

"Can't God know a thing without decreeing it?"

God knowing a thing denotes that that thing is certain, fixed and unchangeable. There are only two ways that things could have been made certain, fixed, and unchangeable: one is the ruling of blind, cold fate; the other is the decree of a

wise, just God. We prefer to believe the later, and we find this to be the teaching of Scripture.

"Men have no souls or destinies before they are born in this world. They have no destiny to be fixed."

If men had no destinies in eternity, how could God know their destinies?

"Brother, I have done my best to be brief, kind, and merciful to a young, erring preacher."

We have done our best to show up the heresy of a confirmed heretic.

The Remission of Sins

A STUDY OF ACTS 2:38

ROGER L. CLARK, Martin, Tenn.

Some of my younger brethren in the ministry, coming in contact with the pedo-baptist and Campbellian interpretation of Acts 2:38 and kindred passages referring to baptism, are perturbed in mind and labor under difficulty in reconciling them with salvation by grace. I have been asked by the editor to show the meaning of this passage in contrast with the sacramental conceptions of forgiveness. I welcome the opportunity: for this verse, Acts 2:38, was emblazoned in stained glass in the window back of the pulpit of the church where my parents worshipped. It was the first verse of the Bible I spelled out for myself; and Sunday after Sunday, while the pastors in the pulpit fulminated I knew not what, I centered my interest in this window back of them, and wondered at the meaning of the words I did not understand. Often on the way home I would ask and my father would try to make me understand the meaning of repentance, remission, and the Holy Ghost. In those days this verse was the key note of Campbellism. I grew up in the belief that the whole gospel was epitomized in it. And in this I have not changed: it is. It is a most wonderful pronouncement of the Holy Spirit, the first public manifest of a heaven endued church. It is to be joyfully received, fully believed and its glorious promises claimed. Given like circumstances, any and every Baptist preacher must make the identical reply. But in view of the age long controversy we are apt to doubt whether Peter would have been so terse, and whether the true design of baptism was not explained in the "many other words" with which he exhorted them.

It is impossible to escape the controversy—especially as so many, because Baptists insist upon an authoritative, New Testament baptism, accuse them of teaching the utmost contrary and contradictory of Baptist faith, that one has to be baptized to be saved. Our Methodist friends have almost entirely abandoned the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and have changed their ritual accordingly. The progressive wing of the Campbellian movement long ago receded from the position of the "fathers"—the stained glass preachment has been taken down; the baptistry which was in front, in full view of the congregation, has been moved to the Sunday School annex, and the old pipe organ, gilded over, now affords the background of Campbellian eloquence. And Baptists, themselves, in this modernistic trend of indifference to truth and complacent toleration for popularity's sake, are drifting into alien immersion and unionism.

There are three possible interpretations of Acts 2:38: first, that remission is in the act of baptism; second, that remission is contingent upon baptism; third, that remission is prior to baptism and is not directly connected with it. It is with the second view that we are now concerned. We therefore ask the question: Is remission of sins conditioned, among other conditions, upon the act of obedience called baptism?

We answer that it is not, and that Acts 2:38 does not teach baptismal remission.

Let us read the passage: "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." We turn to the Revised version: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The Revised version is an effort to bring out the force of Peter's reply: Repent ye (plural, addressed to all asking "Men and brethren, what shall we-do?") and be baptized every one of you (third person singular, first aorist imperative passive, addressed to those who repent). Here we have a vital distinction, an imperative command addressed to all: "for God calleth all men to repent;" and a further command to get one's-self baptized as a consequent of repentance. It would be too much to say that all commanded to repent on that day did so. We have two classes here addressed in this reply, the unsaved, and those in the way of being saved. To this latter class only is Peter's reply addressed in its entirety—and this holds true of the Gospel message for all time. Peter bases his reply upon the ground that the promise of salvation, i. e., the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, is made to "as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him" (v. 39). God makes this promise to the called, "as many as the Lord shall call—to the 'far off'—and only to the called. How and whom does the Lord call? Rom. 8:29, 30; Eph. 1:3-14. The form of the reply therefore shows that Peter is not formulating a process of salvation but he was calling the elect out from among the generation which had crucified the Lord. In sublime consistency with God's holy purpose, Peter preaches the Gospel to all who hear him and enjoins the first of its commands upon all before him; but only to those who can obey "in the name of Jesus Christ" does he urge the duty of baptism. This is consistent with the great commission and the history of the evangelization of the apostolic church. We know from the Scriptures that the benevolent desire of God is that "all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9); we also are told that God "saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before time eternal." (2 Tim. 1:9).

Let us recall the scene. Before Peter is the assembled multitude which fifty days before had cried out against Jesus, "Crucify him." Although there were among them "devout Jews from every nation under heaven," Peter charges this multitude with the wickedness of slaying the Lord and Christ. The issue is whether Jesus, a man approved of God and delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is Lord and Christ. Such is the force of the expression "in the name of Jesus Christ" in this thirty-eighth verse. They slew him lawlessly, in unbelief. Now He is offered them again. If they turn to Him as their Saviour, they are to manifest their faith, and decide the issue by aligning themselves with the disciples. The declarative act of faith in Jesus as a Saviour is the act which depicts the death of the believer in Christ, his burial with Christ, and declares the hope of his resurrection through Christ. Those who can in the name of Christ put Him on in baptism are said to be buried with him and raised with him (Col. 2:12). Peter is commanding the penitents to identify themselves as Christians. It is not baptism but the name of Christ which is unto the remission of sins.

We here must examine this expression and the preposition which introduces it. "In," "with the use of the dative implies actual superposition, as one thing resting upon another, as upon a foundation or basis which may be actual (e. g. Mk. 6:25, 28, 39), or moral (e. g. Matt. 18:13, Mk. 3:5). Both senses occur in 1 Thess. 3:7. Hence it is used of the moving principle

or motive suggesting the purpose or object (e. g. Eph. 2:10) and sometimes including the result." Companion Bible. This preposition (epi) locates salvation "in the name of Christ" and baptism comes out of "this state of trust." "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:13) is the act of faith; and so baptism is the expression of faith—"Arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord." But as the authority and power and salvation of Jesus is in His name, so does this command to be baptized rest upon the object or purpose of confessing His name.

And it is this name which is unto "the remission of sins." Jesus so declares in instituting the Lord's Supper. His blood is shed unto the "remission of the sins of many." (Matt. 26:28). **"To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins."** (Acts 10:43).

J. B. Moody, in debate with Mr. Harding, at Nashville, gave an exhaustive demonstration that the preposition eis, **for**, or **unto**, could not mean, in this instance, **in order to**. Dr. Robertson says in regard to the force of eis in this passage "only the context and the tenor of New Testament teaching can determine whether 'into,' 'unto,' or merely 'in' or 'on' ('upon') is the right translation, a task for the interpreter, not the grammarian." Gr. Gram. in the Light of Hist. Res. p. 592. But between baptism and remission of sins here, is the procuring cause of both. There need be no quibble about eis. It means in, into or unto. The error we must avoid is putting any motion in the preposition. Mr. Weymouth translates eis here, **with a view to**. We may grant all that can possibly be claimed as to the force of this signal word. It faces us in the right direction. The power of salvation, the means of salvation, unlock with this key word. It is used in the crisis of conversation, descriptive of our receiving salvation. We believe **into** Christ. (John 1:12; 2:11; 23) "He that believeth on (into, eis) the Son hath eternal life" (John 3:36). "This is the work of God that ye believe on (into) him whom he hath sent. . . . he that believeth on (into) me shall never thirst" (John 6:29-37). Saving, therefore, brings us into Christ; and its symbol, trusting Christ in his death to sin and his resurrection for our justification, all of which is declared in baptism, is into the out-calling of Christ, the body of Christ, the church, and therefore tropically into Christ. Actually in faith; figuratively in the obedience of faith. Note, too, that the same style of speaking is used of the Lord's supper and our participation in it. Permit me to add here that it was the force of eis during the second year of Greek in Stephen's High School—and under a devout Baptist teacher—which led me completely away from the idea of baptismal remission. I believed eis Christ. If I was in, I was in and all other subsequent intos and in-order-tos were tropical).

That baptism is subsequent to salvation, because of it, and not in order to it, is clearly determined by the last phrase of Peter's exhortation, "the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter does not promise the baptism of the Holy Spirit—(those who use the Scofield Bible must be on their guard at this point, for Scofield makes salvation the baptism of the Holy Spirit—rank heresy)—but the gift of the Holy Spirit, that is, salvation, the new birth, regeneration. We are safeguarded in this interpretation by the Holy Spirit, Himself. When Paul came to Ephesus he asked certain disciples "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" But these did not know anything about the Holy Spirit or salvation in Christ. Then they heard the gospel, they believed and were then baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul came, they were unsaved, for they lacked the Holy Spirit. On this occasion Paul confers the extraordinary gift by the laying on of hands, to make this fact evident (Acts 19:1-7). Peter did not promise the three thousand on Pentecost the gift of tongues. He promised "as many as the Lord God should call" the gift of the Spirit, Him-

self. If one has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His (Rom. 8:9). We are begotten of the Spirit, born of water and the Spirit; by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. From the beginning to the end, from the birth of the Spirit unto our adoption in fullness, the redemption of our bodies, salvation is wholly of God, and from God. And this full and finished work is promised to all who "repent and get themselves baptized upon the ground of their faith in the power of Christ to save and the witness of the Spirit with their spirit that they are saved, children of God."

DOES PRESENT DAY CHRISTIANITY "WANT" AN ELIJAH

(Continued from Page Four)

ute. His fight against the false religion, which was the popular one, caused the king to address him as the troubler of Israel, but "he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings 18:18). Thus did Elijah point out the sins of those in high places! Does present-day Christianity want that type of preacher? Is it not a fact, known to all, that the leaders of our own denomination denominate as "troublers in Israel" those preachers who raise a voice against sin in high places? Is it not a fact that many denominational leaders will aid the worldly element in a church to rid the church of the ministry of the pastor who will not submit in silence to the rule of a godless denominational machine?

When Ahaziah, king of Israel, "fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber and was sick; and sent messengers, and whether I shall recover this disease," Elijah said to the messengers of the king: "Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that you go to enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron?"

When the "Promotion Committee of Southern Baptists" sends a letter to Baptist pastors, saying, "The future . . . of the churches themselves hinges largely upon the success of this movement," i. e., the movement, expressed in the language of the letter, to ask "the rank and file of the membership in our churches to touch the dotted line and indicate what they will give each week to the support of their own churches and 'to preach the gospel in the regions beyond,'"—I say when this is done as it has been in recent years, if Elijah were one of those pastors, methinks I would hear him say, "Is it not because there is no Holy Spirit in your churches, that ye thus seek to raise money by means purely of the world and of the flesh?" Reader, after thinking it over, what do you say? Does present-day Christianity WANT an Elijah?

CHINA'S WOES

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The high waters and flooded country in China this summer is said to surpass anything in history. Honkow, that great business city with its hundreds of thousands of people, is now suffering untold misery and death. The whole city is under water and it is flowing over the tops of thousands of buildings. The collapse of houses is constantly going on. The great Yangtsi river has swollen to a height of almost fifty-three feet above its ordinary level. It will be impossible to ever estimate the number of people drowned. Before the water reached a serious height thousands of refugees had come in from other flooded sections around about. Sixteen provinces have suffered and are suffering from the excessive rains and floods. It is estimated that fifty million people are affected by these overflows. Thousands upon thousands have already been drowned and many more are starving for bread. Famine and disease are already upon these stricken districts. How can we but be depressed? Depressed for the dying and drowning and starving bodies of these millions! Are we distressed for their famishing souls?