

Whatever God wants us to do He will help us to do.

MISSIONARY

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

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RESOLUTIONS FROM COTTON GROVE

By Mark Sweat

On 24 June, 1851 J.R. Graves, the well known minister and author, met with a number of Baptists in Cotton Grove, Tennessee. The reason for this meeting was to discuss the problems relative to Baptists recognizing pedobaptists preachers as Scriptural ministers and their man-made societies as gospel churches. From this meeting came what we know as the "Cotton Grove Resolutions", which served to attract the minds of Baptists to the problems at hand. These resolutions were offered in question form by Elder Graves and are as follows:

1. Can Baptists, consistently with their principles or the Scriptures, recognize those societies not organized according to the pattern of the Jerusalem church, but possessing different governments, different officers, a different class of members, different ordinances, doctrines and practices as churches of Christ?

2. Ought they to be called gospel churches or churches in a religious sense?

3. Can we consistently recognize the ministers of such irregular and unscriptural bodies as gospel ministers?

4. Is it not virtually recognizing them as official ministers to invite them into our pulpits or by any other act that would or could be construed into such a recognition?

5. Can we consistently address as brethren those professing Christianity who not only have not the doctrine of Christ and walk not according to His commandments but are arrayed in direct and bitter opposition to them?

Those who attended answered these questions in a manner consistent with the Bible. Their exact answers were not recorded but we know from the events that followed

what were the positions they took.

1. No, obviously Baptists cannot ever view man-made societies as churches of Christ.

2. No, these organizations should not be called gospel churches.

3. No, the preachers of these groups should not be recognized as Gospel ministers.

4. To invite such men into the pulpit is a terrible wrong and should never be done nor any other act that could be made to look like a recognition.

5. No, you cannot address those who are in opposition to the doctrine of Jesus Christ as brethren.

In our own day true Baptists are facing the same problems those men of God faced then and more besides. At a time when what is needed is a strict adherence to the Scriptures and those principles that have always distinguished the Lord's churches, we find the very opposite taking place. All too often there are reports of pastors, church members, institutions and churches falling away from the truths that Baptists have always held dear.

What is the cause of this defec-

tion? It would seem that in an age when so much of Baptist history is at our fingertips, when we have more information on our heritage, doctrines, trials and heroes than ever before, many are more than happy to ignore it. It would appear that some within our ranks cannot or will not learn from the mistakes of the past. They seem to have decided that to be condemned to repeat those mistakes, as the old saying goes, is not so bad after all.

This course of action is not worthy of the people called Baptist. It is not only a terrible injustice to all those tortured martyrs of the past who gave their very lives for what we claim (and some only pretend) to stand for, but it is an error for which there must be tremendous spiritual repercussions.

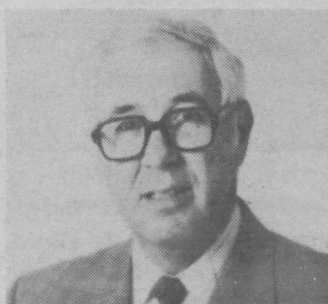
How can anyone believe for an instant that you can reject Bible truth and maintain a ministry, an outreach, a church, yes, even a life that is acceptable to God? Why would anyone, after coming to know the truth, want to cast it off to return to those things that are false and never satisfied them before?

(Continued on Pg. 6, Col. 1)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Eugene P. Helton

LOOKING FOR JESUS



"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus." (John 12:20-21).

We're going to take a trip, in our minds; we're going to look for Jesus. We'll be stopping at the

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

By Wallace York, Associate Pastor

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The Bible reveals one God in His tri-personal existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the nature of the one God, there are three eternal distinctions which are represented to us under the figure of persons, and these three are equal. Each possesses the essential characteristics or attributes of deity, such as: omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence.

In the Old Testament the Father is prominent; yet the Son and the Spirit are present and are often mentioned. In the Gospels the Son of God is prominent though the Father and the Spirit are also present. Since the day of Pentecost, the ministry of the Holy Spirit has been prominent.

As a young preacher I learned there is much confusion among Christians concerning the office work of the Holy Spirit. This is easily seen when one begins a serious study on the baptism in the Spirit. Such things as tarrying services, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues must be dealt with.

For a few minutes let us consider the subject, "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit."

I. APPROACH

Most commentaries and Bible writers have taken the wrong approach to understanding this important subject. The secret to understanding scripture is to use the right key, and the key to understanding the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to approach it logically by first understanding baptism. A person who does not understand water baptism cannot be expected

to understand Holy Spirit baptism.

When writing to the church at Ephesus, Paul said there is only one literal baptism, and that is the baptism in water instituted by John the Baptist by divine commission, received by the Lord Jesus, and by Him committed to His church to be observed as an ordinance for disciples only. The other baptisms in the Bible are figurative and must be interpreted or understood by the literal baptism in water.

Four things are essential if baptism is to be scriptural;

A. There must be a proper administrator or authority. The first person in the Bible to administer baptism was John the Baptist. His authority to baptize was from the highest of all sources, God Himself, (John 1:33). Later, we find Jesus baptizing through the agency of His disciples. (John 4:1,2). Having organized His disciples into a church, Jesus com-

missioned it to continue making, baptizing and training disciples to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:18-20). That same church which the Lord founded and commissioned is still in the world carrying out those orders. Churches with a human founder have no such authority to administer this ordinance of the church.

B. There must be a proper subject to be baptized. Not just any person is qualified to be baptized. John the Baptist demanded "fruits meet for repentance: as a prerequisite to baptism, and Jesus required by precept and example that the making of disciples precede their baptism. (Matthew 3:7-9; 28:19; John 4:1). At Pentecost "they that gladly received his word were baptized," (Acts 2:41). Every person baptized in the New Testament was a professed believer. Not a single instance of so-called "infant baptism" can be found in the Bible.

C. Scriptural baptism also requires a proper mode. The Biblical act of baptism was immersion in water. A person with no knowledge of the Greek language can see this from the study of the New Testament in the King James version. John was baptizing where there was "much water"; when Jesus was baptized he "went up" (Continued on Pg. 3, Col. 5)

most popular places, places where people always look for Jesus. "...Sir, we would see Jesus."

There is no need to look in Bethlehem's inn for the Scripture says: "... there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7).

I. Our First Stop in Looking For Jesus.

The little town of Bethlehem; (Continued on Pg. 2, Col. 1)