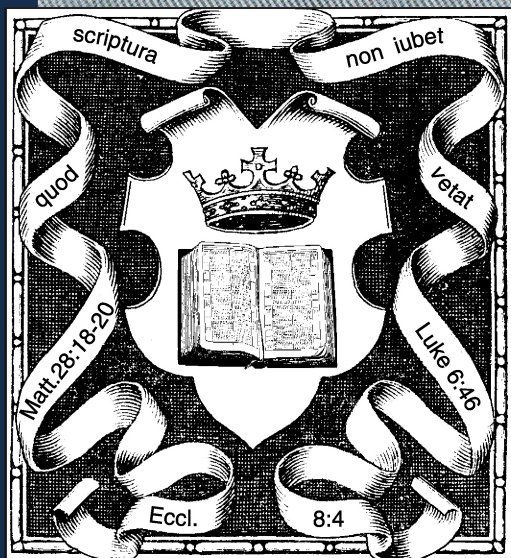


The Baptist Distinctives Series  
Number 15



# Communion:

The distinction between  
Christian and church  
fellowship and between  
communion and its symbols.

T. F. Curtis



## *Quod scriptura, non iubet vetat*

The Latin translates, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden:”

**On the Cover:** Baptists rejoice to hold in common with other evangelicals the main principles of the orthodox Christian faith. However, there are points of difference and these differences are significant. In fact, because these differences arise out of God’s revealed will, they are of vital importance. Hence, the barriers of separation between Baptists and others can hardly be considered a trifling matter. To suppose that Baptists are kept apart solely by their views on Baptism or the Lord’s Supper is a regrettable misunderstanding. Baptists hold views which distinguish them from Catholics, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals, and Presbyterians, and the differences are so great as not only to justify, but to demand, the separate denominational existence of Baptists. Some people think Baptists ought not teach and emphasize their differences but as E.J. Forrester stated in 1893, “Any denomination that has views which justify its separate existence, is bound to promulgate those views. If those views are of sufficient importance to justify a separate existence, they are important enough to create a duty for their promulgation ... the very same reasons which justify the separate existence of any denomination make it the duty of that denomination to teach the distinctive doctrines upon which its separate existence rests.” If Baptists have a right to a separate denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which their separate life cannot be justified or maintained.

Many among today’s professing Baptists have an agenda to revise the Baptist distinctives and redefine what it means to be a Baptist. Others don’t understand why it even matters. The books being reproduced in the *Baptist Distinctives Series* are republished in order that Baptists from the past may state, explain and defend the primary Baptist distinctives as they understood them. It is hoped that this Series will provide a more thorough historical perspective on what it means to be distinctively Baptist.

The Lord Jesus Christ asked, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46). The immediate context surrounding this question explains what it means to be a true disciple of Christ. Addressing the same issue, Christ’s question is meant to show that a confession of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ is inconsistent and untrue if it is not accompanied with a corresponding submission to His authoritative commands. Christ’s question teaches us that a true recognition of His authority as Lord inevitably includes a submission to the authority of His Word. Hence, with this question Christ has made it forever impossible to separate His authority as King from the authority of His Word. These two principles—the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word—are the two most fundamental Baptist distinctives. The first gives rise to the second and out of these two all the other Baptist distinctives emanate. As F.M. Jans wrote in 1894, “Loyalty to Christ as King, manifesting itself in a constant and unswerving obedience to His will as revealed in His written Word, is the real source of all the Baptist distinctives:’ In the search for the *primary* Baptist distinctive many have settled on the Lordship of Christ as the most basic distinctive. Strangely, in doing this, some have attempted to separate Christ’s Lordship from the authority of Scripture, as if you could embrace Christ’s authority without submitting to what He commanded. However, while Christ’s Lordship and Kingly authority can be isolated and considered essentially for discussion’s sake, we see from Christ’s own words in Luke 6:46 that His Lordship is really inseparable from His Word and, with regard to real Christian discipleship, there can be no practical submission to the one without a practical submission to the other.

In the symbol above the Kingly Crown and the Open Bible represent the inseparable truths of Christ’s Kingly and Biblical authority. The Crown and Bible graphics are supplemented by three Bible verses (Ecclesiastes 8:4, Matthew 28:18-20, and Luke 6:46) that reiterate and reinforce the inextricable connection between the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word. The truths symbolized by these components are further emphasized by the Latin quotation - *quod scriptura, non iubet vetat*— *i.e.*, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden:’ This Latin quote has been considered historically as a summary statement of the regulative principle of Scripture. Together these various symbolic components converge to exhibit the two most foundational Baptist Distinctives out of which all the other Baptist Distinctives arise. Consequently, we have chosen this composite symbol as a logo to represent the primary truths set forth in the *Baptist Distinctives Series*.



**COMMUNION:**  
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN  
CHRISTIAN AND CHURCH FELLOWSHIP  
AND BETWEEN  
COMMUNION AND ITS SYMBOLS.



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EMBRACING  
A REVIEW OF THE ARGUMENTS  
OF THE  
*Rev Robert Hall and Rev. Baptist W. Noel*  
IN FAVOR OF  
MIXED COMMUNION  
BY  
T.F. CURTIS A.M.  
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, HOWARD COLLEGE, A.L.A.

*With a Biographical Sketch of the Author by John Franklin Jones*

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Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;  
that it may be displayed because of the truth.  
— Psalm 60:4

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**THE WALDENSIAN EMBLEM**

*lux lucet in tenebris*

“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

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## PREFACE.

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THE Author of the following pages had occasion, in commencing to prepare a series of Lectures on the Constitution, Government, and Discipline of our Churches, for the benefit of some young brethren studying for the Ministry, to re-examine the Mixed Communion Controversy, and especially the arguments of the celebrated Robert Hall. Some two or three years previously, while laboring as a Pastor, he had delivered a series of discourses on the subject of Communion, which had been kindly received. These, re-written and re-arranged, form in fact the basis of the first two parts of the present work. The third and fourth parts, are the application of the principles before established to the arguments of Robert Hall, and also of Baptist W. Noel.

The chief point in which this volume differs from most which have preceded it on the subject, is that instead of attempting to defend *a rule*, it aims to establish *a principle*. Most of our writers have sought chiefly to vindicate the rule that no unbaptized person is qualified for the Lord's Supper. The object of the present work is to exhibit the principle that *the*

*Lord's Supper is a symbol of Church relations between those who unite in its celebration.* The advantage of this course is, that whereas the rule is negative, a principle is essentially positive. One true principle will lie at the basis of many rules. A rule bounds an idea but on one side ; a principle implies its own limit on all sides. A rule restricts, a principle establishes.

It was because the writer had felt the want of some popular exposition, exhibiting in a less *negative* manner the whole subject of the present Essay, that he was induced originally to deliver, and now publishes these views. The most simple, comprehensive, and conclusive plan, even so far as the restrictive side is concerned, is to maintain that positive principle, which comprehends all the rules, and presents the subject in its wholeness to the observation of the candid inquirer. The Author is convinced that no doubt can long remain after an attentive consideration of this subject, that the Lord's Supper symbolizes visible Church relations as existing between those who unite in it. To such as admit the primitive independence of the Churches of Christ, which is a point now universally conceded by the ablest investigators of Church History in Germany, the rest will follow as a necessary consequence. Where these relations do not subsist, as they certainly do not where different denominations are concerned, the symbol of such relations must be inappropriate.

It is because, in modern times, we do not feel the warmth of that peculiar affection which existed origi-

nally among those who were members of the same Church or family of Christians, that our practice in regard to the Lord's Supper, which symbolized it, comes to be called in question.

It will be observed that this work takes for granted, that the views of our denomination on the subject of baptism are correct. To have pursued any other course, would have occupied too large a field. The writer has aimed, as much as possible, to narrow the controversy to the point at issue. Nothing, however, has been taken for granted, that was not freely conceded by the most skilful opponent of our views on this subject, Robert Hall. This volume is not sent forth into the world to provoke controversy. It is written chiefly for members of our own Churches, and for those pious persons, who, convinced of the general truth of our sentiments, as to the mode and subjects of baptism, are yet troubled with scruples in regard to the Lord's Supper.

To his brethren in the ministry, the Author offers a word of explanation as to his motives, and his hopes. The substance of this work originated, not in any special circumstances of controversy, but in the regular course of ministerial labors. It was, therefore, simply to present to a Church of our own denomination, with a congregation often increased by other evangelical Christians, and well established in Divine truth, not only clear and settled views upon a subject of controversy, but also such thoughts as a Pastor would naturally desire to present in all affection, on such a subject as that of Communion; and to promote

some of the very highest and noblest of all the relations of a Christian congregation—Church fellowship, love to fellow Christians, and above all, Communion with Christ. Nor is it without the hope of entering into, and silently assisting the labors of Pastors, in this unobtrusive manner, that the Author issues this book to the world. Hence, he has not been careful to prune out some paragraphs, especially in the first Part, which might be spared from a mere theological argument.

To promote love and true Communion between all mankind and Christ; between all Christians as fellow heirs of light and glory, and members of the Universal Church; between all who sustain towards each other the solemn and endearing relation of brotherhood in the same Christian Church, is the simple object which the Author has had in view. And if this volume can in any measure set these several relations in a clearer light, and restore that fervor of primitive love, that strong (not high) Church feeling that the study of the New Testament, and the earliest records of the Christian Church shows to have existed; we are convinced that the greatest difficulty to the correct understanding of the subject will have been overcome. Our chief object will assuredly have been accomplished.

T. F. C.

HOWARD COLLEGE, *September 27, 1849.*

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“REASONS WHY BAPTISTS OUGHT TO TEACH THEIR DISTINCTIVE VIEWS . . . First, *it is a duty we owe to ourselves*. We must teach these views in order to be consistent in holding them. Because of these we stand apart from other Christians, in separate organizations. . . We have no right thus to stand apart unless the matters of difference have real importance; and if they are really important, we certainly ought to teach them.”

JOHN A. BROADUS

*The Duty of Baptists To Teach Their Distinctive Views.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1881).

“No religious denomination has a moral right to a separate existence unless it differs essentially from others. Ecclesiastical differences ought always to spring from profound doctrinal differences. *To divide Christians, except for reasons of gravest import, is criminal schism*. Separate religious denominations are justifiable only for matters of conscience growing out of clear scriptural precept.”

J. L. M. CURRY

*A Baptist Church Radically Different From Paedobaptist Churches.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1889).

“There is something distinctive in the principles of Baptists. They differ from all other denominations; and the difference is so great as not only to justify, but to demand, their separate existence as a people . . . What distinctive mission have the Baptists, if this is not their mission? - to present the truth in love on the matters wherein they differ from Pedobaptists. What is there but this that justifies their separate denominational existence and saves them from the reproach of being schismatics? *If they have a right to denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which that life cannot be justified or maintained.*”

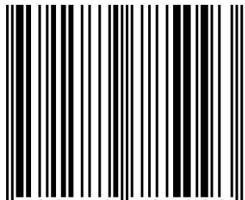
J. M. PENDLETON

*Distinctive Principles of Baptists.*  
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