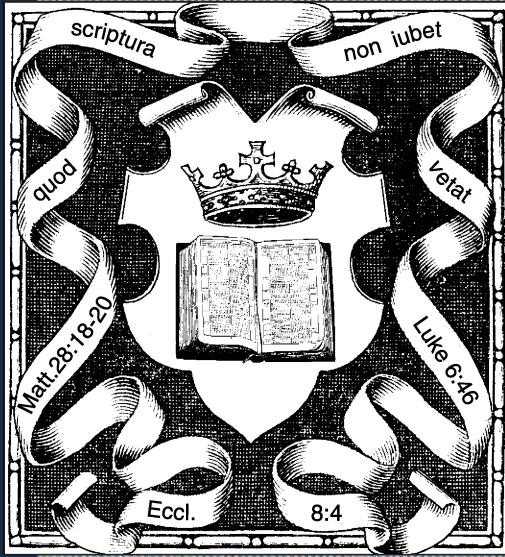


The Baptist Distinctives Series      Number 40



# A Defense of Baptism, A Term of Communion

Joseph Kinghorn



## *Quod scriptura, non iubet velat*

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.

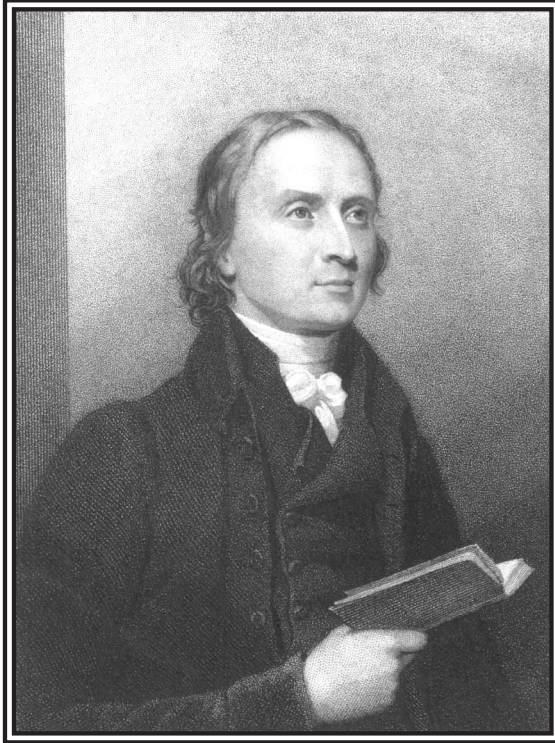
Many among today’s professing Baptists have an agenda to revise the Baptist distinctives and redefine what it means to be a Baptist. Others don’t understand why it even matters. The books being reproduced in the *Baptist Distinctives Series* are republished in order that Baptists from the past may state, 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*.



A  
**DEFENCE**  
OF  
**“BAPTISM A TERM OF COMMUNION”**



**JOSEPH KINGHORN**  
**1766-1832**

Photo courtesy of:  
Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives,  
Nashville, Tennessee

A  
**DEFENCE**  
OF  
**“BAPTISM A TERM OF COMMUNION”**  
IN ANSWER TO THE  
**REV. ROBERT HALL’S REPLY:**  

---

**BY JOSEPH KINGHORN.**  

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

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**“AMONG ALL THE ABSURDITIES THAT EVER WERE HELD, NONE EVER MAINTAINED *THAT*, THAT ANY PERSON SHOULD PARTAKE OF THE COMMUNION BEFORE HE WAS BAPTISED.” —WALL; History of Infant Baptism.**

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

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*by*

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**THE WALDENSIAN EMBLEM**

*lux lucet in tenebris*

“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

ISBN# 1579786324



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## P R E F A C E.

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ALTHOUGH controversy has often been productive of many evils, and has given great reason for humiliation before God, yet it is frequently unavoidable, and we are indebted to it for a large portion of important information. It is a very remarkable expression of the Apostle Paul, when speaking of the different opinions which existed in the church of Corinth, "there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Cor. xi. 19.) The departure of some from the faith once delivered to the Saints, tried others, and shewed who were, and who were not willing to adhere to the doctrine of the Apostles; and those who did adhere to the truth in its simplicity, were compelled to contend for it with earnestness and vigour. When apostacy from the faith of the Gospel had become general, every attempt to bring men to a just view of the will of the Lord occasioned opposition and controversy, so that when the Reformers began the great work of turning men's attention to the truth as it is in Jesus, they

were obliged in the first place to establish the supreme authority of the New Testament. When the Baptists came forth from the obscurity in which they, in common with other protestants, had been concealed, they had to contend in the same field in the midst of difficulties peculiarly severe. They called the attention of the world to what they considered a nearer approach to apostolic truth than other protestants had admitted; and they found enemies in the very men, who, in opposition to the Roman Catholics, pleaded for conformity to New Testament doctrine, and for the ordinances of the Gospel as practised in the apostolic church. They were esteemed *Heretics* by all parties; they were induced by their hard circumstances to study the New Testament closely, and to suspect the truth of many sentiments which were generally received without suspicion. Hence they were led to mark the difference between the church of Christ as *he* formed it, and a church established by the power of the state; and from this investigation they caught the first glimpse of that important principle of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY which it was their honour to bring forward to notice, and to defend in the midst of censure and obloquy.

The source of their sorrows, and the cause of their success, was their view of BAPTISM. Deriving their opinion from the New Testament, and appealing to that volume in their own defence, they found themselves fortified beyond the power of successful attack, because they could prove

that they did no more than obey its injunctions. In doing what Christ commanded they were sure that they were acting rightly, and they were satisfied that their opponents could not bring equal evidence in favour of sentiments and practices which were neither enjoined by Jesus Christ, nor illustrated by the example of the apostolic church.

Like those who of old were zealous in building the temple of the Lord, they and their fellows were men wondered at. (*Zech.* iii. 8.) All the expedients which persecuting rage, scorn, bitterness, and misrepresentation could devise, were employed to sink them in public estimation, and to run them down as a despicable party, who were neither supported by truth, nor possessed of the talents and literature necessary for their own defence.

How vain is the storm that is raised by passion! When “a great and strong wind passed by, and rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord,—the Lord was not in the wind.” (1 *Kings* xix. 11.) DR. FEATLY, a man of talent, of learning, and of considerable popularity in his day, took up his pen against the *Anabaptists*, and gratified himself by abusing them. He was honest enough to confess that he could hardly dip his pen “into any other liquor than the juice of gall”; but if he had not made this confession, his book was a sufficient evidence of his temper. His work was so popular that it passed through six editions in as many years; and doubtless many

would think, that between his arguments, his literature, and his severity, the Baptists would be so overpowered, that they would never raise their heads again. The contrary, however, was the fact: "the more" their opponents "afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew"; and could DR. FEATLY now rise from his grave, he would find them increased beyond his greatest apprehensions, and have the mortification of hearing that they bought his book as a curiosity, on account of its virulence, and often amused themselves by observing the violent explosions of his temper.

A specimen of a better kind was exhibited by MR. FLAVEL, a man of a different spirit, but still quite opponent to the *Anabaptists*. MR. PHILIP CARY, a Baptist minister at *Dartmouth*, had published a book on baptism, entitled, '*A Solemn Call*'; FLAVEL thought well of the author, yet he deemed it necessary to reply to his work. He treated him, however, respectfully, and appears to have been very desirous of not *misrepresenting* him. But it is curious to observe how he intreats him to consider the situation in which he had placed himself by venturing to plead the cause of '*Anabaptism*'. "As for your pretended solutions of the *incomparable* MR. BAXTER's, and the *learned* and *accurate* DR. BURTHOGGE's arguments, I admire at your confidence therein.—Alas! my friend, you little know what it is to have such weak and inartificial discourses as yours, brought under the strict *examen* of such acute and judi-



cious eyes.”\* Between two such millstones, poor *Philip Cary* was doubtless to be ground to powder. Some things, however, resist all attacks, and in their nature are too hard to be crushed by human power. *Mr. Cary's* sentiment still continues to make its appeal to men on the ground of the New Testament representations, and spreads more and more : the reason is manifest, it is to be found in that sacred volume, and is supported by it. There it is seen that those only who believed in Christ were baptised ; and that neither precept nor precedent can be discovered in favour of the administration of baptism to persons of any other description.

The debate which engages our attention at present, does not lead us to inquire either into the mode or subjects of baptism, but it directs our regard to a question which in point of importance takes the precedence of every other in the baptismal controversy ; which is, whether baptism is an ordinance to be maintained in the church ; or, whether it is one of those indifferent and unimportant things which the church has no right to consider as requisite to communion ? Time alone can discover what will be the effect of the attempts now made, to justify the introduction of persons *professedly unbaptised*. We may be upon the verge of a new system of corruption, and may see the most unscriptural propositions and practices become popular : but so long as the New

\* Flavel's Works, vol. viii. p. 202. Ed. 8vo. 1770.

Testament is acknowledged to be the source of authority, we shall say to those who adopt the theory of Mr. Hall, as we do to our friends, who plead for infant baptism;—go to the scriptures and *find it there*, and then we shall be satisfied.

We do not intend to rest the argument on *expediency*, but as Mr. Hall brought forward this consideration himself (though he blamed us for the notice we took of it), it may not be amiss to mention a few facts which our forefathers have preserved, and which shew what was the tendency of the system of mixed communion in their day.

Every one acquainted in any degree with Non-conformist History, has often met with the name of MR. JOHN TOMBES, who strenuously pleaded the cause of the baptists in his day, and by this means, was of eminent service to the body at large: but he held this sentiment, and his conduct shewed its tendency; for though after the act of uniformity had passed, he did not choose to conform and hold a living in the Establishment, yet he not only frequented the church of England, but actually *died in her communion*, and thus his conduct tended to neutralize his arguments.

MR. BAXTER informs us of two “Anabaptists”, (as he calls them) who were induced by his arguments and persuasion to adopt the plan of mixed communion; he says they both “*turned from anabaptistry and separation*”; and he adds, that

“in sense of their old error,” they “ran into the other extreme”.\*

The eminent JOHN BUNYAN, who zealously advocated the cause of mixed communion, seems to have had no great success in promoting the interests of the Baptists. We hardly ever find an allusion to the ordinance of baptism in his works, except in his controversial pieces, in which he practically undermines its authority. Nor was the effect of his favourite system conducive to the spread of his opinion as a baptist; for such was the state of the church with which he was long connected, that on his death they chose a Pædobaptist; and from the year 1688, in which he died, to the year 1738, when MR. JOSHUA SYMONDS died, the ministers who succeeded him were *Pædobaptists*, except the last, who some years after his settlement with the church, changed his sentiments and became a Baptist. This took place in 1772; but though MR. SYMONDS continued at Bedford, it was ‘on the conditions that he should not introduce the controversy into the pulpit, nor into conversation, unless it was first mentioned by others.’ We have also been informed, that one instance occurred in the year 1700, and another in 1724, in which the church refused to grant a dismission to members who desired to unite with two Baptist churches in London, because they were *strict communion* churches.

\* See his Life and Times, by SYLVESTER, pt. ii. p. 180, and pt. iii. p. 180. The two persons were, MR. THOS. LAMB and MR. W. ALLEN; the general fact of their change of sentiment on this subject is confirmed by DANVERS in the postscript to his ‘*Treatise of Baptism*’, p. 53, 54.

DR. JAMES FOSTER, who was more than twenty years pastor of the General Baptist church in Barbican, London, and who in his day advocated the cause of mixed communion, left the General Baptists, and accepted the pastoral charge of the Independent church at Pinner's Hall, London. But, though he had pleaded the *expediency* of mixed communion as the means of leading men to consider what the Baptists had to urge in defence of their sentiments, yet MR. GRANTHAM KILLINGWORTH informs us, that in conversation with him upon the point, "he could not pretend to say, that one single person who was in communion at Pinner's Hall before his going over to them, had since submitted to that institution, [of baptism] or shewn the least inclination to be baptised".\*

The instances above recited mark the tendency of the system in times now considerably distant; at a later period MR. BOOTH shews what was *his* view of its tendency, and his manner of expression clearly evinces that he drew his remarks from *facts*. He says, "I would also take the liberty here to observe, that some of those churches in which free communion has been practised, have not been the most remarkable for brotherly love, or christian peace and harmony. Has the pastor of a church so constituted, being a Baptist, never found, that his Pædobaptist brethren have been a little offended, when he has ventured freely to speak his mind on the mode and subject of

\* Killingworth's Answer to the Defence of Dr. Foster's Sermon of Catholic Communion, p. 35.

baptism? When Pædobaptist candidates for communion have been proposed to such a church, have those members who espoused the same sentiment never discovered a degree of pleasure, in the thought of having their number and influence increased in the community, that has excited the jealousy of their Baptist brethren? When, on the contrary, there has been a considerable addition to the number of Baptist members, has not an equal degree of pleasure in them, raised similar suspicions in the minds of their Pædobaptist brethren? And are not suspicions and jealousies of this kind, the natural effects of such a constitution?" (*Apol. p. 131, 132.*) No one who is acquainted with the character of ABRAHAM BOOTH, will for a moment suppose that he was writing from imagination: his concluding observation also, is too forcible to be denied:—"now, as our opponents must allow, that their communities are liable to all those other imperfections which are common to the churches of Christ; so, I presume, the reader will hardly forbear concluding, that free communion exposes them to some *additional* disadvantages, which are peculiar to themselves."\*

One effect it will always produce; it will *exclude* those who think that the primitive constitution of the church ought to be preserved; and invite those who for any reason are opponent, either to baptism as an ordinance of Christ, or, to the form and order of the christian church as it

\* Some observations on the experience of the American Baptist churches, the reader will meet with in the progress of the work.

was established by the Lord. Whether they come as persons baptised, or the contrary, they are equally accepted, and those who receive them practically declare, that though our view of baptism is justified by "overwhelming evidence," yet it does not now hold the situation in which it was placed by Jesus Christ. To us this consideration forms an unanswerable objection to the scheme: it eventually strikes at the *permanency* of the institution of the Lord; and no acuteness that has yet been brought into the discussion, can prove that it needs be regarded at all, if Mr. Hall's principles are admitted.

An anonymous author has lately shewn the tendency of these principles in an indirect but marked manner, in a pamphlet entitled, "*Thoughts on Baptism as an Ordinance of Proselytism, including observations on the controversy respecting terms of Communion; by Agnostos.*" This writer is the opponent of all parties, for his sentiment is, that if baptism was designed to be a standing ordinance of the church, *Missionaries* are the only proper administrators, and their proselytes the only proper subjects. Hence it follows, on his plan, that Baptists and Pædobaptists are equally wrong, and if his theory were admitted, the controversy respecting communion would immediately terminate. With his sentiments, it is to be expected that he would treat the principle of strict communion as a mistake; and that practically, he would be on the side of Mr. Hall: yet so far as the tendency of the sentiment is concerned, he

throws his weight into the opposite scale. He observes justly,—“what can be more inconsistent than to maintain that Baptism is a positive institution and a standing ordinance of the christian church, and yet treat it as a matter of indifference and countenance the total neglect of it, by admitting to an *equal* participation of *all* the privileges of church fellowship those who are unbaptised, with those who have paid a regard to that ordinance?” (*p.* 109.) The controversy he calls “a contest between *Christian* principles and *Baptist* principles”; and he says either the law of baptism must be sacrificed, or the spirit of the Gospel of Christ must be violated”. (*p.* 101.) According to this statement, what the author calls *christian* principles, cannot admit that our Lord appointed a positive rite to be obeyed, when his disciples enter on a public profession of his Gospel.—This, however, he must be aware, we should call an assumption; but if what he calls “*Baptist* principles” are supported by the New Testament, “*Christian* principles” will never be in opposition to *Christian institutions*. It is, therefore, only needful to shew that “*Baptist* principles” are *scriptural*, and then the subject is at rest, till it is proved to be also *scriptural* that we should form a church of persons *unbaptised*.

It is no part of our business to enter the lists with “Agnostos” respecting his main argument, but his observations on the tendency of mixed communion deserve the more attention as they proceed from a writer who was not led to make them from

any partiality to the cause we are advocating. He grants that the objections urged against Mr. Hall's system are well founded; that in proportion as it prevails, the cause of the Baptists must sink; (*p.* 112.) that the effect of mixed communion, instead of inducing Pædobaptists to become Baptists, will tend in the contrary direction, and what they see and hear, will confirm them in their former ideas, that Baptism is of little or no importance, and altogether unnecessary. (*p.* 114.) Besides, he observes that where Baptists and Pædobaptists are indiscriminately associated, "it is generally *understood*, if not *absolutely stipulated*, as a term of communion, that *baptism should be kept out of sight as much as possible*; that it should *scarcely ever be mentioned*, and *never* be insisted on, lest the peace of the church should be disturbed, and the harmony of its members be interrupted." (*p.* 114, 115.) Farther, he observes, it exposes a minister to the temptation of shunning to declare the whole counsel of God in order to avoid giving offence; and it accustoms the people to see an *acknowledged duty* treated as a matter of indifference. And—it has a tendency to excite a spirit of jealousy between the two parties, destructive of peace and unity, and thus, he observes, one of the strongest arguments in favour of mixed communion is turned against the practice. (*p.* 117.)

The tendency of Mr. Hall's reasoning is also marked by a writer of a different description, who asks him *how he can justify his DISSENT from the*



*church of England*, on the principles of his own work? THE REV. CHARLES JERRAM, *Vicar of Chobham*, in a volume entitled, "Conversations on Infant Baptism, and some popular objections against the Church of the United Kingdom," brings the subject forward in a long note. (*p.* 152, &c.) He classes Dr. Mason and Mr. Hall together; he compliments them both, and is glad that he can appeal to such unexceptionable authorities. He argues from what they have each brought forward; and contends that on their principles, Dissenters ought not to have left the Establishment. He observes, that Mr. Hall challenges the Baptists to produce a single instance of withdrawing from the ancient church on the account of Infant baptism;—that this shews at least the sentiment of *Mr. Hall*, that difference of opinion on this important rite, a difference so great as to ANNUL the ordinance in the minds of the Baptists, is not a legitimate cause of separation.—That if any thing may be considered as of such minor importance, that it may be merged for the sake of peace, the circumstantial in the administration of the Lord's supper may be viewed in that light; and he tells us that "the doctrine which Mr. Hall lays down as the foundation of a more extended communion among the various denominations of christians would *undoubtedly lead to this conclusion.*"—That "we have the authority of Mr. Hall for asserting, that nothing less than a radical defection from the purity of apostolical doctrine and discipline can authorise the principle of

separation or exclusion from christian communion." This Mr. Jerram says is, "*a most important concession*"! and he adds,—“we may challenge the world to substantiate such a charge against us, as would render it improper, on *these principles*, to continue within her pale, or make it a matter of indifference to desert her community.” (p.160.162.)

The reasoning that can dispose of an institution of Christ, by removing it from its primitive station, introduces so lax a principle, that no precept which we do not consider essential to salvation, can maintain its ground. If we are not bound to adhere to a positive appointment of Christ, which is confessedly permanent in its obligation, we in vain assert, that it is of consequence to form the church according to the plan which Christ has furnished; for it may always be retorted, what avails your pleading scripture, when you reason away the authority of one of its plainest institutes? Mr. Jerram is a man of sense, he sees the advantage which is given him, and we doubt not he will use it.

But it is time to conclude this long preface. I have now discharged a duty which I owed to the denomination of which I am an unworthy member; and I commit the following pages to the reader's attention, asking for nothing more, than that he will consider how far the observations he may meet with, agree with the New Testament. Should he accuse me of repeating the same arguments in different parts of the work, my apology is, that it arose from following the detail of Mr. Hall's

reasonings, which, in my apprehension, were continually in opposition to a few plain principles by which the controversy must eventually be decided. Repetition was therefore (to a degree at least) unavoidable, unless I had adopted a totally different plan, which would have been open to the the objection, that I had not examined my opponent's arguments in their order. As my attention has been awakened to this subject by a variety of circumstances, I shall listen to any *fair* and *candid* argument which may yet be presented from any quarter ; but unless something should be urged, far superior to any thing that has yet appeared, it is not likely that I shall trouble the world with a reply. Contention is not desirable ; but, if we are not willing tamely to surrender the cause of truth, it is sometimes unavoidable. In pleading for what I believe is the will of the Lord, I hope that I earnestly desire to keep an eye on his character and glory, while I intreat his forgiveness of my weakness and imperfections in this attempt to direct the attention of professing christians to the *ordinances* of the Gospel, as Christ and his Apostles *delivered them unto us*.

NORWICH,  
*September, 1820.*

“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.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1882).

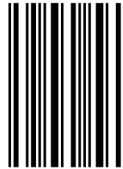
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