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Number 23



Baptist Church Perpetuity

W. A. Jarrel

Baptist Church Perpetuity



W. A. JARREL
1849-1927

Baptist Church Perpetuity,

OR

THE CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE OF BAPTIST CHURCHES FROM THE
APOSTOLIC TO THE PRESENT DAY DEMONSTRATED
BY THE BIBLE AND BY HISTORY.

By W. A. JARREL, D. D.,

*Author of "Liberty of Conscience and the Baptists;" "Old
Testament Ethics Vindicated;" "Gospel in Water or
Campbellism;" "The Origin, the Nature, the
Kingdom, the Works and the Destiny
of the Devil," etc., etc., etc.*

INTRODUCTION

—BY—

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Chicago Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell
shall not prevail against it." —JESUS CHRIST.



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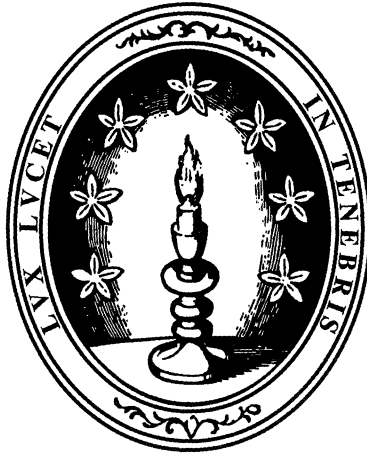
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Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth.
-- Psalm 60:4

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THE WALDENSIAN EMBLEM

lux lucet in tenebris

“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

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DEDICATION.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE LAMENTED

PROF. R. J. W. BUCKLAND, D.D.,

AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN ROCHESTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, WHO, NOT LONG BEFORE HIS DECEASE, WROTE ME HE WAS WORKING TO PROVE THE PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE TO THE PRESENT ;

TO THE MEMORY OF THE LAMENTED

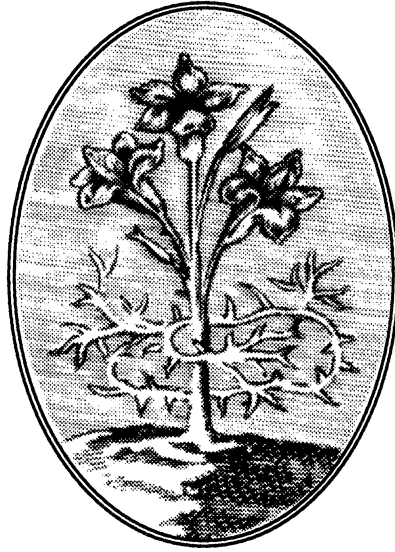
J. R. GRAVES, LL.D.,

TO WHOM, MORE THAN TO ANY OTHER MAN OF THIS AGE, THE BAPTISTS ARE INDEBTED FOR FAITHFULNESS TO DENOMINATIONAL TRUTH AND FOR DENOMINATIONAL CONSISTENCY ; AND

TO MY DEAR WIFE,

WHO HAS, IN THE MASTER'S SPIRIT, SO HEROICALLY HELPED ME BEAR THE LABORS AND THE SACRIFICES, IN GETTING THIS BOOK OUT, I AFFECTIONALLY DEDICATE IT.

W A. J.



Sicut liliū inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias

On The Cover: We use the symbol of the “lily among the thorns” from Song of Solomon 2:2 to represent the Baptist History Series. The Latin, *Sicut liliū inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias*, translates, “As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.”

PREFACE.

Notwithstanding that many of the ablest Biblical expositors and theologians rightly regard the Romish church as the apocalyptic, "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth . . . the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," some church historians and some professors in Theological Seminaries, treat her as the "Christian church," and the true witnessing church as "heretics" and "heresies." Surely, it is high time this was reversed.

Baptist churches being regarded as but one among the Reformation sects, no wonder there is so little interest in Baptist history that several of the best publications on Baptist history, by the American Baptist Publication Society, have hardly returned the financial outlay in publishing them. Regarding Baptists but one of modern sects, thinking and conscientious people naturally reject their exclusive claims and practices. Seeing this, Baptist opponents leave "unturned no stone" to teach the people that Baptist churches are in origin "but of yesterday." In this, Baptist opponents are wiser than Baptists who are content that Baptist Church Perpetuity be presented as a trifle.

Seeing that one man has as much right to originate a church as has another, ambitious and

PREFACE.

designing men, by originating new sects, are continuously adding to the babel of sectarianism. Thus the answer to Christ's prayer—"that they may all be one . . . *that* the world may believe that thou hast sent me"—is hindered and infidelity is perpetuated.

Calling on God to witness his sincerity, the author of this book gladly expresses his Christian affection for every blood-washed soul—*whatever may be his or her creed*. He begs that this book be taken not as an assault on any dear child of God, but as a Biblical and historical exposition and demonstration of very important practical truth—truth sorely needed for this *falsely* liberal and sectarian age.

The book has been *worded* and the proof read by time snatched in revival meetings from needed rest. For any little oversights which possibly may appear in it, let this be the explanation. Nearly all quotations within this volume having been made in person by its author—excepting a *very few*, and they from reliable sources—the reader can use them with the greatest assurance.

The author thanking the public for the generous reception given his other books, which has encouraged him to send this one out, with profound gratitude to God for the opportunity and the grace to publish this one, signs himself,

A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE,

DALLAS, TEXAS.

May, 1894.

INTRODUCTION.

The Baptist movement in history has always been back to the New Testament. This people has always refused to follow others away from the teaching and practice of that book. In the New Testament are plainly stated certain great principles which lie as foundation stones in the base of the Church of Christ. These principles are the regeneration of the believer by the Holy Spirit and the word of God, the baptism of the believer in water, the equality of believers in the church, the separation of church and State, and in the church the sole authority of the Bible. But these distinctive principles of Christianity were soon set aside and Jewish or pagan notions were put in their places. The doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit, and the word was the first to be abandoned and in its place was introduced the notion of regeneration by water. To water, a material element, was ascribed the virtue which the New Testament gives to the word as the seed of life. With the attention directed to the performance of a sacrament instead of to hearing and believing the word, it was not long before the churches were filled with members who were Christians by sacrament, who had the form of godliness, who had a name to live, but were dead.

Then it was about 150, A. D. that the first Baptist protest was raised by the Montanists. The Montanists with all their faults, stand in the line of the Apostles. They raised their voices against the increasing formalism and worldliness of the churches and proclaimed an ever present Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. They were

wrong in magnifying fasting and forbidding second marriage, but were right in looking for the Holy Spirit not without in forms, but within in the heart. This is the chief mark of the Baptist movement in history, the demand for evidence of regeneration, for a personal experience of the grace of God, for the witness of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit. In a Baptist church this is an unalterable condition of membership. The intimacy with God observed by Max Goebel in the prayers and hymns of the Anabaptists, and which he contrasts with the formal devotion of others, is traceable to the universal and deep-seated conviction of the Anabaptists, that union with Christ is essential to salvation and that a new life is the only evidence of that union.

The second fundamental principle of the New Testament, to wit, the baptism of believers only, was displaced with the first, for as soon as baptism became a synonym for regeneration and water was supposed to wash away sin, it was natural that dying or sickly, and then all infants should be brought to the priest to have their sins washed away. It is the protest which Baptists have raised against this innovation and revolution in gospel order that has attracted the attention of the world and occasioned most of the wickedness that have been invented to describe them. The refusal to have their own infants baptized and the denial of the validity of baptism received in infancy, placed them in conflict with the authorities of church and State and made an impression upon multitudes who inquired no further and cared nothing about their doctrine of the secret operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. To this day, most people when they think of Baptists, think of baptism and not of what goes before baptism—the new creation of the soul.

The third fundamental principle of the New Testament, namely the equality of believers in the church, was discarded with the other two, for when regeneration was reduced to the sacrament of baptism, the servant of the church who administered the saving rite, was a servant no longer, but a priest, a magician, a little god. In this way the clergy were exalted above the laity and became a separate class. This official distinction of the ministers did not improve their character. It was not a question of character any longer, but of ordination. Those who were properly ordained had the power to wash away sins whatever their character might be. The office hallowed the man and not the man the office.

The next two protests in church history were raised by the Novatians in the third century and by the Donatists in the fourth, against the false view of the priesthood. The persecutions of Decius and of Diocletian had exposed many hypocrites who were said to have "lapsed." After peace was restored, the question arose as to the proper treatment of these lapse christians who sought restoration to church fellowship and office. The majority, led on by Cyprian and Augustine, took a lenient view of their apostacy, but the Novatians and Donatists declared that the rights of apostles were forfeited. Hence they were called "Puritans" and "Anabaptists" because they demanded a pure and loyal record for the ministry, and because they rebaptized those who had been baptized by the disloyal ministers of the Roman Catholic church. Baptists have always insisted not only on a holy ministry and on the equality of ministers, but also on the ministry of all believers. Lay preaching has been favored by Baptists from the beginning. No bishop is allowed to lord it over the pastor, and the pastor is not allowed to lord it over

the humblest member. The highest place a minister can occupy, is to be the servant of all.

The fourth fundamental principle of the New Testament, that is to say, the separation of church and State, was necessarily maintained for three centuries, because the Roman State persecuted the church during that period, but when the Emperor Constantine made the offer of an alliance between church and State, the offer was accepted, and the union then formed remained in force everywhere until a Baptist obtained his charter for Rhode Island. Except in the United States, Australia and Ireland, the old order still prevails. Thus the Lord's decree, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's"—the most momentous utterance, Von Ranke says, that ever fell from his lips, is disregarded by the rules of church and State. The interesting historical fact is that a Baptist in Rhode Island was the first to try the application to civil affairs of our Lord's decree, and that Baptists were the first to move to secure the adoption by Congress, before its adoption by the States, of this Baptist principle. It may be called a Baptist principle because before Rhode Island was formed, only Baptist voices were heard in the advocacy of the separation of church and State. Total separation is the logical outcome of the Baptist principles already stated. Beginning with a regenerated soul and the baptism of believers only, and holding firmly to the equality of all believers, there is no place for the State in the church and there is no need of the State by the church. As a Baptist church is founded upon voluntary faith, persecution is prevented from the start. Is it not time that Baptists, the first and foremost friends of liberty, should be cleared of the charge of bigotry?

The last fundamental New Testament principle, namely, the Bible, the sole authority in the church, was discarded soon after the union of church and State under Constantine. Some other authority was needed to justify that union and many other departures from New Testament precept that had already taken place. That authority was found in the church itself and in tradition. "I would not believe the New Testament if the church did not command me to," said Augustine. "I esteem the four general councils," said Pope Gregory, "as highly as I do the four gospels." Throughout the middle ages tradition held full sway. When the Waldensians translated the New Testament into the vernacular, Pope Innocent III compared the Bible to Mt. Sinai, which the people were forbidden to touch. The fourth Lateran council, held in 1215, forbade laymen to read the Bible, and the Bishop of Tarragona, in 1242, forbade even the priests to do so. Baptists have always done their share in translating the Bible into the languages of earth. Carey, Marshman, Ward, Judson and many others have let the light of life shine in heathen lands. Joseph Hughes was the Baptist founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Baptists were the leaders in the movement to revise the English Bible, and furnished Conant, Hackett and Kendrick to represent them in the enterprise.

While they hold fast to these fundamental principles of the New Testament, Baptists have a bright future before them. By insisting, on evidence of regeneration in every candidate for baptism, this will prevent the spirit of worldliness, which weakens other churches, from entering the assembly of the saints. By maintaining the equality of believers, the temptation of ambition, so strong in all human organizations, will find nothing in them. By guarding the independence of the church, they will

preserve the independence of the State, and by upholding the Bible as the sole authority and as interpreter of its own decrees, they will be safe from the attack of rationalism on the one hand or superstition on the other.

W. W. EVERTS.

HAVERHILL, Mass., May, 1894.

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“A HISTORY of the Baptists should be understood in its objects and aims; and cleared, in the beginning, of misapprehension and perversion. It is not the history of a nationality, a race, an organization, but of people, *traced by their vital principles and gospel practices*. The unity to be exhibited and demonstrated was not brought about by force, by coercion of pains and penalties, by repressive and punitive Acts of Conformity; but by the recognition and adoption of a common authoritative and completely divine standard... the WORD OF GOD.”

Dr. J. L. M. Curry (1825-1903)

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