

Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT

ORGANIZED 1786

MISSIONARY

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

VOL. 9

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

AUGUST, 1978

NO. 11

THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT

BY THE LATE: C. D. COLE

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Back in timeless eternity—back before the dawn of creation—back when there was nothing but the Triune Godhead, it was determined to create the universe with man in it as the image and likeness of God, the Creator. Before man was created, his fall was foreseen and gracious designs for the salvation of fallen men were inaugurated. The Saviour was selected and the Son—the eternal Word—stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and on the sixth day He made man and placed him in the Garden of Eden. Man was made male and female, and marvelous provision was made for their welfare and happiness. But in the course of time, Eve was deceived and Adam followed her in rebellion against God. This sin caused a break between God and man, and this separation resulted in death—moral death instantly and physical death later. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Life and death are not antonyms of existence and non-existence, but of conditions of existence. Adam died the day he ate the forbidden fruit, but he did not cease to exist. Sin separates between God and men, and this separation means death. Just as the body without the spirit is

dead, so man without God is dead as a moral being—dead in trespasses and sins.

As soon as man sinned, the gracious designs of salvation were put into action. Adam and Eve were naked, that is, they became conscious sinners and afraid of God. God clothed them with skins of animals after they had miserably failed to clothe themselves. Thus, in type and in sermon, He told them of a Saviour to come—the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head.

In Old Testament times, Moses and the prophets told of the coming Saviour Who was called the Messiah. In the fulness of time He came, born of a woman and made under the law to redeem sinners from the curse of God's law.

He came and died and was buried, but He could not be holden of death. On the third day He arose and after many infallible proofs of His being alive, He ascended back to the Father. But while He was here, He built a church and assured it perpetuity. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Here the pronoun "my" distinguishes it from all other churches or assemblies. We read of a church in the wilderness—a church back in Old Testament history—but that was not Christ's church. Remember, the word "church" is the translation of the Greek word "Ekklesia", and means an assembly or congregation.

In I Thessalonians, Paul addresses his letter to the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There were two other churches or assemblies in Thessalonica—the Jewish synagogue and the Greek assembly that transacted the business of the city government. But Paul wanted the assembly or congregation that was related to God as Father and to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

The word “church” is used in the New Testament in a twofold sense—in the sense of an institution it is used abstractly, but when the institution takes on concrete form—when it is located and identified, it is always an assembly or a particular congregation.

To illustrate: When we speak of the American home, we are speaking abstractly, but when we locate the American home, it is of necessity a particular home. We talk about the American boy, but when we find the American boy, it is always a particular boy. We talk about the American jury as a system of jurisprudence, but when we find the American jury, it is always a particular group of people. There is no such thing as one big American boy, or one big American home, or one big American jury.

The only kind of a church the New Testament knows anything about is a local or particular assembly. When the New Testament wants to speak of something larger than a particular congregation, it uses the word churches. In the New Testament there is no Church of Europe or of Asia. All the Christians in Europe or Asia could not constitute a church for the simple reason they could not assemble. There were churches of Asia, and churches of Galatia, that is, churches scattered through these provinces. But when a particular church was found, it was at some location, such as the church at Corinth, Ephesus, etc.

People who do not know sometimes talk about the Southern Baptist Church, but there is no such thing. There are many churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention for purposes of worldwide missionary endeavor. And each and every church is a whole church and not a part of one big universal church, whether visible or invisible.

Altogether apart from the Bible conception and Bible usage, we have in the world a big universal visible church in the Roman Catholic hierarchy, but that church is not a church of Christ. And we have what people call a big invisible church to which all believers belong.

Brother Sebastian once asked one of these invisible church fellows for the address of his church and the name of its pastor. Brother Sebastian reminded him that the churches of the New Testament could be written to, and that he would like to write a letter to his church. This was enough to expose the foolishness of the idea of an invisible church.

What is a New Testament Church? It is a group of baptized believers believing what Christ has said and covenanting to do what He has commanded. The church is both an organism and an organization. As an organism, it is made up of living stones, or redeemed people. As an organization, it is a group in fellowship, working together to make Christ known to the world.

A New Testament Church is democratic in its government, and autonomous, that is, there is no human agency or authority to which it is subject. It has its officers, but they are its servants for Jesus' sake. All members are brethren and Christ is their Lord. The pastor does have the rule over the flock, but he rules with a big book, not with a big stick.

The New Testament Church is simple in its ceremonial expression. It has two ordinances or ceremonies: baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are not sacraments but symbols—they have no magical power to save, but are symbols pointing to what does save. They are the Gospel in two acts. They are not the Gospel, but symbols of the Gospel. Baptism symbolizes the burial and resurrection of Christ. The Lord's Supper symbolizes His death....And these things make up the Gospel. “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3,4).

Baptism does not save, but it says something. It says that the believer is dead to sin by virtue of his legal union with Christ—union in law. (Rom. 6:1-11).

There are four things that constitute scriptural baptism:

1. The proper subject—a believer and hence a saved person.

2. The proper mode—an immersion and an emersion. A planting and a resurrection.

3. The proper design—to symbolize the burial and resurrection of Christ and our own burial and resurrection to walk in a new life through union with Him. Burial is for the dead, and the believer is dead to sin—the guilt and penalty of it—therefore, he is buried. He is alive unto God in Christ, therefore, he is raised up to walk in the new life he has in Christ.

4. The proper administrator—a New Testament Church. Many of us are agreed that sprinkling is not baptism. Baptism is a burial. If sprinkling were baptism, then it would not be the word “baptizo”, but the word “rantidso”. But you can have immersion without baptism. A person might immerse himself, and do it in sincerity, but that wouldn't be baptism. A man might believe as he walked along the highway and meet

someone and have that person to immerse him, but that would not be baptism. The ordinances belong to the church, not to just anybody, not even to just any Christian. The church is Christ's institution to carry out His commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19,20).

The Lord's Supper is a Memorial service. The bread and the fruit of the vine have no magical value; they are emblems of Christ's bruised body and shed blood. In the Lord's Supper we are to think of His wounded body—we do show the Lord's death. The only value of the Supper is to make us think more of Him; it is to keep our eyes upon Him.

In the Lord's Supper we dramatize His sufferings. A sacred drama in four acts:

1. We have the one loaf and one cup, representing His sinless body.

2. We have the thanks for the bread and cup as representing His body.

3. We have the breaking of the bread and pouring from the cup to symbolize His sufferings on the cross.

4. We have the eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup to symbolize our faith. We say symbolically that we are feeding by faith upon Christ and Him crucified. It is His death, burial and resurrection we look to for salvation.

You sometimes hear people talk about the "true church", by which they mean some big invisible something to which all the redeemed belong. The logic of such reasoning is that the "local church" is not the true church, and if it is not true, it is false. And to follow the logic of such reasoning is to ignore the local congregation and be loyal to something you can't see nor find. I want to be loyal to the "true church", and if it is some big invisible something, I do not know what to do to be loyal to it. But if the "true church" is an assembly of baptized believers, agreeing as to what Christ has said, and having fellowship in doing what He has commanded, then I know how to be loyal to it. I can attend its services; I can support its ministry; I can love its members; when one member suffers, I can suffer in sympathy with him.

CASSETTE TAPES

MESSAGES BY CARL MORTON

All tapes (C-60) are \$1.75 each, postage paid.

Order from:

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH
TAPE MINISTRY
3175 Briar Hill Road
Lexington, Kentucky 40511

CLIP AND MAIL TODAY

I TIMOTHY

- 1 The Church And Its Message
- 2 The Church And Its Members
- 3 The Church And Its Officers
- 4 The Church And Its Minister
- 5 The Church And Its Ministry
- 6 The Church And Its Ministry

II TIMOTHY

- 7 The Pastoral Appeal
- 8 The Practical Appeal
- 9 The Prophetic Appeal
- 10 The Personal Appeal

Send to _____

Street _____

City & State _____

Return defective tapes with a note of explanation, and we will replace tape.



**CHRIST BLESSES THOSE
WHO ARE LOYAL TO HIM**

