

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

# THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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*"Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state"*

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## WHY I AM A BAPTIST

BY: C. D. COLE

As is well known, there are many denominations or groups of people professing to be the followers of Jesus Christ, a man who lived upon this earth over 2000 years ago. According to the book we call the Bible, this man was born of a virgin without a human father; He was God manifest in the flesh. On the human side He was a Jew, a descendent of David, a king of Israel. He belonged to the tribe of Judah or kingly tribe. His early days were spent in obscurity in a little town called Nazareth, a place with a bad reputation; so bad that it was a sort of proverbial saying, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" John 1:46. He was taken when eight days old to the temple for the Jewish rite of circumcision. At the age of twelve years we find Him in the temple confounding the doctors of the law with His wisdom. At thirty years of age, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, [this was "John the Baptist" Matthew 3:1] to be baptized of him...And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," Matthew 3:13,16,17-4:1. Here the devil tried his utmost to get Jesus to do wrong. He tempted Him to selfishness in three directions:

1. To do something for Himself; "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he an-

swered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," Matthew 4:3-4.

2. To do something spectacular; "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down...Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," Matthew 4:5-7.

3. To worship the devil; "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matthew 4:8-10. Each time Jesus vanquished the devil with the word of God. After this He entered upon a brief but busy ministry of doing good. He went about doing good, healing people with all kinds of disease, casting out demons, feeding the hungry, raising the dead to life. But in His brief ministry of deeds and words, He incurred such enmity of the Jews and Gentiles, the religious leaders of His own race and the civil powers that He was crucified by Roman soldiers. His grave was guarded by Roman soldiers, but He miraculously arose and for a period of four days He appeared at different times to His followers; one time 500 saw Him at once. At the end of forty days, He went back to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit who came ten

days later on the day of Pentecost. His followers did not understand His death and were skeptical about His resurrection, but when they were convinced that He was risen, they took a new courage and began to preach Him as the hope of lost men. They said that He was the only Saviour. These witnesses were persecuted but they could not be stopped. Some of the persecutors like Saul of Tarsus, were converted and became flaming evangel of the new movement. Millions died rather than renounce their hope in Him. The Roman emperors, one after another, tried to stamp out the movement, but the blood of martyrs was the seed of the church. Finally after nearly 300 years, the emperor Constantine stopped the persecution and made the religion of Christ the religion of His empire. This was a great factor in corrupting the church of Christ. It soon put a lot of people in the church that had not been born from above. The church became popular and people flocked to it. A big ecclesiastical hierarchy came into existence with wealth and splendor with a man called the "Pope" as the head of it. This was the Roman Catholic church or hierarchy. All Christians did not enter it and would not accept its teachings or doctrine. Those who did not were persecuted. They fled to the valleys of the Alps mountains where they maintained worship. The dark ages came on and the

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# HOW'S YOUR STANDING?

BY: C. D. COLE

**Introduction:** I want to begin with a very personal question to every person including myself. How's your standing? This is not to embarrass you but to challenge us. You might answer, "My standing is good, I have a clean bill of health." From whom? I might ask. And you may reply, "From myself. I do not know of anything very bad against myself, my conscience is fairly clear." But I remind you of a certain lawyer who was willing to justify himself and to whom Christ spake the parable of the good Samaritan. And Paul said, that even though he might not have much against himself, he would not be justified, for he that judgest me is the Lord. An easy conscience might be a diseased conscience. Our conscience is very apt to be prejudice in our favor.

If you say that your standing is good as a law abiding citizen, I would remind you that a lot of sinners in God's sight are not in jail. If you say, I am right in the eyes of my neighbors, I would remind you of certain Pharisees who justified themselves before men to whom Christ said, "...*Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God,*" Luke 16:15.

What I mean is this: "How's your standing before God?" What does God say about you? Has God given you a clean bill of health. If He has, on what ground? To be saved one must be justified by God for it is God who justifieth.

The important thing is not your repentance in the eyes of the government or in the eyes of your neighbor. I expect every person can get a recommendation from his neighbor. But our eternal welfare depends upon being accepted of God. Does God accept you and justify you, and if so on what ground?

What does it mean to have right standing before God? It means that God, as law-giver, has no charge to bring against you. It means that God does not condemn you. And if God has no charge against you and does not condemn you, then nobody else can. "*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth,*" Romans 8:33. Do I hear someone say, "Brother Cole, is it possible that there are people against whom God brings no charge?" Yes, that is what I am saying. "*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,*" Romans 4:8.

So far as guilt and punishment are con-

cerned, the man who has right standing with God is as though he had never sinned. "*And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,*" Acts 13:39.

This right standing before God is called justification. It is that part of salvation which consists of deliverance from guilt and punishment. A human court can only uphold justice and maintain its honor by justifying the innocent, but God vindicates His justice and magnifies his grace in justifying the ungodly. "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,*" Romans 4:5.

Justification makes us safe from the wrath of God and eternal punishment. And no man is wise who does not fear God and wants to escape his wrath. The only source of real danger for anybody is from the sin-hating & sin-avenging God. It was Paul's concern for the safety of men that led him to say, "*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*" II Corinthians 5:11.

There is a theory today that you must not scare people. The technique of the psychiatrist is to deliver people from fear and dread. They act on the principle "there is nothing to fear but fear." But the Bible says God is to be feared. "*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell,*" Matthew 10:28. "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,*" Psalm 111:10.

Everlasting punishment is something to be shunned. The Philippian jailer was moved with fear when he cried out, "*What must I do to be saved?*" Acts 16:30. The dying thief was moved with fear, "*And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,*" Luke 23:42. I dare say that the beginning of interest in salvation on the part of every saved person is from fear.

Fear surpasses danger and where there is no real danger there need be no fear. The Bible says, "*Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord,*" Romans 12:19. There is danger from Christ, "*In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,*" II Thessalonians 1:8.

Justification is more than pardon, which is not a New Testament word. A man who is pardoned is still guilty and his pardon is a benevolent act of the governor. Justification

is the righteous act of a just God. Justification is not the generous act of God; it is not on the ground of generosity but on the ground of redemption.

There are four or five things I want to bring from the Bible on the subject of justification:

## MOVING CAUSE

The moving cause or source of justification is the grace of God; and grace only. The question is, What leads God to save sinners? Is it their good character and good works? If it is something in sinners, then what is it? Romans 3:24 answers this once and for all. "*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" Someone says this passage does not give all the truth on justification. Quite true but it does give all the truth on the two points it deals with; namely the cause and ground. The cause is grace and the ground is redemption that is in Christ. We cannot be too emphatic that justification is by grace alone as that which moves God to save sinners. Every aspect and every step of salvation is by grace. Every step towards glory is by grace.

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come. 'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

Our election is of grace. "*...a remnant according to the election of grace,*" Romans 11:5. Our justification is of grace. "*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*" Romans 3:24. Our calling is of grace. "*But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,*" Galatians 1:15. And our glorification will be of grace. "*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*" I Peter 1:13.

## GROUND OR MERITORIOUS CAUSE

The ground of justification or the meritorious cause is the blood of Christ. "*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,*" Ephesians 1:7. This verse teaches the same two points as Romans 3:24 and says that the redemption is through the blood of Christ. "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,*" Galatians 3:13. "*Forasmuch as ye know that*

ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," I Peter 1:18-19. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," Revelation 5:9.

"What can wash away my sin, Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh precious is the flow, that makes me white as snow. No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

### INSTRUMENTAL CAUSE

The way of justification, or the instrumental cause is faith, and faith only. "Therefore it is of faith, that is might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all," Romans 4:16. To plus faith on the part of the sinner would be to plus grace as the source of salvation and the blood of Christ as the ground of salvation. If grace is the sole source of salvation and the blood of Christ the sole ground of salvation then it follows necessarily and logically that faith is the sole way of salvation. All in the world a sinner can do to be justified is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. God will not forgive on any other ground.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1. Faith has been called the receiving grace. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John 1:12-13.

Repentance and faith are graces wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins," Acts 5:31. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life," Acts 11:18. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will," II Timothy 2:24-26.

### PICTORIAL OR SYMBOLICAL

The pictorial or symbolical way of salvation is in the ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are preaching ordinances; not saving ordinances. They point to what does save and in symbol, speak of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. "But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," Romans 4:24-25. Baptism is a declarative act. It declares that the person being baptized is a believer in Christ. Baptism is for believers only and believers have everlasting life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36.

Baptism is an identifying act. It identifies the believer as one with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Baptism says that the believer is in legal union with Christ. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Romans 6:4.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ death. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come," I Corinthians 11:26. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Hebrews 10:14.

### EVIDENCES OF SALVATION

The evidences of salvation are our works and works only. Evidentially we are saved by works. Works are the only proof of saving faith. Our proof is justified by works only.

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with is works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righ-

teousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," James 2:14-24.

### WHY I AM A BAPTIST

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Roman Catholic hierarchy became so rotten in its teachings and practices that in the 15th century there was a revolt led by Martin Luther of Germany (1525). This was the beginning of the Protestant denominations.

### WHY I AM A BAPTIST

1. Not because I think Baptist to be better than other Christians.
2. Not because my parents were Baptist.
3. Not because I believe one has to be a Baptist to be saved.

### Positively:

Because I understand the Scriptures to teach on the various doctrine what I find in Baptist Confessions of Faith and the utterances of men who were Baptists in the past. The only ground of fellowship I have with Baptists is a doctrinal ground.

Baptists believe many things in common with other denominations. They even agree with the Roman Catholics in several things, viz., the virgin birth and deity of Christ.

But they differ with all other denominations on some points, and on these points, I am a BAPTIST.