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Grover Stevens

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# Why I Left the Baptist Church

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GROVER STEVENS

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Return  
James O. Wilbur  
Church of  
Christ



# Why I Left the Baptist Church

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GROVER STEVENS

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I HAD ATTENDED the Baptist Church from childhood. I had been going to the Phillips Baptist Church for several years. At the age of 15 I realized I was lost and conviction pressed me hard. I wanted to join the Baptist Church then, but my mother thought I was too young. I soon afterwards quit attending services at all. Some time later I started again. Only a short time passed until I was again under conviction. At the age of 17 I joined the First Baptist Church of Phillips, Texas, on April 24, 1938. I was baptized into the Baptist Church on the confession that "I was saved from my sins." I immediately went to work and led several to what I honestly believed was Christ. I "surrendered to preach" on July 25, 1938. and began to preach occasionally. It was during a meeting held by A. G. Hobbs, Jr. in the Spring of 1939 that I be-

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gan to see my error. I was wrong, but honestly wrong. Upon seeing my error, and after much study and prayer I was baptized into Christ by Thomas McDonald in August 1939. The following reasons will explain why I left the Baptist Church.

### **The Baptist Church is Unscriptural in Name**

John the Baptist did not establish the Church, but was a forerunner of Christ. Mk. 1:2, 3. John was not in the Kingdom. Matt. 11:11. Neither was he the bridegroom, but the best man. Listen to the voice of John, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. Jn. 3:29, 30. After the death of John the Baptist (Mt. 14:10), Jesus said, "\* \* \* I WILL build my church." Mt. 16:18. Hence, we see that John did not build the church.

The term "Baptist Church" does not one time appear in the Bible. The word "baptist" means one who administered baptism. Winston Dictionary. p. 54. Therefore, no one is a Baptist who does not administer baptism,

But someone will say. "What difference does the name make?" Listen to the voice of the Lord. "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a NAME better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an EVERLASTING NAME, that shall not be cut off." Isa. 56:5. By this we learn that God's children will be given a name better than that of sons and daughters. This name is to be an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Then again we read in Isa. 62:2. "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a NEW NAME which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Here is a prophecy of a new name, which shall be named by the mouth of the Lord. And in Jas. 2:7 James asks "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?" Then we read that "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Pet. 4:16.

Baptists emphasize the name Baptist. In their sermons, invitations, literature, and conversations they stress the name Baptist. "I am proud that I am a Baptist," they say. As for myself, I glory in the name Christian. Peter tells us, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him



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glorify God on this behalf." 1 Pet. 4:16. The followers of Christ were never called **Baptists**, therefore the name cannot be worn by faith. Rom. 10:17.

Paul condemns sectarian names. 1 Cor. 1:10-13. **Christ** was crucified for us; we pray in the name of Christ, Jn. 14:13; we are baptized in the name of **Christ**; we are saved in the name of Christ, Acts 4:12; **His** church wears **His** name. Rom. 16:16. There is salvation in no other name. Acts 4:12.

#### The Baptist Church Is Unscriptural In Worship

They call Sunday the Sabbath. Saturday is the Sabbath day. Ex. 20:10. Sunday is the Lord's Day. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10. When did the Sabbath pass away? "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross \* \* \* Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." Col. 2:14, 16, see also Hosea 2:11. For further proof, note Amos 8:5, 9 "Saying, when will the new moon be gone. that we may sell corn? and the **sabbath**, that we may set forth wheat \* \* \* And it shall

come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." This prophecy was fulfilled at the crucifixion. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour," Mt. 27:45. The sixth hour is twelve o'clock, and the ninth hour comes at three o'clock. . Since this prophecy has been fulfilled" the sabbath' therefore, is gone. Hence, Sunday is not the sabbath.

Baptists get instrumental music out of "that which is abolished." 2 Cor. 3:13. The New Testament does not authorize it. We are taught to SING by the apostles. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16. "But it does not say do not play." says one. In Gen. 6:14 God commanded Noah to make an ark of gopher wood. When God said use gopher wood, Noah understood not to use pine and spruce. If Noah would have sinned by using pine in addition to gopher wood in the ark, then we sin by using instrumental music in addition to singing in the worship. Paul says in 1 Cor. 14:15, "I will sing with the spirit,

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and I will sing with the understanding also." Instrumental music is without the understanding, therefore wrong to use in the worship. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. Instrumental music is not mentioned in the New Testament for worship, therefore not of faith. Paul says in Rom. 14:23. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The Holy Spirit did not teach us to use the instrument. Jn. 16:13, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth." This teaches one of two things, either the Holy Spirit did not guide the apostles into ALL truth, or else, instrumental music is not truth because the apostles never used it. God that made the world \* \* \* dwelleth not in temples made with hands; NEITHER IS WORSHIPPED WITH MEN'S HANDS, as though he needed anything." Acts 17:24, 25. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the FRUIT OF OUR LIPS giving thanks to his name." Heb. 13:15. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." 2 Jn. 9. People who use instrumental music in the worship are not abiding in the doctrine of Christ, because neither Christ nor



the apostles anywhere taught us to use the instrument. Hence, such people "hath not God."

Baptists neglect the Lord's Supper. They read in 1 Cor. 11:25 where Christ is quoted as having said "this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me, and conclude that the Bible says nothing about how often it is to be observed. If the Bible does not say how often to observe the Lord's Supper, then who has authority to do so? The Bible states plainly that "upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" Acts 20:7. Every week has a first day. When God said to the Children of Israel "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy," they understood that they were to keep every sabbath holy. And too, if this verse does not teach that the Lord's Supper is to be observed every first day of the week, then where is the authority or the command to assemble every first day of the week? or to give every first day of the week? The same verse that teaches us to assemble every first day of the week also teaches us to observe the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. Will these people say that it is all right to give when you feel like it? Where do they get

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their authority to give every first day of the week?

In 1 Cor. 16:2 we are taught thus: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." And in 2 Cor. 9:7 the Spirit filled apostle says again, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give." There is no place in the New Testament that we are commanded to tithe. And certainly not to raise money by pie suppers, banquets or auctions.

### **The Baptist Church is Unscriptural in Terms of Pardon**

I could relate several stories where people were, according to the Baptists, saved by prayer. One instance might be worthy of consideration. Three boys, who were alien sinners, a preacher, and myself all engaged in prayer until the boys arose and confessed they were saved.

An alien sinner is not saved by prayer. Jn. 9:31 says, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners. but if any man be a worshipper of God and doeth his will, him he heareth." It is God's will that we "obey the gospel." The gospel commands us to be baptized into Christ "for the remission of

sins." Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:38. We have not done God's will until we have been baptized into Christ. Hear Isaiah, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isa. 59:2. We are to pray for the lost, that's true, Rom. 10:1. But the gospel, not prayer, "is the power of God unto salvation." Rom. 1:16.

Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:11. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we PERSUADE MEN." Some people try to persuade God to save the sinner, but Paul persuaded the sinner to obey God. God is willing to save all who will obey. 2 Pet. 3:9; Tit. 2:11; Heb. 5:9. "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have OBEYED from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being THEN made free from sin, ye become the servants of righteousness." Rom. 6:17, 18.

Sinners are not saved by faith ONLY. Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." Is this the plan of salvation complete? Then where does this go, "For by GRACE are ye saved through faith." Eph. 2:8; Rom. 8:24, "For we are saved by HOPE\* \* \*" 1 Cor. 15:1, 2; "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the

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GOSPEL which I preached unto you \* \* \* by which also ye are saved \* \* \* ." Jas. 1:21, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted WORD, which is able to save your souls." "The like figure whereunto even BAPTISM doth also now save us \* \* \* ." 1 Pet. 3:21. So, we see that we are not saved by faith only, but also by grace, hope, the gospel, the word, and baptism. But these are all made possible by Jesus. Matt. 1:21. Paul told the Philippian Jailor "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shall be saved"—but do not stop here, let us read on—verse 32 reads, "And they **spake** unto him the word of the Lord, "and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Since faith is the first step taken toward salvation, Paul told the jailor to "believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." But when they "spake unto him the word of the Lord," he was baptized the same hour of the night, since the word of the Lord says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved\* \* \* ." Mk. 16:16.

Baptist make the wrong confession. They say "confess your sin," but Christ says in



Mt. 10:32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess ME before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." The confession is not made in baptism. Consider, Rom. 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with **thy MOUTH** the **LORD JESUS** and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The eunuch did not confess his sins, but did confess "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Who ever heard a Baptist preacher ask anyone to confess "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"? Sometimes Baptists confess "that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned my sins." This is the confession that I made and I have heard a number of others make the same confession. This confession contradicts every verse in the Bible that speaks of baptism and salvation. The Bible says we are made free **AFTER** we have obeyed the gospel. Rom. 6:17, 18.

### **Baptists Do Not Administer Bible Baptism**

John's baptism is out of date. In Acts 19:1-5 we find where Paul rebaptized twelve men who had received John's baptism.

Baptists baptized people whom they claim already have received the remission of sins. "There is an actual, a real remission of sins

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when we believe in Christ—there is a declarative, formal, symbolic remission in baptism.” (Baptist Church Manual, p. 13). The Bible plainly states that baptism is **FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS**. Acts 2:38 or to wash away sin. Acts 22:16.

Baptists do not baptize a person into Christ, but into the Baptist Church. They say any such person is in Christ before baptism. Hear Paul “For as many of you as have been **BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST** have put on Christ.” Gal. 3:27.

Baptist baptism must be on a confession that one is already saved. Bible baptism puts a person into Christ where salvation is 1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:10.

### **The Baptist Church Is Unscriptural In Organization**

The Baptist Church has a minister whom they call “Pastor,” and deacons to rule over the congregation, but no elders. The truth of the matter is this, pastors, bishops, presbyters, and elders are all the same and take the oversight of the flock. The deacons are servants of the church. The preacher is a minister or evangelist, not the pastor of a congregation.

Baptist preachers call themselves and have themselves called, "Reverend." This word is used one time in the entire Bible and then in connection with the name of God. Ps. 111:9. When you see the man you believe equal with God, call him reverend.

### Their Doctrine of Apostasy is False

Men can and do fall from grace. "Who-soever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5:4. We are saved by grace. Eph. 2:8. Therefore people can fall from that which saves them. In 1 Cor. 10 we read where the children of Israel were baptized, (v. 2), ate spiritual meat, (v. 3), drank spiritual drink (v. 4), rock was Christ, (v. 4), fell by transgression, (v. 8). God says they "should not enter into my rest." Heb. 3:17-19. Then Jude tells us that "the Lord, having SAVED the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward DESTROYED them that believed not." Jude 5. Judas fell by transgression. Acts 1:25. In 1 Jn. 3:4 we learn that "sin is the transgression of the law." Therefore Judas fell by sin.

All agree that those who belong to the "kingdom" have been "born again." Jn. 3:3. In Mt. 13:41, 42 we read, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall

gather OUT OF HIS KINGDOM all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. Again in Rev. 22:19 we read, "And if any man shall take away from the word of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away **his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city,** and from the things which are written in this book." Now, friends, anyone can see that before a persons part of the book of life can be taken away he must **have had a part** to be taken away.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." 2 Pet. 2:20. Note: (1) they have escaped the pollutions of the world, (2) they are AGAIN entangled therein, and overcome, (3) the latter end is worse than the beginning.

If the Baptist doctrine of apostasy is true, there are many needless warnings in the Bible. Such as: 2 Pet. 3:17; Heb. 10:26, 29; 2 Pet. 1:10. 1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Cor. 9:27; Gal. 6:7-9 and others.

Note some impossible prophecies if their doctrine is true, "Some shall depart from



the faith." 1 Tim. 4:1. "Shall deceive many."  
Mt. 24:11. "Love of many shall wax cold."  
Mt. 24:12. "Will not endure sound doctrine."  
2 Tim. 4:3. "Shall turn away their ears from  
the truth." 2 Tim. 4:4.

If a child of God cannot fall from God's favor, then God gave a needless law of pardon to him. In Acts 8:13 we read where Simon believed and was baptized. He fell. (v. 21). "REPENT therefore of this thy wickedness, and PRAY God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." (v. 22).

There are two things the apostles never did: (1) Command an alien sinner to pray, (2) Command a child of God to be baptized.

### **The Baptist Doctrine Contradicts the Bible**

They are wrong first in having a man made doctrine at all. "This Declaration of Faith was framed many years ago by J. Newton Brown, D.D." (Baptist Church manual, foot note, p. 43, published by the Southern Baptist Convention). Christ says in Mt. 15:9 "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The Baptist doctrine contradicts the Bible in reason. Ask a Baptist preacher "What is the Baptist Doctrine." It is "what a church

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believes the Bible to teach." (Bapt. Church Manuel, p. 41). "Must I believe the Bible to be saved?" Answer, "Yes." "Must I believe Baptist doctrine to be saved?" Answer, "No." Then if I must believe the Bible to be saved, and must not believe Baptist doctrine to be saved, then it follows that Baptist Doctrine is not Bible doctrine. I ask you kindly, consider these things carefully.

Baptist Doctrine contradicts the Bible in fact. "We believe that the salvation of sinners is WHOLLY of grace." (Baptist Church Manual, Article IV of the Declaration of Faith, p. 47). We are saved by HOPE, Rom. 8:24, and Peter said BAPTISM saves us, 1 Pet. 3:21. If this is true, then we are not saved WHOLLY or ENTIRELY by grace, but by hope and baptism also. Then this article of faith is false.

"We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end." (Article XI, p. 54). Consider 2 Pet. 2:4, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Are these "real believers" more steadfast than angels?

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the

heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, IF they shall FALL AWAY, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb. 6:4-6. I ask, "Is a person a real believer who has been enlightened, has tasted the heavenly gift, has been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and has tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come?" If so, "If they shall fall away" is conditional, and shows that they can.

Is it possible that Paul could be a cast-away? Paul thinks so, hear him. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Cor. 9:27. Was Paul a "real believer?"

### **Baptists Support a Democracy, not a Kingdom**

The essentials of a kingdom are a king, law, and subjects over which he rules. The king makes the laws, enforces the laws, and passes judgment on violators of the law. Offices are filled by appointment of the king. Since Christ has all authority in heaven

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and in earth and has been crowned "King of kings," He made the laws; He will judge all violators of His laws in the day of judgment.

A democracy is that form of government that the subjects by vote make the laws. The United States is a democracy. The people elect their officers and make their laws by majority vote. I challenge you to compare the Baptist Church to these two forms of government. The Bible teaches that Christ established a kingdom, but Baptists support a democracy.

In the first place, they take Christ's place in adding to the church. The scriptures say, "The LORD added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47. But Baptists VOTE to receive people into the church. There is not one place in the Bible that teaches us to vote to receive people into the church.

Baptists take the authority to change the great commission. Christ said in Mk. 16:15, 16, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Baptists say he that believeth and is not baptized is



saved already because of his faith. Now which will you believe, Baptists or Christ? Yes, the verse says "he that believeth not shall be damned." Why? Because no one can be baptized before having faith. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." He put faith before baptism and baptism before salvation. Baptists put faith before baptism and **salvation before baptism** also. I ask again, whom will you believe, Baptists or Christ?

In 1939 I was a delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention held in Oklahoma City. At this convention, besides the sermons and programs, certain resolutions were adopted by majority vote. Dear reader, do you believe that the Bible can be altered by majority vote? If any number of persons met and voted on any subject of the Bible, would their decision necessarily be **truth**? Let us suppose that a number of sincere believers in Christ and the Bible met to decide on baptism, whether or not a person must be baptized in order to be saved. When the meeting is over they have decided that a person must not necessarily be baptized to be saved. Would this decision be binding at the judgment? No, friends, this decision would not release us from baptism and justi-

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fy us at the judgment, but rather, we must face it. You will not be judged by the Baptist Doctrine or by resolutions adopted by any convention, or by what some preacher tells you, but by the **word of Christ**. Jn. 12:48. Knowing this and "the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" to forsake these man-made creeds and institutions and "obey the gospel." Knowing that Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn. 8:32, we try to point out to honest people that false doctrine will not make you free regardless or how sincere you are in it. Are you satisfied with believing the preacher or do you "try the spirits whether they are of God?" We challenge you to **try the church of Christ** with the Bible. We are not afraid what we teach will not stand trial, because it is **TRUTH**.

Friends, I hope you have studied these reasons with an open mind. If you have, then you cannot help but reach the same conclusion that I did. I trust that you will have the same courage to renounce all and follow Christ.

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