

# K

## KINSHIP

### *Our Baptist Heritage*

#### *Study #11*

Outside of the Word of God, one of the greatest areas of spiritual ignorance is that concerning the **history** of New Testament churches over the past 1,900 years.

#### ***Lesson Overview***

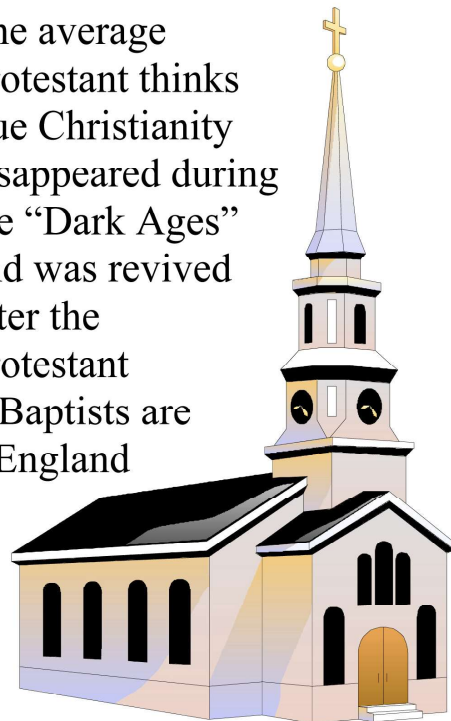
- I. What is Church Perpetuity?
  - II. The Founding of the New Testament Church
  - III. The Perpetuity of Baptist Churches
  - IV. Why Are We a Baptist Church?
  - V. The Trail of Blood
  - VI. Books on Baptist History
- Supplement – Why I Am A Baptist, by Noel Smith
- Supplement – Lessons on Distinctives

The Roman Catholic is led to believe his is the *only* ‘Church’ that began with St. Peter and has continued intact down through the centuries. All non-Catholic denominations are called “departed brethren.”

The average Protestant thinks true Christianity disappeared during the “Dark Ages” and was revived after the Protestant

Reformation. They mistakenly believe Baptists are Protestants and had their beginnings in England in the early part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Scriptures promise, and history confirms, the existence of true New Testament churches in every period of



the last nineteen centuries.

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## **I. WHAT IS CHURCH PERPETUITY?**

Perpetuity means “being perpetual, existing forever.” By church perpetuity we mean that in every age there have been true New Testament churches and believers who have remained faithful to the Word of God.

### ***THE LORD PROMISED HIS CHURCHES PERPETUITY.***

#### ***A. Read: Matthew 28:18-20.***

This commission was given to His churches and is for the churches to fulfill.

1. In it, the Lord promised to be with them  
A \_\_\_\_\_, even unto the end of the world.
2. If God made such a promise, then we can expect churches to be around until the end of the age to receive the promise.

#### ***B. Read: Matthew 16:18.***

Upon the Rock (Himself) the Lord established His Church, and He said that the gates of hell would not P \_\_\_\_\_ against it.

#### ***C. Read: 1 Corinthians 11:26.***

The Lord’s Supper is an ordinance given to the Lord’s churches. The Lord’s Supper is to be perpetually observed by churches (“*ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.*”) This pre-supposes the existence of New Testament churches at all times to observe the ordinance.

#### ***D. Read: Ephesians 3:21.***

In a special way, God is glorified among His churches. This glory is to continue throughout A\_\_ \_ A \_\_ \_ . If true churches disappeared as the apostasy that developed into the Roman Catholic Church took hold, this Scripture would be meaningless.

- E. Much of the New Testament is addressed to Christians in a CHURCH setting. If there have been periods of time when churches have not existed, much of the New Testament was or is useless.*

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## **II. THE FOUNDING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**

### **A. *The Church's Establishment***

1. John the Baptist's ministry was the embryo of the church.
2. It did not actually begin with John the Baptist in terms of a completely organized and functioning body. John initiated the process that resulted in the formation of the church.
3. John announced the Gospel.  
*(John 1:29) "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*
4. John introduced the ordinance of baptism.



**B. *The Choosing of the Twelve Disciples***

1. In the calling of the Twelve we see the principle of a group of believers being “called out” and “assembled” around Christ as the Head. Christ was their good shepherd – their pastor. *John 10:14 “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.”*
2. Through the ministry of Christ and His congregation, the group of followers grew numerically. Those who responded to the message and received Christ were baptized by the disciples. *John 4:1-4 “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, {2} (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) {3} He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. {4} And he must needs go through Samaria.”*

**C. *A gradual development***

1. Beginning with John’s baptism there was a continual adding to Christ.
2. Christ is seen as the Builder (Matthew 16:13-18), and the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10-11).
3. Church discipline is provided for (Matthew 18:15-17).
4. The Lord’s Supper is given (Matthew 26:17-30).
5. The church only needs to be purchased with the blood of Christ. (*Acts 20:28*) *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of*

*God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*

**D. *The upper room (John 20:19-22)***

1. After purchasing the church on the cross, Christ meets with them in the upper room.
2. He breathes the Holy Spirit upon them, thereby fusing them together into an organism (vv. 19-22). This is the birthday of the church.
3. The church is commissioned. *John 20:21* “*Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*” This is a repetition and enlargement of the commission already given (Matthew 4:19).

**E. *On the Day of Pentecost***

The church is empowered by the Holy Spirit for the task of world evangelism. *Acts 1:8* “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*”

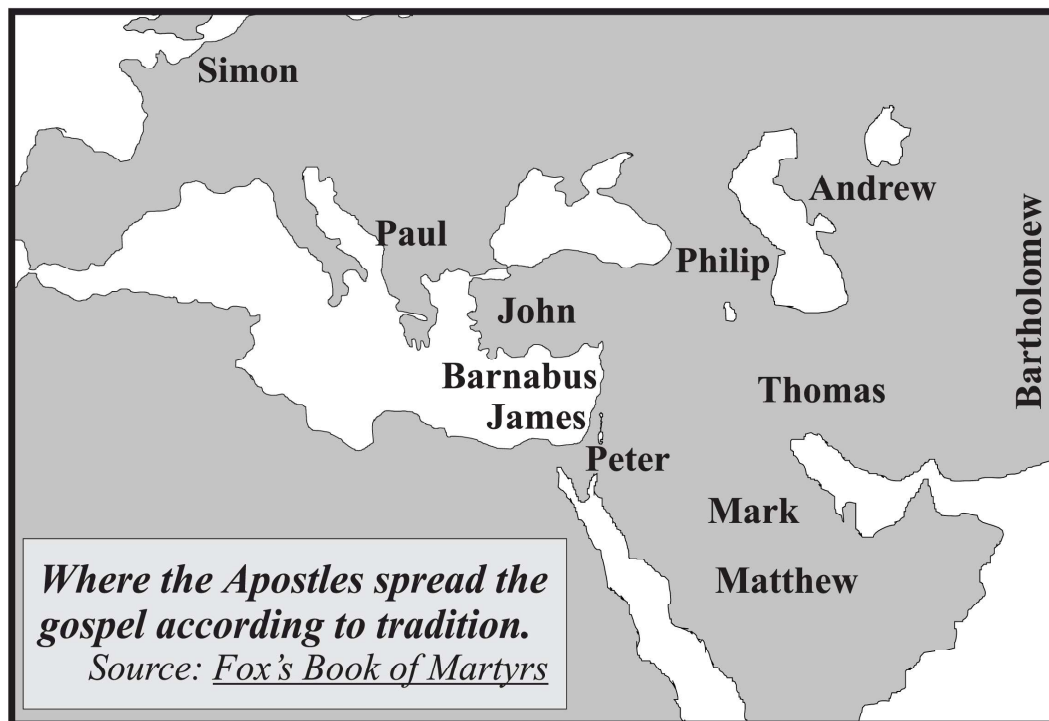
**F. *Throughout the Book of Acts***

1. Through Philip the gospel goes to Ethiopia.
2. Through Peter the gospel goes to the Gentiles of Samaria and to Jews from throughout the Roman Empire who are in Jerusalem at Pentecost.
3. Through Barnabus, Paul, Timothy, Silas, and others, the gospel travels throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and islands of the Mediterranean Sea.

**G. *Beyond the Book of Acts***

According to tradition:

1. James, the son of Zebedee – ministered in Jerusalem
2. Philip – labored diligently in Upper Asia
3. Matthew – labored in Parthia and Ethiopia
4. Andrew – preached in Scythia
5. Bartholomew – preached in India
6. Thomas – evangelized Parthia (modern Iran)
7. Mark – founded the church in Alexandria, Egypt
8. James, the Less – ministered in Jerusalem
9. Peter – ministered throughout Palestine
10. Luke – traveled with Paul
11. Simon Zelotes – preached the gospel in Mauritania, Africa, and then later in Britain
12. John – founded churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira
13. Barnabus – ministered in Cyprus



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### **III. THE PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES**

#### **A. *Not A Perpetual Name***

Baptist church perpetuity is not the tracing of a name that has had at all times a definite meaning. The name has been applied to those who were not Baptist, and to many who were Baptist in principle that existed before the origin of the name.

#### **B. *Spiritual Kinship***

*Spiritual-Kinship* perpetuity is the “tracing of a principle which has been held by various bodies, sometimes with completeness and sometimes not, and sometimes in close association with other like bodies and sometimes by those who were isolated and widely scattered.”

1. Baptists trace their origin through a succession of churches that are in agreement “in all essential matters of conduct, doctrine, and polity.”
2. This doesn’t mean that those churches were exactly what Baptist churches are today “in all points, great and small, without addition or diminution.” Not all Baptist churches today are exactly alike. But there were fundamental principles (Baptist distinctives) that they did primarily hold to.
3. There was a succession of Christian bodies, known under different names and stretching down from the Apostles’ day to today, who kept alive the truth of the gospel in its essential purity. They bore strong resemblance to those who were afterwards called by the name Baptist and usually emphasized some fundamental tenet of our faith.

4. “Baptist churches are more like a load of bricks which have been picked up along the way, all alike because made in the same mold but each complete in itself and independent of all the rest.” (The Baptist In History, by R. C. Mosher).
5. In 1819 the King of Holland appointed Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in the University of Groningen, and Rev. I. J. Dermout, Chaplain to the King, both learned men and members of the Dutch Reformed church, to prepare a history of their church. In the authentic volume which they prepared and published at Breda, 1823, they devote one chapter to the Baptists, in which they make the following statement:

We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who long in the history of the church receive the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages. (History of the Dutch Reformed Church, by A. Ypeij, Doctor and Professor of Theology at Groningen, and I. J. Dermout, Secretary of the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, and Preacher at The Hague, at Breda, 1819.)

- C. *A Baptist church is Baptist if it holds to and carries out the basic teachings of the New Testament.*

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#### IV. WHY ARE WE A BAPTIST CHURCH?



We stand directly in the middle of a historic tradition of Bible doctrine. This stance (distinctives) has distinguished true churches from false ones.

We have arranged these distinctives as an acrostic to aid us in remembering them. These are what make a historic Baptist different from Protestants and Catholics.

**B** Bible is our only rule of faith and practice

**A** Autonomy of the local church

**P** Priesthood of the believer

**T** Two ordinances of the church  
(Baptism and the Lord's Supper)

**I** Individual Soul Responsibility

**S** Separation  
(Personal, Ecclesiastical, and Political)

**T** Two officers of the church  
(Pastors and Deacons)

A fuller explanation of these distinctives are found in the supplements at the end of this lesson.

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## **V. THE TRAIL OF BLOOD**

Stop here and read through the little book entitled, *The Trail of Blood* by J.M. Carroll. This small primer gives a synopsis of church history.

Answer the following questions. (Page numbers may vary between editions of *The Trail of Blood*.)

**A.** *List three ways many of our Baptist ancestors were dealt with. (page 2)*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

A Catholic monk taunts a crucified Christian. His crime – he refused to have his infant baptized!



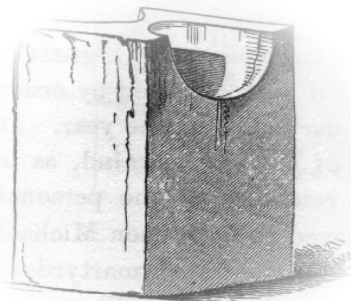
**B.** *What was possibly the first serious departure from New Testament church order? (page 12)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C.** *What is the year of the first recorded baptism of a child? (page 13)* \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** *What happened in the year 251 A.D.? (page 14)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



A Catholic  
“beheading  
block.”

**E.      *In what year did the Dark Ages begin? (page 19)***

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Several groups of Christians challenged the Roman church by using the New Testament as the basis of their beliefs. The pope ordered them to quit preaching and eventually developed the office of the Inquisition – a search

and destroy machine to eliminate all “heretics.” This secret church court tortured Christians and turned them over to the state for punishment in the form of loss of property or burning at the stake.

**F.      *What one doctrine does the Greek Orthodox reject? (page 26)***

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**G.      *What action was taken by the Council of Toulouse in 1229 AD? (page 37)***

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**H.      *To what century can the name “Anabaptist” be traced? (page 39)***

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**I.      *What book did John Bunyan write? (page 43)***

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**J.      *Why was Mr. Painter whipped? (page 48)***

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**K.** *According to the chart, from which ‘Church’ did the Methodist denomination come?*

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**L.** *From the book and the chart, fill in the list of names given at various times to our Baptist forefathers.*

- C \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 11:26)  
M \_\_\_\_\_ (Phrygia)  
D \_\_\_\_\_ (Africa)  
N \_\_\_\_\_ (Italy)  
P \_\_\_\_\_ (Armenia)  
W \_\_\_\_\_ (Europe)  
A \_\_\_\_\_ (France)  
B \_\_\_\_\_ today)

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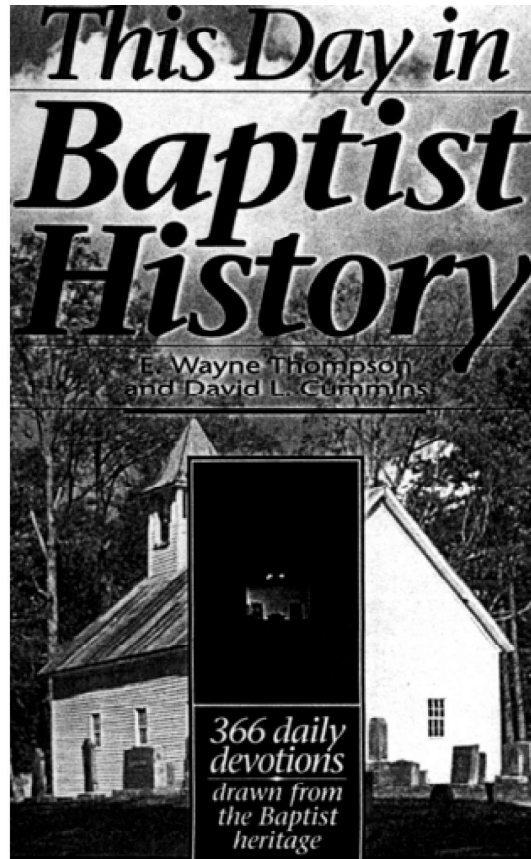
## **VI. BOOKS ON BAPTIST HISTORY**

There are many excellent books dealing with the subject of Baptist history. Here is a brief list:

- **A History of the Baptists**, by John T. Christian, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas.
- **A Brief History of the Baptists**, by Edward Overbey, The Challenge Press, Little Rock, Arkansas
- **The Baptist Heritage**, by J. M. Holliday, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas
- **A History of the Baptists**, by Thomas Armitage, Baptist Heritage Press, Watertown, Wisconsin
- **The Origin of the Baptists**, by S. H. Ford, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas.
- **A People for His Name**, by M. A. Seiver, University Publishers, Chattanooga, Tennessee
- **Baptist Church Perpetuity or History**, by W. A. Jerrel, Calvary Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas

- **Short History of the Baptists**, by Henry Vedder, Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

*This Day in Baptist History* is a devotional book containing 366 stories from Baptist History. It will increase your appreciation for the sacrifice our forefathers made so we could have religious liberty. Perhaps you would want to use it during your family altar time.



### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH LESSON**

- ❑ Read your L Lesson (Lord's Supper) and answer all the questions.
- ❑ Continue reading through the New Testament *at your own pace*.
- ❑ Take sermon notes using your *Spiritual Journal* and be prepared to share highlights next week.
- ❑ Give out copies of *Life's Greatest Discovery* or *The Amazing Story Behind Amazing Grace*.
- ❑ Where would you like to meet for next week's session?
- ❑ Be sure to bring your Bible, pen, L Lesson, and *Spiritual Journal*.

# **Why I Am A Baptist**

by Noel Smith

Founding Editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*

Here are a few of the reasons why, in the midst of the dissolution of the basic institutions of civilization, being a Baptist increasingly gives me a feeling of spiritual and intellectual anchorage.

Baptists are a people. They have an historical identity. They have an historical image. Their continuity is the longest of any Christian group on earth. Their doctrines, principles, and practices are rooted in the apostolic age.

I am not a Pharisaical sectarian. But I don't confuse Baptists with the Reformation, with the Reformers. The Reformers wanted to reform the Roman Catholic Church; the Baptists were against the church. Because it was not a New Testament church, Protestantism originated in the Reformation. Protestantism is protest-ism. That's negative. Negativism has within it the seed of its own disintegration.

The Baptists were not reformers. They were not protestors. They were positive.

Freedom of conscience is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

The separation of church and state is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Religious liberty is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Believer's baptism is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Baptism of the believer by immersion in water, symbolizing the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ, is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

The local, visible, autonomous assembly, with Christ as its only head and the Bible as its sole rule of faith and practice, is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Worldwide missions is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine. The Reformers had no missionary vision and no missionary spirit. For almost two hundred years after the Reformers, the Reformation churches felt no burden to implement the Great Commission.

What kind of a world would the Western world have been had Protestantism become its master?

The general attitude today is that truth is determined by the passing of time; that there are no eternal, abiding truths. “You can’t turn the clock back. Time invalidates all truths. Time invalidates one set of truths and fastens another set upon us.”

Baptist history repudiates this philosophy of fatalism. Baptists today are believing, teaching, preaching, and practicing the truths that were believed, taught, preached, and practiced two thousand years ago.

It gives me a feeling of stability to reflect that I, as a Baptist, am in the stream of this long continuity of faith and practice.

The Baptist people are a great continuity. They are a great essence. They are a great dignity.

The world never needed them more than it needed them today.