

# KJV

"...THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH."

I Timothy 3:15

## THE BAPTIST PILLAR

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## THE INDEPENDENCY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

By E. L. Bynum

(This sermon was preached at the annual Bible Conference of the Fellowship Baptist Church, L. K. Landis, Pastor, Liberal, Kansas, September 20, 1994. We are printing the edited notes that were used in the preaching of this message).

*"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."* Eph. 1:22-23.

*"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."* Eph. 2:19-22

*"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."* Eph. 3:21

Pastor Landis asked me to preach on The Independency Of The Local Church in this Conference. This is a subject

that I firmly believe in, because it is supported by the Scriptures.

### The Meaning of Independence

#### 1. The definition of independence

To find out the meaning of independence, we must turn to Webster's unabridged dictionary. It states, "**Independence:** The state or quality of being independent; freedom from influence, con-

trol, or determination of another or others; self-maintenance or self-government." "**Independent:** Not dependent; not subject to the control, influence, or determination of another; not subordinate." "Not subject to bias, persuasion, or influence; self directing." "Not connected or related to another, to each other, or to a group; separate, as and independent grocer."

"**Independent**" as a NOUN: "A person who believes that a local organized

Christian church is or should be self-sufficient and not dependent on external ecclesiastical authority."

I certainly agree with Webster, especially in the use of independent as a noun.

#### 2. What we DO NOT mean by independent!

When we speak of the local Church being independent, it is important that we make it clear what we **do not** mean.

We do not mean that we are to be independent of the teaching of the Bible.

We do not mean that we are to be independent of Christ the Head of the Church.

We do not mean that we are to be independent of the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Independent does not mean that we are to be in a state of disorganization.

Independent does not mean that we are to be without a plan or purpose.

Independent does not mean that we are to be in a state of anarchy.

Independent does not mean that we are to be isolationists.

Independent does not mean that we cannot fellowship with other churches and pastors of like faith and order.

Independent does not mean  
*(Independency continued on page 2)*

## "NORTH AMERICA OWES ITS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM TO THE

### BAPTISTS"

*This is the first article of a new topic we will be featuring called, "FORGET NOT THE PAST."*

Taken from *The Baptist Almanac, 1852*

The number of baptists in this country, with their relative progress, and rapidly growing power, is one of the most singular facts of the age.

As such it may challenge the attention of the philosophical historian and statesman, no less than that of the thoughtful Christian.

If we go back to the settlement of this country, it is not explained by ordinary principles. Not one of all the colonies, not even Rhode Island, was originally planted by baptists; as Virginia was by Episcopalians, Maryland by Catholics, Delaware by

*(N.A. Owes continued on page 3)*

(Independency continued from page 1) that we cannot cooperate together as equals, in supporting missionaries and doing Scriptural works. Independent Baptist Churches cannot and must not surrender their independency to any other Church, organization, Convention or board, etc.

### The Historical Case for Independent Churches

#### 1. What reputable historians have said.

1. G. H. Orchard, an English Baptist pastor, wrote **A Concise of the Baptists** [1]. It was published in London in 1838. Speaking of the 1st and 2nd centuries, he said, P. 22, "The Christian societies, instituted in the cities of the Roman empire, united only by the ties of faith and charity. Independency and equality formed the basis of their internal constitution."

2. Orchard, says on P. 31, "...the churches for three centuries remained as originally formed, independent of each other, and were united by no tie but that of charity. Again on P. 36, Orchard says, "During the first three centuries, Christian congregations, all over the East, subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government, and consequently without any secular power over one another. All this time they were Baptist churches..."

3. David Benedict wrote **History Of The Donatists**, [2] which was published in 1875. On page 138 he writes, "A bishop," says Mosheim, "during the first and the second century, was a person who had the care of one Christian assembly. In this assembly he acted not so much, with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. The churches in these early times were **entirely independent**; none of them were subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one was governed by its own rulers and its own laws." "A church and a diocese," says archbishop Whately, "seems to have been, for a considerable time, coextensive and identical; and each church or diocese, and consequently each superintendent, though connected with the rest by the

ties of faith and hope and charity, seems to have been perfectly independent, as far as regards any power and control." (Emphasis ours)

4. Orchard tells us how the churches began to lose their independence on p. 38, as he writes, "In 306 (A.D.), Constantine, surnamed the Great, was saluted emperor by the army, and the aspect of affairs towards the Christian church was soon changed; and in 325, the old corrupt interests were incorporated by an act of the emperor's from which union we dissent."

He further writes, "In 251, there were forty-four Jewish Christian congregations in Rome. Till the time of Sylvester, the Christians had baptized either in private baths, or in subterranean waters, or in any place without the city. The emperor Constantine gave Bishop Sylvester the imperial mansion for a sort of parsonage-house: and here was erected the first artificial baptistery in Rome. From this period, at proper seasons of the year, all their catechumens went to be baptized at the Lateran baptistery. Other churches looked to the bishop, who presided over the Lateran congregation and the baptistery; consulted him about the times of baptism, or administering the ordinance, and the regulation of other ecclesiastical affairs. This mode of proceeding in consulting the bishop, led to the destruction of civil and religious liberty, and ruined the **independency of the churches**." (Emphasis ours).

5. It is highly significant, that the first successful attempt to take away the independency of the local churches was carried out through an unsaved Roman emperor by the name of Constantine. These churches in Rome ceased to even resemble scriptural churches. They became Roman Catholic churches. Since that time, many churches have lost their independency through submission to decrees of political leaders. In America this has come about through the organizing of Associations, Conventions, Boards, and Fellowships. Then they elect presidents, chairmen, boards, and committees to lord it over God's churches. (A committee is a board by a sweeter sound-

ing name).

6. Let us look at the testimony of **Francis Wayland**, (1796-1865). He was born in New York City. He pastored First Baptist Church, Boston, Mass., and First Baptist Church, Providence. He was, for 28 years, President of Brown University. He wrote a number of books, including the 336 page, **Notes on the Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches** [3], originally published in 1857. On page 177, and 178, he wrote, "The Baptists have ever believed in the entire and absolute independence of the churches. By this, we mean that every church of Christ, that is, every company of believers united together according to the laws of Christ, is wholly independent of every other; that every church is perfectly capable of self-government; and that, therefore, no one acknowledges any higher authority, under Christ, than itself; that with the church all ecclesiastical action commences, and with it terminates, and hence, that the ecclesiastical relations proper, of every member, are limited to the church to which he belongs."

On page 181, he states, "It would seem, from these simple principles, impossible that a church of Christ can be **in any proper and legitimate sense represented**." (Emphasis his). *We have nothing to submit to representatives. We have no representatives to whom any thing is to be submitted. I will go further, and add, that what can not be done properly and legitimately must not be done improperly and illegitimately. It is as truly a violation of the independence of the churches, and the right of private judgment, when several hundred brethren meet in some public convention, and manufacture public opinion, and adopt courses which their brethren are called upon to follow, on pain of the displeasure of the majority, as when they establish a formal representation, to whose decisions all the constituency must submit."*

On page 182, Wayland wrote, "Jesus Christ left his church without any general organization. Throughout the New Testament we can discover not a trace of organization beyond the establishment of individual

churches. Their bond of union was sympathy with him through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each individual. **It is not probable that as he left it, so he intended that it should continue to the end of time?** (Emphasis ours). *The object of the church of Christ on earth is very simple: it is the conversion of souls. This object, it seems to me, can be accomplished without the use of the complicated, cumbrous, and frequently soul-destroying machinery, with which his disciples have for many ages been burdened."*

Wayland was also with us who believe in missionaries being sent out through the agency of the Church, and not through a board. In 1859, he wrote, **Thoughts on the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist Denomination**. In it, Wayland stated, "The more I have reflected on the subject, the more obvious has it seemed to me, that preaching Christ to the heathen must be a more simple business than is commonly supposed. There were no missionary boards and no central organizations in the times of the Apostles, and yet they labored with an efficiency that turned the world upside down; and why should we need such organization now?"

7. John Quincy Adams was born in 1825 in Philadelphia, PA, and pastored churches in New Jersey and New York. He wrote the 179 page book, **Baptists Thorough Reformers** [4]. On page 153, he wrote, "The primitive churches were independent in their government. All the members were on an equality in each church, and each church was on the same equality with every other church. There were no bishops, in the sense in which that term is used by Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Methodists. There were no church sessions, presbyteries, assemblies, synods, or conferences. (And I might add there were no associations, conventions, organized fellowships, or mission boards or committees - ELB). Advisory councils, having no power to legislate, were sometimes called to give counsel in difficult matters. But individual churches possessed supreme authority to administer discipline, and transact their own

business. **The church was the highest court of appeal.**" (Emphasis ours).

8. T. H. Pritchard (born 1832) pastored a number of Baptist Churches. He also was president of Wake Forest College. He authored one of the chapters in the book, **Baptist Doctrines** [5]. This 630 page book was edited by Charles A. Jenkins. On page 305 Pritchard wrote, "*As to church government, we believe that each separate and individual church is entirely independent of all other churches, persons and bodies of men, either civil or ecclesiastical, and is to be governed by its own members alone, without aid or interference of any other person or persons whatever. Consequently, churches governed by popes, bishops, synods, presbyteries, conferences, or in any other way than by their own members directly and exclusively, are not constituted on the model of the primitive churches, nor governed according to the gospel rule.*" (Emphasis ours).

9. **Baptist Doctrines** [5] (published 1890) also has a chapter called **The Independence Of The Churches**, written by J. A. Smith, Chicago IL. On p. 230, Smith writes, "*Church independency is, in Baptist belief and practice, a fundamental principle... The Church of Christ is a local Christian society. This point is so far implied in what is said elsewhere in this volume, in setting forth the characteristics of the apostolical churches, as to make it unnecessary for us to go at length into the Scriptural proof. It must suffice to say, here, that in no usage of the word 'church,' in any part of the New Testament, can the smallest authority be found for any other species of organism than the Christian society, made up of baptized believers, meeting in one place for worship, the administration of the ordinance and for the hearing of the word.*"

He further writes on p. 231, "*The local church...is in every respect, complete. Its official appointments, pastors and deacons, are all for which the New Testament rule provides. Its functions, as a Christian organism, are complete in its local and independent form.*

*Every detail of administration, whether official, disciplinary, or in any other sense executive, is comprehended in what is assigned to the local church. There is, in short, in the New Testament conception of the church, no point at which one church can officially interpose in the affairs of another without unauthorized intrusion, nor any point at which supplementary organization can be attached, without encumbering the beautiful simplicity of New Testament order, and changing to complication and confusion what the Lord himself intended to be a unit and a harmony."*

Smith writes on p. 234, "*By the historical value of the principle of church independency, we mean the place it fills in historical Christianity. It is not too much to say that the enormous mischief inherent in and proceeding from the great Antichristian apostasy had their root in a departure from this principle, and that no efficient cure for these mischiefs has ever been found short of a return to primitive Christian simplicity in this regard.*" (We say AMEN!)

## 2. Where did the other organizations come from?

Earlier we quoted Orchard, as to how the Roman Churches lost their independence and their identity as New Testament Churches. There were other attempts to impose some kind of organizational power over Baptist Churches. These attempts failed for the most part. For over a thousand years Baptists churches, under different names, carried on their work, sent out missionaries and spread throughout many nations. They did this without mission boards, conventions, unions, associations, or organized fellowships. If you want more information on this, I heartily recommend, **Local Church Missions, A Doctrine And Practice Manuals** [6], by Charles K. Johnson. (Order from Tabernacle Baptist Church, P.O. Box 3100, Lubbock, TX 79452)

John T. Christian wrote, **A History of the Baptists** [7], (two volumes). In vol. 1, page 313, he wrote, "*The formation of Baptist Associations may be traced to the period of the*

(Independency continued on page 7)

(N.A. Owes continued from page 1)

Lutherans, Pennsylvania by Quakers, New Jersey and New York by Presbyterians, and all New England by Congregationalists. Nor was their original introduction and spread the result of any energetic missionary system, like that of the methodists. No other body of Christians owes so little as the baptists to emigration from Europe. And then they alone have religiously rejected the entrapping policy of infant baptism—on which all other sects rely for the perpetuity of religion. All the more prominent baptists of that period became such after their arrival in the New World. Roger Williams became a baptist, for example, eight years after his arrival, and three years after his banishment from Massachusetts for his views of liberty of conscience, which were truly thought to "tend to Anabaptistry." When he became convinced of the truth of our views in 1639, there was not a baptist minister in the country to administer the ordinance. The little baptist church formed in Weymouth, Mass., that same year, was broken up by the civil power: by fines, imprisonment, and banishment. Yet the year following, Hanserd Knollys, then first pastor in Dover, N.H., embraced baptist principles, and returning to England, spent a long and glorious life in their defence; dying at last, as Cotton Mather tells us, "a good man, in a good old age." The lady Moody, of Lynn, became a baptist in 1642; and Dr. John Clarke, the founder of the first baptist church in Newport, and one of the ablest and best men of the age, in 1644. Mr. Painter, of Boston, the first to bear our principles to the test of the public whipping-post, embraced them and suffered for them the same year. Obadiah Holmes, the second sufferer for the same cause, in the same cruel manner, in 1651, became a baptist in 1648. President Dunstar, of Cambridge, who was roused to the investigation by the sufferings of Mr. Holmes, became a convert to our principles in 1652—a noble climax to these triumphs of persecuted Truth! It was thirteen years later, before the conversion of Thomas Gould to our sentiments led to the

formation of the first baptist church in the city of Boston; where now their relative standing and influence are probably not inferior to those of their orthodox Congregational brethren.

The remark of Cotton Mather in his *Magnalia*, therefore, that "some of the first planters of New England were baptists," needs qualification. It is more exact to say, that some of the first settlers became baptists. And assuredly they were men—and women too—of whom we need not be ashamed. Who can claim among the pilgrims a nobler ancestry than we? Wherever baptists pitched their tent, or rose to power, there in its highest sense Liberty was sacred.

"Aye, call it holy ground!

The place where first they trod:

They have left unstained what there they found—

Freedom to worship God!"

Besides these venerable confessors, whose names are now inspiring watchwords of our history, it illustrates the early tendency of the American mind to our principles, to hear Cotton Mather confess, "that a multitude of holy, watchful, faithful, heavenly people among the first settlers of New England, had scruples as to infant baptism." Were all hearts laid open now, how few conscientious pedo-baptists would be found free from such scruples!" This is not mere conjecture. There are many facts by which hearts are even now revealed—were this the time to tell them.

The history of the Middle, Southern, and Western States might supply other facts illustrative of this point. But we mention only one. The great religious awakening under Whitefield (1740-1770) multiplied converts to baptist principles from Maine to Georgia. Even Whitefield's Agent in his Orphan House at Savannah, Mr. Bedgewood, with several of the Assistants, became baptists in 1758, and Mr. Bedgewood afterwards became a useful baptist minister.

The new impulse given to the spirit of liberty by the revolutionary war, was followed by the rapid spread of baptist principles, particularly in Virginia, where our brethren had suffered severe persecution. Our chief

(N.A. Owes continued on page 6)



# CANADIAN NEWS



## Open Files

A national registry is now being considered by the federal government. This registry will allow the files of serious violent offenders and pedophiles to be open to the public.

Dosanjh, the Attorney General for B.C. pushed the idea of the registry being available to the general public and also wants pardons eliminated for pedophiles. He says he wants the registry to operate "in a way where information is retained for a long time and it is accessible to the public."

The Civil Libertarians are throwing a fit about such a proposal because they say it infringes upon the rights of people who have already served prison sentences.

There are also concerns it might violate the individual's charter of rights.

*[Since when do pedophiles have rights?]*

## School Grounds or Battle Grounds?

Helen Jones, the co-founder of the Association of Parents Support Groups in Ontario (which assists parents of disruptive youth) says, "Children are becoming more violent."

Experts say a recent string of violent crimes involving children as young as nine is a sign of the times.

*[If only they knew how true that really is.]*

Jones says that the lax rules at school have encouraged undisciplined children to fall invincible and indifferent to consequences of violent crimes.

Here's a list of crimes of young offenders that have recently made headlines:

- Eight teens charged with beating and drowning a 14-year-old Victoria girl.
- A 12-year-old Cambridge, Ont., boy charged with robbery for taking a penny from four school mates held at knifepoint.
- A 13-year-old London, Ont.,

girl charged with stabbing a 9-year-old boy during a lunch room argument.

- Five high school girls charged in Mississauga, Ont., in two separate beatings of other females over school yard disputes and a racially motivated attack.

*[A school system without God - NO thanks.]*

## VLTs Assist Suicides

On Nov. 23, 1997, Kevin Blais left his Winnipeg townhouse and went to a nearby wooded area and hung himself from a tree. Before leaving to do so he told his children these heartbreaking words, "Daddy loves you, but you won't see me again."

When his body was found almost a week later, his suicide became the second one in a month tied to gambling addictions. The bereaved family members attributed his death to an addiction to VLTs (Video Lottery Terminals).

Manitoba currently has about 6,000 lottery terminals from the U.S. border to the far north. With that, the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba devotes about 10 percent of its resources to treating 800 or so problem gamblers a year.

Our government is turning a deaf ear to the true picture of how devastating gambling really is. Because the terminals generate net revenues of around \$125 million a year.

*[I Tim. 6:10, "For the love of money is the root of all evil.".]*

## "And Knowledge Shall Increase"

More Canadians are surfing the Net than ever before, as the proportions of households using the service almost doubled during the last year. A survey done shows that 1.5 million households now have access to the Internet, compared to 1996 figures of 843,000.

*[A hunger for knowledge is*

*the reason for this. It all shows us another reason to lift up our heads. For God said that in the last days that knowledge would increase. And increase, it has!]*

## Only the Half is Known

Of the 2,867 divorces in Manitoba in 1995, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 120 were brought on by adultery Statistic Canada says. The reason behind the bulk of them was being separated for over a year - 2,615 cases. But adultery was cited almost twice as often as the next most common cause, physical cruelty. While adultery was the cause of divorce in four percent of the 1995 cases, six percent was the national average. Adultery was used in 13 percent of divorces in Quebec.

## Open Sundays

Sunday alcohol sales kicked into effect in 1997 in Ontario. The province's 560 liquor stores and more than 400 beer stores were allowed to open

for business on Sundays. The community of Niagara Falls remains the only large centre to keep beer and liquor stores closed. Consumer Minister David Tsubouchi says there's a huge demand for the extra shopping day.

## Withdrawing Support

Ottawa is calling it blackmail, but officials with Imperial Tobacco say they will have no choice but to withdraw its \$50 million annual sponsorship out of cultural and sporting events across Canada. Organizers of some of the events warn they may have to cut back on their program without financial help of the tobacco industry. All this comes after government is trying set limits on where tobacco advertizing may be done.

## Catholic Priests Forbidden to be Alone with Children

A draft code of conduct recently drawn up for Roman Catholic priests in Australia

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would forbid them to be alone with children as a means of preventing sexual-abuse scandals. The Catholic Church has admitted their priests have abused hundreds of children. According to the *Religious Information Service*, an official report released in New South Wales, in August said there was a significant occurrence of sexual abuse in Australian churches, which protected pedophile clergy. "Sexual abuse has often been regarded by churches as a problem of 'moral failure,' rather than a criminal offense, calling for help rather than punishment," said the report. "Spiritualizing the problem is dangerous because it involves the assumption that once confessed...the problem has been resolved. This response is inappropriate because many

such offenders have simply continued to abuse the years." (*Religious Information Services*, Sept. 25, 1997). The report noted that many clergy thought their celibacy vow concerned only heterosexual relations and did not address indecent acts with boys or adolescent males!

*O Timothy*

## Bible is Communism's Main Enemy

Recently, Jiang Zheming, president of China and head of the Communist Party, said, "Our enemy is not those with guns, but missionaries with Bibles." (*WIWT*) Christians take note!

CC

## Catholic Testimony of The Baptist

A Catholic, Cardinal Hosius,

President of the Council of Trent, (1545-1563), wrote during the early years of the Reformation period, "Were it not that the Baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in greater numbers than all the Reformers." This should convince anyone, that the Baptist are not a by-product of the Reformation, and are not even Protestants in the popular sense of the term.

### Good News Bible Has 21st Birthday Party

The Good News Bible [*Which is not a Bible at all,*] had its birthday party at a place well suited for such a translation, Plant Hollywood Restaurant, in London, England. A lot of entertainment but no spirituality. If this translation was so much better than the King James Bible why has man's spiritual condition deteriorated since its publication in 1976.

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### Editor's Note:

*In The Baptist Pillar we use articles taken from many different publications and written by many different authors. Please realize that this does not necessarily mean we agree with the doctrinal position of the publication or the author of the article, but that the particular article presents a scriptural truth we do agree with.*

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*You can also access The Baptist Pillar on the World Wide Web at <http://www.techplus.com/bkfv1611/> This is a NEW ADDRESS.*

## CHURCH SUCCESSION, PERPETUITY, OR CONTINUITY

**Taken from Our Baptist Heritage, Sept. 1992**

"Just as God created the first swarm of bees, and from that first swarm has come all the bees in the world, so the Lord has created the first church, and all true churches have come out of her, or from churches that have been organized out of the one at Jerusalem." (L. D. Foreman)

"Succession among Baptists is not a linked chain of churches or ministers, uninterrupted and traceable at this distant day ... The true and defensible doctrine is that baptized believers have existed in every age since John baptized in Jordan, and have met as a baptized congregation in covenant and fellowship where an opportunity permitted." (S. H. Ford)

"All that Baptists mean by 'church succession' is: there has never been a day since the organization of the first New Testament church in which there was no genuine church of the New Testament existing on earth." (W. A. Jarrel)

"Baptists do not claim perpetuity upon the basis of a successive and unbroken chain of baptisms. I do not believe that it is necessary to have a linked succession of baptisms in order to have valid baptism. If such were the case, any of us would be hard pressed to establish that link, unbroken, back to apostolic times." (Roy Mason)

"If every church of Christ were today to become apostate, it would be possible and right for any true believers to organize tomorrow another church on the apostolic model of faith and practice; and that church would have the only apostolic succession worth having a succession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to Him." (H. C. Vedder)

"History will not support the theory of a linked-chain type of church succession ... it will support the view of the continued existence of the

church." (Bob Ross)

"The New Testament churches were independent, self-governing, democratic bodies like the Baptist churches of today. We originated, not at the Reformation, nor in the Dark Ages, nor in any century after the Apostles, but our marching orders are the Great Commission, and the first Baptist church was the church at Jerusalem. Our principles are as old as Christianity, and we acknowledge no founder but Christ." (George McDaniel)

"From the time the Lord Jesus Christ established his New Testament church during His earthly ministry, until the present time, there have always existed believers and churches apart from both Romanism and Protestantism that have held to the essentials of New Testament truth ... It is one thing to prove historically that New Testament churches have existed in every age since the apostles; it is altogether different to seek to prove a linked succession of such churches' This is what distinguishes historic Baptists from those who are ardent 'Landmarkers.'" (W. R. Downing)

"We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the Reformation, we were reformers before Luther or Calvin were born: we never came from the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves." (C. H. Spurgeon)

"The footsteps of the Baptists of the ages can more easily be traced by blood than by baptism. It is a lineage of suffering rather than a succession of bishops: a martyrdom of principles rather than a dogmatic decree of councils: a golden chord of love, rather than an iron chain of succession, which, while attempting to rattle its links back to the apostles, has been of more service in chaining some protesting Baptist to the stake than in proclaiming the

truth of the New Testament." (J. T. Christian)

"The authenticity of a Baptist church depends, not on its ability to trace an unbroken line of connection to the apostles, but rather in its ability to demonstrate that it presently possesses the doctrines, principles, and practices which the apostles had and which are evident on the pages of the New Testament. If a church were forced to demonstrate its 'kosher' pedigree in order to be recognized, this would require that organized assembly to rely upon the word of man rather than the Word of God, since the inspired genealogical tables came to the object of their existence with the birth of Christ and were not continued beyond that." (Kenneth Good)

"When we speak of Baptist succession, we mean that since the time of Christ's earthly ministry there have appeared in every generation churches like the one He founded while He was here on earth ... and that such churches will continue to exist until the Rapture." (David Gonnella)

"I mean by the term Baptist church perpetuity that the church as an institution has existed in every age since the personal ministry of Christ. There has never been a day since the organization of the Jerusalem church in which there was no genuine church of the New Testament order existing on earth." (Milburn Cockrell)

"Churches like the first church have continued to exist from that day to the present time. Christ promised that they would not cease to exist. Those today who claim that they and the churches of the Reformation have restored New Testament Christianity overlook the fact that the church Jesus built would not have to be restored." (M. L. Moser Sr.)

(N.A. Owes continued from page 3) prosperity dates from that era. And two facts are worthy of attention—the ratio of increase has been greatest where they were previously most persecuted—and also where the greatest degree of general activity and culture prevails. These facts are important, as showing that patient suffering, a spirit of self-sacrifice, and the advancement of society in general knowledge, are alike favorable to the prevalence of our principles.

### The Obstacles Overcome by Baptists

Let it be remembered that baptist principles have had everything to contend against, even in this country, except God and Truth. On the one hand were the Quakers, denouncing all the visible ordinances of Christ; on the other, every class of Christians, with customs and creeds stereotyped in the Old World, denouncing the baptism of believers only, as re-baptism, as the renunciation of God's covenanted mercies, as the rejection of little ones from the kingdom of heaven here and hereafter. Foul slanders—all but nevertheless fully believed and industriously propagated. The very mode in which the Son of God in the river Jordan "fulfilled all righteousness," was then as now, either stoutly denied, or stigmatized as no example for his followers, as unnecessary, indecent, presumptuous, bigoted, vulgar, murderous, idolatrous! Men of learning, men of power, men of wit, men venerable for wisdom, eloquence, and piety, frowned upon them—warmly opposed, coldly neglected, caustically satirized, or contemptuously pitied them as the dupes of ignorance and fanaticism; while they had only here and there a man qualified by education and acknowledged ability, to repel these assaults, and vindicate dishonoured and discredited truth. Their own children were often overpowered by the number, subtlety, and force of opposing influences, and without conviction, from mere weakness, impatience, pride, and worldliness, went over to the pedo-baptist ranks. No wonder that many pedo-baptists here, thought with Dr. Wall in England, that the baptists would die out in

seventy years—or at least cease to spread.

But such men mistook the matter. What they deemed a superficial, transient error, was a deep-rooted, vital, vigorous truth. And in this republic it has at last found a congenial soil. Unaided by power or policy, or to any considerable extent by emigration, it has leaned on Heaven for support and prospered. At every point of our Union it has penetrated, wrestled with all opposition, and overcome. It has conquered "by the blood of the Lamb and the Word of His Testimony." The only converts of which it boasts are converts not to a form or creed, but to Christ. These it now counts by myriads, only "as God gives to every man," though its adherents are not less than four or five millions. This almanac will show our present position, our progress in numbers, institutions of learning and benevolent effort, and prospects of advancement towards a still brighter future.

It is not generally known that, next to Rhode Island, New York, under the rule of the Dutch, was an early asylum for the persecuted baptists. The first settlers of the "Empire State," then a small Dutch colony, brought with them from Holland those principles of toleration, which forty years before, (1573) William I., Prince of Orange, the Father of Belgic liberty, and the friend of the baptists, had succeeded in introducing into the constitution of the republic, in spite of the strenuous resistance of the clergy and nobles. Hence, as the puritans, when driven by persecution from England, first sought refuge in Holland, so the persecuted baptists and others in new England, sought refuge in "New Netherlands," now New York. Long Island, from its greater convenience, or supposed security, was the part of New York especially settled by these fugitives from New England puritan intolerance.

The first notice of this sort we have seen, relates to the celebrated Hanserd Knollys, the persecuted pastor of Dover, N.H., in 1641. Just before that good man was recalled to England, it seems, from Backus's History, that he and others like-minded, had already purchased a plantation

on Long Island, to which it is presumed they went without him.

From Hoffman's "Pioneers of New York" we learn the following facts. "In 1642 a band of religionists, led on by the Rev. Mr. Doughty, Richard Smith, and others, who had followed the pilgrims from Old England to New England, were compelled to withdraw from the latter country by the persecution they received there, and after making formal application to the authorities of New Netherlands, they had a grant of land assigned to them, endowed with the usual privilege of free manors, free exercise of their religion, powers to plant towns, build churches, nominate magistrates, and administer civil and criminal jurisprudence. Six months later, Throgmorton, who had already been driven with Roger Williams from Massachusetts by the fiery Hugh Peters, procured permission to settle thirty-five families on the lands in Westchester County, now known as Throg's Neck, which the New Netherlanders at that time named Vredeland, or "Land of Peace."—In the same year the Lady Moody, with her minor son Sir Henry, and many followers, fled in a similar manner from New England to the asylum of New Netherlands, and founded the town of Gravezend, (now Gravesend) on Long Island. To which island Thomas Ffarington, John Townsend, William Lawrence, John F. Ffirman, and others, were compelled, in the next twenty months, to remove with their families from New England, and after accepting a grant of land from the authorities of New Netherlands, enrolled themselves as liege men of that province. The historian De Laet says, in speaking of this period of the history of New Netherlands, "Numbers, nay, whole towns, to escape from the insupportable government of New England, removed to New Netherlands, to enjoy that liberty denied them by their own countrymen." It is worth stating in this connexion, adds Mr. Hoffman, that the Dutch language is at this very day still spoken in many of the localities of Long Island, by some of the descendants of these English emigrants.

How many of the above emigrants were baptists, we have not the means of knowing precisely; but Knollys, Throgmorton, and the Lady Moody it is known were so, and these were the heads of three separate companies. Why Throgmorton should have left Providence for Long Island, is uncertain. It might be from the difficulty mentioned by Roger Williams, as the ground of his appointment, in September of that very year, to go to England for a charter—the "frequent exceptions against Providence men, that we had no authority of civil government."

How wonderful are the ways of God! Roger Williams, as a banished man, was denied the privilege of sailing on that occasion from the port of Boston. Obligated thus, in the spring of 1643 to go to Manhattan, now New York, to find a passage, he came there just in season, by his generous mediation, to put an end to the war then raging between the Indians and the Dutch—in which the famous Mrs. Anne Hutchinson and her family perished, and the dwelling of Lady Moody was assailed.

Of the last named excellent woman, who so mercifully escaped destruction, and of whom it would be gratifying to know more, we have this honourable account from Winthrop's Journal—colored, of course, by the strong prejudice of the age against the baptists. "The Lady Moody, a wise and anciently religious woman, being taken in the error of denying baptism to infants, was dealt withal by many of the elders and others, and admonished by the church of Salem, (whereof she was a member;) but persisting still, and to avoid further trouble, she removed to the Dutch, against the advice of all her friends. Many others, infected with anabaptism, removed thither also." Vol. ii., pp. 123, 124.

It thus appears that the "precious seed" of baptist principles was early sown in Long Island; whence, in due time, it has spread over the whole fruitful soil of the "Empire State." In two centuries, more than 800 baptist churches have there sprung up!

### True Source of Modern Liberty

C.F. Hoffman, Esq., in his anniversary discourse, delivered at New York, Dec. 6, 1847, thus discriminated between the true and the false claims of the puritans.

"It was a brave spirit, that of old puritanism; and I yield to none in honouring its undaunted antagonism to older forms of despotism over the rights of conscience—but it was not less a despotism!

It was an adventurous spirit, that of old puritanism; and I honour it not less for its self-martyrdom of exile, than for its unflinching grapple with the dogmas of its enemies.

"But I will not recognize its ferocious intolerance in forcing its own dogmas upon quakers and anabaptists in this land, as proving that it offered a true priesthood for the altars of freedom! I will not recognize that its blind uses of power have proved aught to the world in the Science of Liberty—aught save the mental vigour and conscientious hardihood of its stern asserters of narrow doctrine.

And speaking still of puritanism in its political aspect—I will recognize its hard-earned triumphs as marking more than one glorious tide in the moving waters of human freedom—but I will not recognize it as the spirit which first released the waves. I will not recognize it as the compelling power which still teaches deep to call unto deep, until the true knowledge of human rights is wide spread as the ocean, and the voices of true liberty are echoed from every shore." pp.36-40.

Mr. Hoffman has here spoken the truth, though not the whole truth, on a great subject, yet widely understood. The truth is stated but partially, when it is said that the Dutch in 1620 understood liberty better than the English puritans. There is no documentary proof that the baptists of that time understood liberty far better than the Dutch. It is the glory of our church organization that liberty is one of its inseparable principles. This is the cause why all the despots of the Old World, whether in church or state, never could endure it. The well-known maxim, that "tyrants hate those whom they fear," has

found its most perfect illustration in the persecutions suffered by the baptists. For infant baptism, that fundamental error that builds up churches by compulsion—what martyr ever died? But for believer's baptism—that great law of Jesus Christ, what myriads in all ages have faced the fiery flame?

More than ten thousand baptists suffered death in the Netherlands alone, from 1566 to 1573, under the ferocious Duke of Alva. (*Ency. Americana, Art. Anabaptists.*) The sufferings of these martyrs of Jesus Christ evidently touched the heart of the Prince of Orange, and stimulated his exertions for the freedom of his country. Even so early as 1565, he had said to the Regent:—

"There are two species of Inquisition. The one is exercised in the name of the Pope, and the other has been long practised by the bishops. The Netherlands have for several years been a school, in which, if we have not been extremely inattentive, we may have learned the folly of persecution. Men do not for nothing forego the advantages of life; much less do they expose themselves to torture and death for nothing. The contempt of death and pain, exhibited by heretics in suffering for religion, is calculated to produce the most powerful effects upon the minds of spectators. It works on their compassion; it excites their admiration of the sufferers; it excites their admiration of the sufferers; and creates in them a suspicion that truth must certainly be found where they observe so much constancy and fortitude." (Jones' Ch. Hist., p. 468, *Phila. Ed.*)

Only eight years afterwards, at the head of the new republic of the Netherlands, William proved the sincerity of these convictions, by securing for the first time in modern history, the legal toleration of the baptists. This noble measure, in 1573, was partly the fruit of pity, partly of policy, and partly of gratitude; they having furnished him pecuniary aid in the bloody struggle with Spain, for the liberty of the Netherlands. Holland thus has the honour of being the first country in the world that gave protection to the persecuted

baptists; that protection being extended to entire religious liberty in 1626. No wonder then if "New Netherlands" partook in some degree of the same spirit. No wonder that the baptists are now the most numerous body of Christians in the "Empire State." Even the laurels of learning begin to flourish on their brow.

It appears then that the baptists—by the grace of God ever the fervent friends of universal freedom, and for ages its only friends, champions, and martyrs—taught it to the Dutch, and the Dutch, so far as they received it, afterwards (in 1688) taught it to the English. Slowly, but surely, has this baptist principle pushed its way through the barriers reared by hereditary pedo-baptist prejudice, until it has pervaded our whole country and is spreading over the globe. □

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(*Independency continued from page 3*)  
*Civil Wars (not to be confused by the American Civil War) and they were developed in the last half of the seventeenth century.*" He further states, "The idea of an association seems to have originated with the particular Baptists. The London Confession of Faith of 1643, article XLVII seems to anticipate an association." On page 314, he says, "But while the idea of associations originated with the Particular Baptists, the General Baptists were the first to organize." He further states, "The General Baptists, like the Particular Baptists, held the idea of the Independency of the Churches, but their General Conference was more Presbyterian in its legislation. By their connection with the Anabaptists and the Mennonites of the Continent, and their stay at Amsterdam, they obtained knowledge of the Presbyterian Synods of the churches of Luther and Calvin."

This gives us a clear view of the origin of these unscriptural organizations. The ideas may be traced back to Luther and Calvin, and their ideas may be traced back to the Church of

Rome.

According to **The Baptist Encyclopedia** [8], the Somerset Association in England, was formed about 1653. It was followed by a number of Associations in that country.

### 3. The formation of extra-scriptural organizations in America.

**The Baptist Encyclopedia** [8], by William Cathcart (published 1881) traces the history of the Associations in America. On page 46, it reads, "The Philadelphia Association was formally established in 1707, and it has lived and flourished ever since." He then lists 15 Baptist Associations that were formed in the 1700's in America. No doubt much of this was done by sincere and good men who thought they were doing the right thing. However, this does not make it right, for there is no Scriptural authority for such organizations."

1. These 15 Associations originated in the 1700's, about 1700 years after Jesus organized the local church.

2. The Triennial Convention was organized on May 18, 1814. This was to be the mother of the Northern Baptist Convention (now American Baptist Convention), and the Southern Baptist Convention.

3. In May, 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention was organized. This was over 1800 years after Jesus organized His local Church.

4. In March, 1905, what is now the American Baptist Association was formed. Almost 1900 years after Jesus set up His local Church.

5. In 1950, the Baptist Missionary Association was formed. This was over 1900 years after Jesus Christ organized His local Church.

6. In 1932, the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches was formed. This was about 1900 years after Jesus started His local church.

7. In 1923, the Baptist Bible Union of America was formed. Although this organization did not last long. It was to be the forerunner of both the World Baptist Fellowship, and the Baptist Bible Fellowship. It was almost 1900 years after the local Church was organized by Jesus Christ.

8. In the 1930's the World  
 (*Independency continued on page 8*)

(Independency continued from page 7)  
Baptist Fellowship had its beginning, at least 1900 years after Jesus organized His local Church.

9. In 1950 the Baptist Bible Fellowship came into existence. This was over 1900 years after Jesus organized His local independent Baptist Church.

**MY QUESTIONS!** How did Baptist churches survive, thrive, and multiply for over 1600 years without organized Associations? How did they exist for over 1800 years without conventions? How did they accomplish so much for 1900 years without organized fellowships?

### THE BIBLICAL CASE FOR THE INDEPENDENCY OF THE CHURCH.

#### 1. The Divine Head of the local Church is Jesus Christ, and this Church can only have one head.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," (Eph. 1:22)

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:15-16)

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." (Eph. 5:23)

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Col. 1:18)

The headquarters of the

Church must be where the Head is, and He is in heaven. The Church has no right to join any organization, be it Association, Convention, or Fellowship. We cannot do so, and still be in submission to Christ. The Head of the Church never mentioned any of these organizations.

#### 2. The Divine Architect planned the local Church.

No where in His plan, is to be found a place for these organizations.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:8-11)

The Church is a building, and it is the only religious building we have on this earth.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:19-22)

#### 3. The Divine Builder constructed the local Church, and nothing is said in the Bible about Him building these other organizations.

"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." (Mat. 16:18)

#### 4. The Divine Purchaser Purchased paid for it.

"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." (Acts 20:28)

#### 5. The Divine Teacher instructed it.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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. Amen." (Mat. 28:18-20)

#### 6. The Divine Godhead sustains it.

"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. Amen." (Mat. 28:20)

"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." (Mat. 16:18)

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22-23)

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:21)

**CONCLUSION:** Men stumble at the simple plan of salvation. Even so they stumble at the simplicity of the Church. **Man wants something bigger, greater, and more elaborate than God planned. This is not God's way!!**

*If the Divine architect did not plan it, and the Divine builder did not build it, and the Divine purchaser did not purchase it, and the Divine teacher did not instruct it, THEN THE DIVINE HEAD DOES NOT RECOGNIZE IT, NOR WILL THE DIVINE GODHEAD SUSTAIN IT.*

The greatest mission work was done in the history of Christianity in the FIRST CENTURY without an Association, Convention, Fellow-

ship, Mission Board or Mission Committee. The Roman Empire was evangelized without them. If they didn't need them then, then we don't need them today.

We have the truth, let us cleave to it with all our might, and proclaim it with all our strength, until Jesus Christ our Saviour comes.

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The Baptist Pillar on the world wide web has been changed to: <http://www.techplus.com/bkjl1611/> and our new