

# Why I am a Baptist

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## The Bible & John's Baptism

Grace Baptist Church is a Baptist church. We believe that the Baptist church is a church that comes from the line of churches that came from the apostles who were baptized by John the **Baptist**. We trust Baptist baptism is a baptism with authority from God.

### The baptism of John the Baptist comes with authority from heaven:

**(John 1:6)** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

**(John 1:33)** And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

### John starts the New Testament:

**(Luke 16:16)** The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

- Abraham was sent with authority in the Old Testament; John was sent with authority in the New Testament.
- Israel traces their authority to "Father Abraham"; the Church traces its authority to John.
- Israel is Jehovah's wife; the Church is the Bride of Christ.

### John's baptism has authority; Jesus inferred it had authority because it was from heaven:

**(Matthew 21:23 - 27)** And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

- The same account of authority to baptize is seen in Mark 11:28-33 and Luke 20:2-8.
- The Bible tells of two kinds of baptism, of heaven and of men.

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. Hence, Jesus was a \_\_\_\_\_.

Go ahead and say it, He was a Baptist. If He was baptized by a Methodist, I would freely admit that He was a Methodist, but the Bible states that He was baptized by a Baptist.

**(Matthew 3:13)** Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

- "Jesus traveled a full day's travel to be baptized by John"  
(<http://syrianorthodoxchurch.org/library/sermons/the-baptism-of-the-lord-jesus/>)
- If Jesus traveled 60 miles to be baptized by a Baptist, it would do us well to follow in His steps.

## The Bible and The Lord's Supper

Authority is passed down – hence baptism must be passed down. The Lord's Supper and Baptism are the Ordinances of the church. Notice that the Ordinances are 'passed down' as the very definition of the word tells us that it is so.

**The Lord's Supper is an ordinance passed down with authority:**

**(1 Corinthians 11:2)** Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

**(1 Corinthians 11:23)** For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

- '*Keep the ordinances*' comes from a Greek verb that literally means to give over; to pass down: **παρε, δωκα** verb indicative aorist active 1st person singular: from a basic meaning *give over from one's hand to someone or something*; (1) of authoritative commitment of something to someone *entrust, commit, give or hand over, deliver* (MT 11.27; 25.20); (2) of a self-sacrificial love *give up, yield up, risk (one's life)* (AC 15.26); (3) as a legal technical term for passing someone along in the judicial process *hand over, turn over, deliver up* (MK 15.1); of an unjustified act of handing someone over to judicial authorities *betray* (MT 10.4); of God's judicial act of handing someone over to suffer the consequences of his wrongdoing *deliver up, hand over, give up (to)* (RO 1.24); of the church's authoritative disciplining *deliver over, hand over to the control of* (1C 5.5); (4) as a religious technical term for passing along traditions, decisions, teachings *hand down, transmit, pass on* (AC 16.4)
- '*Delivered*' is a noun and literally means 'to give over' **παροδοσις**, *ewj, h`* as an action *handing down or over*; in the NT in a passive sense, as teachings about ways of doing things that are handed down from generation to generation *tradition* (MT 15.2); as Christian doctrine handed down *teaching, instruction, tradition* (2TH 2.15)

**The ordinances are things passed down:**

- Baptism from the Lord Jesus through John the Baptist
- The Lord's Supper from the Lord Jesus through the Apostles

## The Bible and Authority

The church (a local church) has authority to carry out the ordinances; to fulfill the Great Commission and to exercise church discipline.

### The church has authority to discipline its members:

**(1 Corinthians 5:1 - 5)** It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. <sup>2</sup> And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. <sup>3</sup> For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, <sup>4</sup> In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **when ye are gathered together**, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>5</sup> To **deliver such an one unto Satan** for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

- When a church disciplines an unrepentant member in blatant open sin, it delivers that person outside of the authority of the church, and Paul said that this was a deliverance to access to Satan. The person would still be saved, but the protection of the umbrella of authority of the local church would be removed.
- Every saved person should submit himself / herself under the authority of a church. There is an umbrella of authority within the church.

### The passing down with authority is a Biblical concept:

The Great Commission was passed down by Jesus. I believe it was passed down to the church as Acts 1:8 can only be fulfilled by the church, not an individual.

**(John 20:21)** Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my Father hath sent me*, even so send I you.

**(Matthew 28:18-19)** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (here, the word *power* means authority) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

The laying on of hands by a church sends forth one called to preach with authority (ordinances) from that church.

**(2 Timothy 1:6)** Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

**(1 Timothy 4:14)** Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

- The call comes from God; the authority to start churches or to pastor comes from the church that lays hands upon him.

**The sending forth of a missionary is by a church - the Holy Ghost sends forth the missionary through the authority (ordinances) of the local church:**

**(Acts 13:1 – 4)** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. <sup>2</sup> As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. <sup>3</sup> And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. <sup>4</sup> So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

- Note: After each missionary journey, Paul came back to Antioch to give a report to his church. Paul was under the authority of his local church.
- I believe that the church planting process in the book of Acts has baptism passed from one church to another church, tracing its authority to baptize back to John's baptism which receives its authority from heaven.
- Hence:
  - Phillip had the authority (from his church) to baptize the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8.
  - Ananias had authority to baptize Paul in Acts 9.
  - Peter had authority to baptize in Acts 10.
  - Philip was an evangelist (church planter).
  - God directly led Saul (Paul) to Cornelius - to the one who would baptize them.

**John baptized Jesus and the 12 apostles:**

**(Acts 1:22)** Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

**(1 Corinthians 12:28)** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

- God is a God of organization and authority. The authority of the baptism of John was passed down as the early church had that authority to baptize. This baptism was passed down to the 12, then to the early church, and then to many groups of Christians – many without names as the churches went underground from 416 A.D. to 1600's. In 416 A.D. re-baptizing a person was punishable by death – which brought about the 'Dark Ages.'
- True Bible baptism started with John the Baptist, continued through the Apostles, and then continued through groups like the Montanists, Novationists, Paulicians, Bogomils, Albigensians, Waldensians, Lollards, Hussites, Anabaptists – and later the Baptists.

## Church History up to 1900

### From 300 A.D. to 1500 there were only two main churches:

- The true church from the group listed at the end of the previous page, which since they were all independent may have had some people with strange beliefs here and there.
- The false church – the Catholic Church (split between Rome and Greek Orthodox). The true church is the bride of Christ; the false church is the whore. This is a great contrast in the eyes of God.

### The late 1500s to 1900:

- The Reformation had Protestants protesting the Catholic Church.
- The Protestants included Methodist, Lutherans and Presbyterians.
  - Out of Presbyterians came the Reformed churches.
  - Out of Methodist came Nazarenes, Wesleyan, and Holiness churches.
- All of these churches have man-made baptism; they do not trace their baptism back to John.
  - Lutherans trace their baptism back to Martin Luther.
  - Nazarenes trace their baptism back to Wesley.
  - They have no authority to baptize.

### What do Baptists believe about the Protestants?

- Baptists are not Protestants as we were never in the Catholic Church. Although there have been many great preachers and many great men and women in the Protestant movement, they are not from our Baptist line.
- God Foreknew that the Protestant Reformation would occur and foretold that they (Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and so on) would re-join Rome for the end-time False Church.

**(Revelation 17:1-9)** And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: <sup>2</sup> With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. <sup>3</sup> So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: <sup>5</sup> And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. <sup>6</sup> And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. <sup>7</sup> And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. <sup>8</sup> The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. <sup>9</sup> And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

This Great Whore:

- Is the church from Rome (Rome is city that sits on seven hills)
  - (Rev. 17:3) woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns
  - (Rev. 17:9) The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.
  - (Rev. 17:18) And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.
- Has martyred Christians  
(Rev. 17:6) woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus
- Is arrayed in purple and scarlet - the colors of the papacy (Rev. 17:4)
- Is decked with gold, precious stones and pearls – the wealth of the Catholic Church (Rev. 17:4)
- Is Mother of Abominations of the earth – all of the abominable false heretical doctrines of the Catholic Church (Rev 17:5)
- Is a Great Whore - has committed fornication with kings of earth. Hence the church has committed fornication with the state – a ‘state-church’
- Is Mother of Harlots - Rome has children that are harlots, other ‘state-churches’
  - Lutheran: state-church in Germany, Presbyterian: state-church in Scotland, Church of England

- Word for *Harlot* is defined as:  
**po, rnh**, *h<sub>j</sub>, h`* from **pe, rnhmi** (*sell*); literally, a woman who practices sexual immorality as a means of making a living *harlot, prostitute, whore* (1C 6.15); metaphorically, from the Old Testament, a government hostile to God *harlot* (RV 17.1)
- These other churches that have come out of Rome are now re-united with her as she has upon her forehead:
  - (Rev. 17:5) And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

The Protestant Reformation was a great movement in its time, but its churches will be re-united with its harlot mother. Hence, the true church is the bride of Christ. The false church is the Great Whore. Her children are also harlots in that they commit fornication with government.

### **What are the central points to this brief history up to about 1900 A.D.?**

- That one would reject the baptism of any church that has come out of Rome.
- Baptism must have authority, and that authority must be traced back to John.

From about 1900 until today we have seen the development of many types of churches, which prompts the questions:

- Does it even matter if one accepts any baptism as long as it is after salvation?
  - Accept a baptism of Lutheran church by immersion after salvation?
  - Accept baptism by immersion of a Mormon church after salvation?
  - Accept baptism by immersion by a church started by Brother Joe that thought he would just start his own church after he got saved?
- What about the churches that have come later upon the scene ?
  - The baptism of the Assembly of God?
  - The baptism of a Bible church?
  - Baptism of a Community Church?
  - Baptism by any one of the other 'new' churches?



This issue has been one I have pondered for many years. If one lived in the time of the Bible writings, there would be no problem – as there was only a small church line to trace back. If one who lives today gets saved and then comes to a church – there is no problem, because a Christian needs to be baptized to obey the Lord.

**The problem comes when one has been saved and then gets baptized in a church other than a Baptist church. Where does that fit within the theology of Baptism and authority?**

- If one rejects the idea of authority, any and all baptisms could be accepted without a problem.
- If one rejects the importance of Baptist history, any and all baptisms could be accepted without a problem.

However, it is a principle (to me) that many Baptists have given their life over re-baptizing. We are a Baptist church. This is not something that is looked upon highly by the world. They actually scorn the name *Baptist*. Many Baptist churches take the name *Baptist* off so they can reach more people. It is my belief that I pastor a Baptist church out of conviction rather than convenience.

Baptism has nothing to do with salvation. Baptist baptism has everything to do with authority. The Essenes were baptizing before John was baptizing. The baptizing of the Essenes was a ritual bath – an induction into their society. What makes John's baptism unique? It has the authority from God.

**The question is which baptism is acceptable?**

- The problem with Catholic and Lutheran baptism has to do with a lack of authority – not the mode of baptism.
- Presbyterians use immersion but they have 'Catholic-based' baptism.

Baptism always pertains to a local church membership. How does one become a Catholic – Catechism, then baptism. How does one become a Methodist – baptism. Baptism identifies that person with (1) Christ and (2) the church that baptizes them.

One may be baptized into an Assembly of God church. To become a Nazarene, you would be baptized into the Nazarene church. If a church does not re-baptize people from other churches, then they are in essence a non-denominational church.

The clear teaching of Scripture tells us John had authority to Baptize. One ought to ask – is that authority still here? According to Jesus, the church would always be upon the earth – it cannot be snuffed out.

**(Matthew 16:18)** 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.

The church has been given authority by God through the baptism of John - it is the church that does the baptizing. The pastor only has the authority to baptize as a member of that church. The local church has authority.

That authority is passed down to new churches that have been started.

**Our baptism is traced back to John:**

**(John 1:6)** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

**(John 1:33)** And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

**I am a Baptist by conviction because of this personal study of the Scriptures.**