

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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With Respect to the Primitive Baptist Tradition of Re-baptism

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus, through His perfect work and operation of the Holy Spirit: I would like to share some material worthy of our consideration, this document consists of the annual meeting minutes of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Association.

In the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Association, there were thirty-two (32) churches in its fellowship. To the best of my knowledge, this was the largest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States in this particular time in history. The thirty-two Churches was comprised of over 1,650 members.

There is much documentation available of the associations history of annual meeting minutes.

In the following article of business brought before the moderator in the annual meeting of 1765 of the year of our Lord, The Following was recorded:

[The Association met at Philadelphia this year, October 15, and sat to October 17. Forty-four messengers present. Letters from the churches were read.

Of the seven (7) items brought before the Association, item #5 was most interesting, as it reads as follows:

Query, from Smith’s creek; Whether it be proper to receive a person into communion who had been baptized by immersion by a minister of the church of England, if no other objection could be made?

ANSWER: Yea, if he had been baptized on a profession of faith and repentance.]

This meeting was sixty-seven years BEFORE the Black Rock Address and the NEW SCHOOL break away by the Old School, Predestinarian, and or Particular Baptist.

There was NO issue of Baptism brought up in the address as to the new school baptism even being an issue. Therefore, the “tradition” of re-baptism had entered into the Old Baptist mindset after this date and time.

To the best of my knowledge, the documented writing by Gilbert Beebe from the “Signs & the Times” periodical dating around 1840 (eight years after the separation) In reference to an inquiry about “missionary” baptism, Elder Beebe expressed the (not verbatim) response: “Any baptism accomplished by a missionary minister shall be determined as “Alien” (first time the term regarding baptism was ever recorded) and that those of the missionary, New School movement shall be deemed as “pagan” and not Christian.”

Now, if God permit, I would like to interject some thoughts. I have as a Predestinarian Baptist for over 30 years fought against this manmade tradition of Primitive Baptist “re-baptism” ritualistically hammered over the heads of missionary Baptist converts, that have in all good conscience been “satisfied” with their baptism in obedience to our Lord’s command. And identifying with our Lord’s death, burial and glorious resurrection in their personal salvation experience.

I now, within the past two years, have met at least three factions and or associations that have come to agree that, if a person desiring Church membership among these Churches, and the candidate expresses a “SATISFIED” baptism experience as one being in obedience to our Lord and by immersion, they SHALL BE ACCEPTED as a member in good standing.

Dearly beloved, I think this is one of the greatest steps of breaking down the “old walls and fences” man has devised among the Old Baptist Churches.

Sadly to report, I have known more Elders that have been baptized in excess of three and four times over the years to satisfy the demands of associations and/or churches. They have shared their experiences of “re-baptism” with tears of sadness, knowing that the water changed NOTHING from their genuine experience other than vex their conscience that they denied the “genuine and original” baptism as authentic and God pleasing. This man-made tradition of re-baptism is ridiculous and has NO scriptural basis.

Now to those that come seeking a home among the Old Baptist “not satisfied” with their previous baptism due to questioning their salvation experience, most certainly should be Baptized by immersion in obedience to our Lord’s command as would be acceptable to the church. This previous comment is not indicating a “re-baptism,” as

the former “un-satisfied” baptism would not have been in good conscience by the believer a valid baptism, but mere formality without an experience of grace.

May the Lord bring about sweet harmony among Zion’s inhabitants over this issue, and bring peace of conscience, heart and soul, is my prayer.

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