

Why I Left the Baptist Church

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Introduction: This is the second in a series of lessons that involves a personal account of decisions I have made in my life based upon my study of the scripture.

- A. The emphasis of this series of sermons is God and His word and not myself.
 - 1. I ask that you carefully examine the scriptures and test all things. **(1 Thess 5:21)**
 - 2. I seek present this in a spirit of love and ask that you receive it in the same manner. Please let me know if I have misrepresented anything. Above all I ask that we discuss further from God's word any differences we may have on what God wants us to believe and practice.
- B. Each of us must have the same kind of faith in the Lord that the apostle Paul had. He was willing to stand with the Lord, even if it meant leaving the religion of his parents and nation. **(Rom 10:1-3)**
 - 1. Paul had a deep love for God and his nation and family.
 - 2. When it came to the "righteousness of God" there could be no compromise!
 - 3. Paul's love however caused him to plea with others to stand for God's way.

I. Reasons Why I Did Not Leave

A. Personal Preference

B. Friendliness and Associations.

C. Moral Purity

D. Zeal

E. Activities

F. Personal Offense

G. Personal Opportunities

H. If I was to choose among the denominations as to **my preference**, I would choose the Baptist Church!

- 1. All who know the Lord know that our choices never take precedent over God's word. **(Phil 3:4-9)**
- 2. The decision that I also made was one of *faith* and not that of *personal advantage*.

II. What Does True Faith in Jesus Christ Mean?

A. It means *loyalty to Jesus*. In our hearts and in our actions He is first. **(Mt 6:24,33)**

B. It means *obeying the commands* He has given us.

- 1. Our obedience is motivated by our **love for Jesus**. **(Jn 14:15, 21)**
- 2. I will not be ashamed to stand with Him in any situation.

C. It means *seeking Christ's will* in all matters. **(1 Jn 2:3-5)**

- 1. Faith will say "Show me what God's word says and I will do it! God will never lead me wrong."
- 2. There will be no hiding behind the traditions of men or family. **(Mt 15:8-9)**
- 3. All of these principles of faith I was taught and practiced as a Baptist! I will always be thankful for the good I learned from God's word in my association with the Baptist Church.

III. My First Major Challenge: Is Denominationalism acceptable with God?

- A. What does the Bible say? (**Eph 4:4-6**)
- B. Does it matter if we have different gospels, faiths and creeds? (**Gal 1:6-9**)
- C. Does it matter if we have different churches? (**Eph 1:22-23**)
- D. Is it true that all believers in Christ are one, even if we have different beliefs and practices? (**Jn 17:20-23**)
 - 1. In short, **denominationalism equals division!** This stands against what my Lord prayed for.
 - 2. These truths caused me to see the importance of searching the Scriptures for myself.
 - 3. In time I was confronted with several contradictions between the Bible and various Baptist beliefs.
 - 4. The question then came: “Is the Baptist Church the one Jesus established?”

Baptist Churches

1. Origin

- a. Founder - John Smyth
- b. Place - London, England
- c. Time – 1607

2. Name

- a. Church - Baptist
- b. Members – Baptist

3. Organization

- a. **Local** - A pastor, board of deacons and other offices.
- b. **Universally** - Conventions, Colleges and other societies.

4. Rule of Faith

- a. Little distinction made between Old and New Testament
- b. Has various manuals and creeds

The Church Jesus Built

1. Origin

- Jesus Christ
- Jerusalem
- AD 33

2. Name

- Church of Christ (**Rom 16:16**)
- Church of God (**1 Cor 1:1-2**)
- Christians (**Acts 11:26; 1 Cor 1:10-13**)

3. Organization

- A local church with elders, deacons and members (**Phil 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17-30**)
- Jesus is the **only head** of His body!

4. Rule of Faith

- Jesus rules his church through the New Testament (**Col 2:14-17; Heb 8:6-8,13; 9:14-16; 10:9-10**)

5. Worship

- a. **Giving** - Tithing (10%)
- b. **Prayer** - Women leading assembly.
- c. **Music** - Vocal, instrumental and choirs.
- d. **Lord's Supper** - Seldom observed.

6. Work of the church

Spiritual, Physical and social.

7. Membership

Saved by **faith alone** and then baptized into the Baptist Church.

8. Apostasy

Once Saved, Always Saved.

5. Worship

As Prospered (**1 Cor 16:1-2**)

Men lead in Church

(**1 Cor 14:33-35**)

Singing Only

(**Eph 5:19; Col 3:16**)

The Lord's Supper partaken every Sunday (**Acts 20:7**)

6. Work of the church

Spiritual (**Eph 4:11-12**)

7. Membership

Those who believe, repent, confess and are baptized are added to His body. (**Mk 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 9:3-11; 22:16; 1 Pt 3:20-21**)

8. Apostasy

We must continue in the faith. (**Gal 5:1-4**)

V. Difficult Decisions that I faced

A. What am I to do?

- 1. There were several excuses that I considered.
 - a. "I have been sincere."
 - b. "All of my family is Baptist."
 - c. "I do not know anyone."
 - d. "But I have been baptized already!" (**Acts 2:38: 19:1-6**)
- 2. The man of faith would ask: "What would Jesus do?" Jesus said:
 - a. Truth is narrow (**Matt 7:13-14, 21-23**)
 - b. Human traditions must be put aside (**Matt 15:8-9**)
 - c. There is only **one baptism**. (**Matt 28:18-20**)

B. What should I do about the consequences?

- 1. The same thing that Moses, a great man of faith did. (**Heb 11:24-26**)
- 2. There were indeed consequences, but no regrets! (**Phil 3:8-9**)
 - a. As a result of my stand, others obeyed the gospel.
 - b. I began a walk of faith that involves careful study for the rest of my life!
 - c. Later these **same principles** would cause me to make **additional changes!**

Conclusion: What is the church of Christ?

- 1. Those who have Jesus as their head! 2. Churches who have "church of Christ" on their sign may not be following the Lord. What does the Bible teach?