

Concurring Testimonies About Our Doctrine And Practice

- I. This study is meant to demonstrate that we are not entirely alone on various distinguishing points of doctrine or practice. My goal is to comfort and confirm your souls by this approach. **ACT 14:22; 15:32, 41; ROM 11:2-4.**
- A. There are certain doctrinal points we hold with which “mainstream Christianity” would not find fault: the Trinity, the dual Nature of Christ (God & Man), the Virgin Birth, the sinless nature of Christ, His vicarious atonement & blood-redemption, His bodily resurrection & ascension, His second coming, etc.
 - B. But there are other more refined points of doctrine which many professors of Christianity would (and do) consider aberrant.
 - C. Sometimes it is helpful to point out to people that:
 - 1. they believe the same thing, but have just not thought about it thoroughly.
Example: We believe that God's grace is sufficient to even eternally save (if He so wills) an unbeliever. Most Arminians and some Calvinists believe the same thing when it comes to perishing infants, idiots or some of the heathen. But they may not have “put two and two together” in a conscious recognition.
 - 2. it is not we who have swerved from the faith. Many denominations once believed similar doctrine and held to similar practice as we still do, but have shifted from their old foundations. Examples:
 - a. There was once a time when the observance of Christmas or Easter was almost universally rejected by many Protestants and Baptists.
 - b. There is a “Founder's Movement” among the Southern Baptist Convention to return to the Sovereign Grace soteriology which once defined many of their churches.
 - c. Certain Protestants and even some Catholics historically rejected the use of musical instruments in worship services.
 - D. Paul would sometimes use such strategies in reasoning with people. **ACT 17:28-29; 24:14-15.**
- II. Some foundations need to be laid down here.
- A. That others may share some of the more distinctive aspects of doctrine which we hold should not be viewed as a *necessary* validation of our beliefs. We are warned against foolish comparisons such as this. **2CO 3:1; 10:12, 18.**
 - B. The Biblical overview of history shows that false prophets, teachers and systems are likely to be in the majority. **GEN 7:1; 1KI 18:22; MAT 7:13-14; ACT 24:21; ROM 11:3-4.**
 - C. The further through history from the apostolic era that one goes, the less is the likelihood of pure continuation of “...the faith once delivered unto the saints” (**JUDE 1:3**). **2TI 3:13; LUK 17:26; 18:8.**
 - D. If you are uneasy about the general rejection of your profession by the world, you should be more uneasy if your profession meets with broad approval. **LUK 6:26.**
 - 1. The path of true faith will not be loved by the world. **JOH 15:18-20.**
 - 2. Compromising for the love of this world is wrong. **2TI 4:10; JAM 4:4; 1JO 2:15.**
 - 3. Mosheim (Lutheran historian) acknowledges: “There were certain sects and doctors against whom the zeal, vigilance, and severity of Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists were united. The objects of their common aversion were the Anabaptists.” (quoted in Concise History of Baptists, G.H. Orchard, p.346)
 - E. Truth is not determined by numbers, one way or the other.
 - 1. “The many” may be wrong (as seen above) and this trend persists to the end.

LUK 17:26-30.

2. “The few” may be wrong. **1CO 15:12; 2TI 2:17-18.**
3. Truth is determined by the words of Scripture and sound reasoning therefrom.
ROM 4:3; 2TI 3:16-17; ACT 17:2.

III. Baptism by immersion.

- A. Obviously this is not a remarkable distinction. Any Baptist congregation would hold to this, as would Greek Orthodox churches. But so also would a number of Protestant or quasi-Protestant communions, such as the Assembly of God, Seventh-Day Adventists, the Campbellites (Church of Christ), certain Pentecostals, etc.
- B. Martin Luther testified to immersion and even rendered **MAT 3:1**, “John the Dipper.”
 1. “...let Luther, the father of Lutheranism, speak: ‘Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated immersion, as when we immerse something in water that it may be wholly covered, and although it is almost wholly abolished (for they do not dip the whole, i.e., children, but pour a little water on them), they ought to be wholly immersed...for that the etymology of the term seems to demand.’”
(J. R. Graves, The Act of Christian Baptism, p. 28)
 2. Luther had some “choice” words for Baptists elsewhere.
- C. Thomas Aquinas testified to immersion in the Catholic church up until the 13th. C.
- D. “St. Paul alludes to the manner in which Baptism was ordinarily conferred in the primitive Church, by immersion. The descent into the water is suggestive of the body into the grave, and the ascent is suggestive of the resurrection to a new life.” (footnote on **ROM 6:3** of the Douay Confraternity Version of the Holy Bible [Roman Catholic])
- E. John Calvin admitted, “...Although the mere term Baptize means to immerse entirely, and it is certain that the custom of entirely immersing was anciently observed in the Church.” (Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book IV, p. 524)
- F. “Respecting the form of baptism, the impartial historian is compelled by exegesis and history substantially to yield the point to the Baptists.”
(Philip Schaff [Reformed], History of the Apostolic Church, p. 570)

IV. The King James Version issue.

- A. There was once a time among virtually all non-Catholic, English-speaking denominations that the KJV was received as the word of God. We are not the ones who have changed on this point. Even the Catholics conceded the excellency of the KJV in that they upgraded the Douay-Rheims version in the past to align it more with the KJV (until they got the Protestants and Baptists to accept the Vatican manuscripts as the basis for new bibles).
- B. Controversy was created by the doubts which precipitated and which followed the production of competitive, counterfeit versions foisted upon English-speaking people since 1871.
 1. Flooding Christendom with counterfeit scriptures is nothing new.
2CO 2:17; 2TH 2:2.
 2. The real issue here is that of authority. To dare to say that one book is God's book
 - a. leaves no “wobble room.”
 - b. demands that all other “bibles which differ from it are not true Bibles at all. “*Rectum est index sui et oblique* (The line which shows itself to be straight shows also what line is crooked).”
 - c. “To hold a thing as true while simultaneously holding something completely contradictory as equally true is not being tolerant; it is being idiotic.”
(Ted Byfield, publisher, Alberta Report magazine)

- C. Is it so hard or foolish to believe that the omnipotent God could preserve His word perfectly through copies and translations?
DEU 17:18; JOS 8:32-35; PRO 25:1; ACT 2:4-11.
- D. There are numerous authors and denominations which hold to the uniqueness of the KJV of the Bible in English.
1. Dean John William Burgon (Anglican) was a towering defender of the texts underlying the KJV and devoted great labors towards the exposure of the corrupt nature of the Westcott-Hort texts and their 1871 revision.
 2. Commenting on **PSA 119:89**, "...In fact, a frequent objection raised to the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy is that, since all the original 'autographs' have been lost, we can never really be sure of any passage. It is interesting to speculate on what happened to those manuscripts directly inspired by God and penned by Moses, John, Paul and the others. It is strange that they all simply disappeared, with not a hint as to their history. If they had been preserved in a church or monastery somewhere, they would have soon become idolatrous objects of worship, so it is probably best they are gone... If, perhaps, angels somehow carried the original manuscripts of God's word to heaven after enough copies had been made to assure its faithful transmission on Earth, placing them there in the ark, like the tables of the law when it was still on the earth, this would surely give added meaning to our wonderful text verse: "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven!" (Dr. Henry Morris, Founder and President Emeritus of the Institute for Creation Research; as seen in 'Days of Praise' devotional of 8-2-98)
 3. "I believe, therefore, after studying, teaching, and loving the Bible for over 55 years, that Christians---especially creationists!--- need to hang on to their old King James Bibles as long as they live.....(it) is the most beautiful, the most powerful, and (I strongly believe) the most reliable of any that we have or ever will have, until Christ returns."
(Dr. Henry Morris, A Creationist's Defense of the King James Bible, 1996)
 4. Peter Ruckman (Fundamentalist) was a prolific author and teacher in defense of the KJV.
 5. Dr. Frank Logsdon was supportive of The Amplified Version and The New American Standard Bible but renounced those works: "I must under God renounce every attachment to the New American Standard Bible... The deletions are absolutely frightening... Some of the finest people in the world believe in that Greek text, the finest leaders that we have today. You'd be surprised; if I told you, you wouldn't believe it. They haven't gone into it, just as I hadn't gone into it; [they're] just taking it for granted... I'm afraid I'm in trouble with the Lord, because I encouraged him [Dewey Lockman of the Lockman Foundation which produced the NASB] to go ahead with it. We laid the groundwork; I wrote the format; I helped to interview some of the translators; I sat with the translators; I wrote the preface... Friends, you can say the Authorized Version is absolutely correct. How correct? One hundred percent correct."

V. The incarnate sonship of Jesus Christ.

- A. We affirm that the sonship of Jesus Christ refers to His incarnation, having been begotten by the Father in the Virgin's womb, not to some mysterious, unexplainable movement or relationship in the Godhead in eternity past. **LUK 1:35; JOH 1:14.**
- B. Roman Catholic theology, virtually all Protestant theology, and even some Baptist theology hold to the position of eternal sonship / eternal generation of the Son.

- C. We are not alone in our position here. Among those who likewise have held to Incarnate Sonship are certain Freewill Baptists, Peter Ruckman (Baptist), John MacArthur (noted Christian author), Alexander Campbell, Adam Clarke (Methodist author and theologian).
- D. Speaking of the Person of Jesus Christ, “He is the Eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father...” (Book of Discipline, United Methodist Church doctrine)
- E. “(b) The Scripture nowhere calls Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, and He is never called Son at all prior to the incarnation, except in prophetic passages in the Old Testament... (d) Many heresies have seized upon the confusion created by the illogical 'eternal Sonship' or 'eternal generation' theory of Roman Catholic theology, unfortunately carried over to some aspects of Protestant theology. (e) Finally; there cannot be any such thing as eternal Sonship, for there is a logical contradiction of terminology due to the fact that the word 'Son' predicates time and the involvement of creativity. Christ, the Scripture tells us, as the Logos, is timeless, '...the Word was in the beginning,' not the Son!” (Walter R. Martin, The Kingdom of the Cults, p. 103)

VI. Church perpetuity / Baptist antiquity.

- A. We affirm that our church(es) are the lineal descendants of that church which was reformed by Jesus Christ and built upon Him to endure without interruption.

ACT 7:38; HEB 9:10; MAT 16:18.

- 1. This demands that there has been on earth since the days of the Apostles a continual existence of local church(es) built by a perpetuated ministry immersing believers in water, the Biblical building system of a true church. **ACT 2:38-47.**
- 2. This also demands that historical Baptist(ic) churches are the only churches that can possibly be of this character, antedating such later inventions as the Roman Catholic Church and her Protestant daughters.
- 3. For a modern church to deny that it is a perpetuation of the church which Christ left in Jerusalem to be His kingdom on this earth is to deny its validity as a true church of Jesus Christ.
- 4. NOTE: We do not hold that a true church would necessarily have the word “Baptist” in its name or be doctrinally flawless.
 - a. No church in Scripture had the word “Baptist” in its name and churches were identified only as churches of particular locations.
 - b. But a church must be baptistic in practice: building repentant believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ together in a spiritual body by baptism in water.
 - c. No church springing from the Roman Catholic system or any other post-apostolic start-up would qualify as a true church even if had the word “Baptist” in its name.
 - d. A true church might be misnamed by its enemies (**ACT 24:5**), or by ignorant parties, or choose a unique name for itself.
- B. Note these following testimonies to Baptist antiquity:
 - 1. “For not so long ago I read the edict of the other prince who lamented the fate of the Anabaptists who, so we read, were pronounced heretics twelve hundred years ago and deserving of capital punishment. He wanted them to be heard and not taken as condemned without a hearing.” (The letters of Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, Libe Epistolarum 150, titled “Alberto Bavariae Duci” in about 1563 A.D., translated by Carolinne White, Ph. D., Oxford University, Head of Oxford Latin)
 - 2. Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer said (circa 1525): “The institution of anabaptism is no novelty, but for 1300 years has caused great disturbance in the Church, and has acquired such a strength that the attempt in this age to contend with it appeared