

TWO MEN WHO RECEIVED FOUR BAPTISMS

BE BAPTIZED OR BE OSTRACIZED

Let me tell you of two men each of whom received four baptisms. Of course, the most interesting one was an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I mention first the other case. When I was preaching in southern Texas there was a man who had been baptized with and in water four times. He was sprinkled when an infant. As a young man he decided to join the Baptist Church and he had to be immersed. The preacher told him that was the Scriptural method, that the ceremony was the door of entrance into the visible Church, and the Baptist Church was the true New Testament Church. Some years later he attended the meetings of a Progressive Campbellite preacher. Every text in the Bible, of course, led that preacher to Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38, baptismal regeneration. The man got under terrible conviction because he had not been baptized for the remission of sins, and he saw that the Baptists were all wrong and that the New Testament Church was the Christian Church; so he was baptized the third time. If you have ever had any dealings with the Non-Progressive Campbellites, you know something of their contempt for the Progressives whom they brand as heretics. This man attended the meetings conducted by some Non-Progressives who convinced him that he was a member of an apostate group. So at last he settled in what he thought to be the true Bible Church of Christ after he received his fourth baptism.

Now you and I know, if we know our Bible, that that poor deceived and bewildered man will never see inside of heaven unless he has received a fifth baptism, that Divine baptism, without hands, that is mentioned in Colossians 2:12. And we also know, if we know our Bible, that if that man had experienced the one Divine baptism of Colossians 2:12 or I Corinthians 12:13, not one of the other four baptisms were in any way essential to help save, or to make the redemptive work of Christ more efficacious, or to prove to God or man that he had been baptized into the One Body of Ephesians 4:4 by the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5.

Hear this interesting testimony of a

Christian man who recently appeared before the official board of a leading Fundamental Baptist Church. The pastor was presiding. The elders asked the man if he were willing to be baptized in the Baptist way. The man said, "more than willing if it is my Scriptural duty." They assured him that it was. He asked, "is water baptism meritorious or efficacious?" "Oh no", was the reply. "Then", asked the man, "what is it for?" "It is a witness to the world", replied the elders; whereupon the man gave his Bible to them and said, "Please show it to me in the Bible". They were surprised at themselves, and of course a little embarrassed, when they had to appeal to the pastor. Then there was more surprise and embarrassment when the pastor admitted that there was no Scripture to support their statement. He said, "this has long since been the Baptist teaching." The man said, "haven't you long since been teaching something that is not taught in the Bible?" But then he put to the elders of the Church, "what is the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5?" The elders looked to the bewildered pastor for help. He couldn't reply that it was a water ceremony, because he would have had to admit that that work of man, by the flesh and for the flesh, joined the water-baptized man to Christ and His Church. This must also be admitted by any intelligent, unprejudiced student of the Word, if there is any water in the baptism of Romans 6:3 and 4. The Baptist preacher stated what every intelligent, unprejudiced Bible student knows, that the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5, Colossians 2:12 and Romans 6:3 and 4, is a Divine baptism that places the believer into the Body of Christ when he believes unto the saving of his soul.

After carefully studying this matter for more than twenty years, I say without any hesitancy that every one of the many water baptism theories, taught and practiced by the two hundred sectarian groups of Christians, is based on tradition and not on the Word of God rightly divided.

Just a little common sense and a few moments study will convince any man with an open mind that, if the teaching of the Presbyterians (a little water on the

head to take the place of circumcision) is Scriptural, then the teaching of some of the immersionists, that the member of the Body of Christ should be buried in water to show that he is dead and buried with Christ, is absolutely absurd as well as unscriptural.

Why are not God's ministers honest and consistent? A Presbyterian knows that if baptism takes the place of circumcision, girls and women should not be baptized. Leaders among the Fundamentalists will accept either the ceremony of the Presbyterians or the Baptists when they know that the ceremonies and the significance of the two are as different as darkness and light—These same brethren ostracize any man of God who is satisfied with God's baptism without anything that a religious man can add to that Divine work.

Every intelligent, unprejudiced student of the Scriptures knows that every saved Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist and Episcopalian has been buried with Christ by baptism, in spite of their utter confusion as to the why, the how and wherefore of their different water ceremonies, except they are agreed that there is no immersion taught in the Bible.

Now think this over—there is an organization of Fundamentalists in this country. In the name of their organization appears the word "Independent". In their recent convention they adopted in somewhat different language, the slogan "be baptized or be ostracized". They passed the resolution that members of their religious organization—for religious it has now become—must believe in some sort of water ceremony. One of the leaders of that organization said that water baptism is a religious scab that was brought over from a former Jewish dispensation. Another one of the leaders said over the radio, "there is not a millionth of a fraction of value to water baptism." Now just think of this brother helping to put over a resolution to dis-fellowship godly, spiritual men of God, because they do not practice a religious ceremony that does not have a millionth of a fraction of value to it. This is the same brother who declared that the message of Ananias to Saul of Tarsus was not the Holy Spirit's message but the words of a prejudiced Jew. Ananias said, "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22 :16.

This was an inspired Divine message to Saul, and certainly has nothing in com-

mon with the teaching that believers should go into a watery grave to witness to the world that they are dead and buried with Christ. This is a human theory contrary to sound doctrine.

Just this past week a Bible Institute in Chicago passed a resolution that any of their students, who attend a Chicago Church where water baptism is not practiced, shall not be permitted to remain in that Institute. The people and pastor of that Church love the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ and contend with conviction for the faith once-for-all delivered unto the saints. They are evangelical and evangelistic. But the Institute receives much Baptist money.

This same Institute sends students out on assignments to assemblies where anointing with oil, imposition of hands, seeking the second blessing and religious healing, are included in their religious programs. To any of these religious practices there is no objection, or if the pastor is a postmillenarian; just so there is some kind of a water ceremony, Scriptural or unscriptural. In fact one of their leading teachers has just written that there is no objection to these different ideas about the meaning and mode of water baptism.

Now think of the inconsistency. I read this past week a letter written by a member of the faculty of that Institute in which he said, plainly and positively, that water baptism was a Jewish religious ceremony brought over temporarily into the overlapping; period of Acts. It was this same man who gave me a warm handshake and said, "Thank God for a man who is not controlled by any one, and who is not afraid to preach his convictions."

Here we are in this country preparing for war against a dictator who is against religious liberty, and think of men of God, who are supposed to be the outstanding leaders among Christian Fundamentalists "resolving" other men of God out of their fellowship, because they do not accept one of their twenty different water baptism theories when not one of them can support his theory by the Word of God rightly divided. They will malign and ostracize and misrepresent, but not one of them has the courage to meet the issue honorably and openly in the presence of a company of Christians. They know there is not one verse of Scripture where one member of the Body of Christ was told to baptize another member. The Church they boycott is supporting eight missionaries, four of whom are graduates of their Institute.

One of the outstanding big Fundamentalists, the pastor of a large church, invited brethren to his church to condemn the stand of a fellow-member of the Body of Christ on water baptism. That pastor was host, president, judge, prosecuting attorney and chairman. He granted himself twenty-five or thirty minutes to prosecute the defendant; and when the defendant asked for more than the five minutes allotted him the chairman cried, "sit down, you are out of order, you may have five minutes."

He well knows that his teaching concerning water baptism is as unscriptural as his book "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth" in which he has more than twenty plain contradictions to statements in his other books, and far more than twenty unscriptural statements. There is nothing that will stir up this dear brother's "old man" as will a challenge of his unscriptural teaching concerning water baptism. And yet he teaches that this water baptism was to prove to the world that his "old man" has been crucified and buried. Surely he is "the confused doctor lost in the Book of Acts". But we know that religious men hated Paul because he taught Christians needed no circumcision. They even judged him worthy of death. Now men are equally as determined in the matter of a water ceremony.

Note the words in Ephesians 4:1 to 6:

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, and in you all."

Among believers, all members of the same Body, there is to be love and unity; and only one baptism is to be required. If this is a water ceremony, let's all get together and agree on the one and eliminate the other nineteen or more. If it is God's baptism, let's get together in the Spirit and eliminate all of the water ceremonies until we can prove that one baptism means more than one.

THE APOSTLE WHO RECEIVED FOUR BAPTISMS

In Acts 1:13 we learn that two men by the name of "James" were in that company of apostles in the upper room waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit. One of those two men was the brother of John. They were the sons of Zebedee.

To them the Lord Jesus, in His resurrection body said, "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Acts 1:8 "For John (the Baptist) truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with (in) the Holy Spirit not many days hence." v: 5. Then note that Peter and the Eleven preached to Israel on the day of Pentecost, "repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:38 and 39. When the Twelve received the Holy Spirit Peter declared, "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Acts 2:16.

God never promised Israelites, in the Old Testament Scriptures, that they would be baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6. Joel had not one word to say concerning the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 and the one Body of Ephesians 4:4. The Word of God clearly teaches that the Church of the Mystery was Divine truth not made known to the sons of men in other ages, but was God's own unrevealed secret. Ephesians 3:8 and 9—Colossians 1:24 to 28—Ephesians 3:1 to 6. Joel prophesied concerning Israel's "last days", concerning Israel's kingdom and the redemption of that nation, and the kingdom blessings in their land. It is anything but rightly dividing the Word of truth to teach that "the dispensation of the grace of God" of Ephesians 3:1 to 3, or that "the dispensation of the secret" of Ephesians 3:9, began on the day God was fulfilling a promise that He had made to the Jews concerning their "last days". Were the "last days" prophesied by Joel the first days of an unprophesied Church? Is there one hint or suggestion any where in the thirty-eight Books of the Old Testament Scriptures, or in the Book of Genesis, that believing Jews and Gentiles would be baptized in one Spirit into one Body, in accordance with I Corinthians 12:13?

We see that the baptism of James, the brother of John, after the death of Christ was for power. Then what do we learn in Acts 5:32? "And we (twelve) are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him." What great event was witnessed by the Holy Spirit? That Jesus Christ had been exalted with God's right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel,

and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31. Where did the Gentiles come in? They did not come in. Where did the Body of Ephesians 1:20 to 22 come in? It didn't come in. This was a witness by the Holy Spirit of the work God was willing to do for the nation Israel by the exalted Christ. "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36.

Note Paul's statement in Acts 13:23 and 24 and compare it with the statement of John the Baptist in John 1:31: "Of this man's (David's) seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus; When John (the Baptist) had first preached before His coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel." Now note most carefully the statement of John the Baptist, in John 1:31; "And I knew Him (Christ) not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." Why did John baptize with water? God raised up unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. Where, when and how did the Gentiles come in? When and because Israel was cast away. Romans 11:15 When and because of Israel's unbelief and fall. Romans 11:30 and 11:11. When was that? Long after Saul of Tarsus was converted to Christianity. So from Matthew 1:1 right on through to the tenth chapter of the Book of Acts we find an Israelitish kingdom program, and the water baptism was an Israelitish kingdom ceremony, unto repentance for the remission of sins, that Christ might be made manifest unto Israel. In the ninth chapter of Acts, Saul was converted and baptized. He was thus instructed, "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Acts 22:16. Some years later he wrote, "for Christ sent me not to baptize". I Corinthians 1:17.

If Christian water baptism began on the day of Pentecost, not one of the Twelve received Christian water baptism, for they were baptized, at least, three years before that time. Acts 1:22. Among those who received John's water baptism was James, the brother of John. That was James' first baptism, although he may have received many baptisms before that, if he had been a worshipping Jew, for the Jewish washings of Hebrews 9:10 were baptisms. The word "washings" should be translated "baptisms".

Thus we see that James, the brother of John, was baptized unto repentance for the remission of sins. This order is quite

different from the program of baptizers who claim to be "grace" preachers today. They positively affirm that a person has no Scriptural right to receive water baptism until after that person has shown evidence that he has been baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ and therefore into His Body, the true Bible Church. They, of course, have to mix tradition and imagination with the Scripture to defend their water ceremony; and when pressed they invariably make their sectarian creed and constitution the court of appeal. And therefore, there are about as many different explanations of the why, how and wherefore of water baptism as there are sects. Perhaps you would be interested in our printed message "Water Heretics".

There is one truth that every Scripturally-informed member of the true Bible Church knows, and that is, that Christian unity is to be experienced and enjoyed on the basis of one baptism. This is the clear teaching of Ephesians 4:1 to 6. If this one baptism is a water ceremony, then it is high time that representatives of all denominations get together and eliminate all of the sectarian water baptisms except the one true Bible water baptism, if there is such a thing. If this one baptism is a Divine baptism, God's work and not man's, then for the sake of unity in a world torn asunder by strife and turmoil, it is high time that all members of the true Bible Church confess their confusion and water heresies, and enjoy Christian fellowship and unity and present a united front, on the basis of the one Divine baptism, made without hands, as all Christians expect to enjoy on the basis of the one circumcision not made with hands. Colossians 2:11 and 12.

JAMES' THIRD BAPTISM

Let us consider this third baptism in the light of two statements made by the Lord Jesus to and concerning His twelve apostles.

"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Matthew 10:23.

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matthew 19:28.

Perhaps in the light of these two statements we can better understand the question of Peter and the others in Acts 1:6 "When they therefore were come to-

gether, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

If these twelve men were to see the Son of man coming before they had gone over the cities of Israel, and if they were to sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel when the Son of man did come, the question in their minds was, when would the King come and restore the kingdom to Israel. The twelve apostles had suffered and they wanted their reward, sitting on twelve thrones. Now note what the ambitious mother of James and John wanted for her two sons :

"Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy Kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Matthew 20:20 to 24.

Now before we comment let us compare Acts 12:1 and 2 with Luke 12:50:

"Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword."

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

Several years after Jesus of Nazareth was baptized by John the Baptist, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, He was baptized into death on the cross of Calvary. In Luke 12:50, the Lord Jesus called His death His "baptism". In Matthew 20:23, the Lord Jesus spoke of the death of James as his "baptism". So when Herod decapitated James, James was baptized. Some other apostles were thus baptized when they died for Christ's sake.

But all members of the Body of Christ experience a death baptism, whether or not they are killed for Christ's sake.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also

should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:3 and 4.

"Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead." "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances." "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Colossians 2:12 and 20—3:3.

Yes, the believer is dead. Water baptism did not produce this death, and no water is required or expected by God to prove to any one that the believer is dead. Think of the folly of teaching that water baptism is a witness to the world that the believer is dead with Christ. The witness that is expected is mentioned in connection with the statement, "ye are dead", in Colossians 3:3. Note the witness :

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." Colossians 3:1, 2 and 5.

This is God's way for the Christian to witness to the world that he has been baptized into the death of Christ. Just think of any intelligent man of God reading a watery grave into the glorious truth of Romans 6:3 and 4. This is simply to take away the offence of the cross, and to cater to the flesh. It gives the flesh something in which to glory; and God says no flesh shall glory in His presence. I Corinthians 1:29. It is most interesting to note that this statement is in the same chapter in which Paul said, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." I Corinthians 1:17.

Surely when we learn that Jesus Christ called James' martyrdom, James' "baptism", we shall not be foolish enough to join with those who spend hours, days, years and a lifetime arguing that baptism means immersion. The Greek word is found also in Hebrews 9:10 and in I Corinthians 10:1 and 2.

"Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, (baptisms), carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." I Corinthians 10:1 and 2.

Most of Israel's "baptisms" were sprinklings and pourings and washings. Some of them were immersings.

As for I Corinthians 10:1 and 2, any student of the Word of God can read in Exodus 14:27 and 29 that the Egyptian sinners were the only ones who were immersed in water. The children of Israel who were baptized unto Moses went over on dry land. Their baptism was a very dry one. Not one of them got wet. The word baptized in I Corinthians 10:2 has nothing to do with Christian water baptism. By carefully reading Exodus we learn that the children of Israel would not have received Moses, as God's appointed leader, if God had not performed those two wonderful miracles by the hand of Moses. When they accepted Moses, because of the two great miracles, they were baptized unto him. In the same way many Israelites were baptized unto Jesus of Nazareth; and many were not. Acts 2:22—John 2:23—John 12:37.

If we were not living in the day of grace, do you suppose that God would stand for a preacher immersing a little helpless baby in a bathtub, and calling that religious ceremony "household baptism"?

NEW BEGINNINGS WITH JAMES' BAPTISMS

When James was baptized with John's baptism a great event was taking place. The Creator had come to earth to redeem His people Israel, and to that nation the King proclaimed, "the kingdom of God is at hand": "the time is fulfilled". So John's baptism marked one of the greatest events in the history of the world.

Later on Israel was cast away and reconciliation was sent to the Gentiles. Romans 11:15. Surely that was a revolutionary change in God's dealings with the human race. To the apostle Paul was committed "the dispensation of grace" for Gentiles. Ephesians 3:1 to 3.

One of the most serious blunders that Christian preachers and teachers have made is the blunder that this revolutionary change came with James' second baptism rather than after his third baptism, his death. This erroneous teaching has led to other errors and has caused many Christians to go into fanatical Pentecostalism and other religious delusions. In Acts 14:27 the Scriptures plainly state when God opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And if there is any truth clearly and dogmatically taught in the Bible, it is the fact that "the dispensation

of grace" began with Paul's ministry and not with Peter's. What plain words of Paul in Ephesians 3:8, and Galatians 2:7. And let no one deceive you into believing that the Greek reads, "to the circumcision" or "for the uncircumcision". The genitive case is used in the Greek and "of" is the correct translation. Ephesians 3:1 to 3, Galatians 3:8, and Romans 16:25 should convince any intelligent, unprejudiced Christian that the Lord Jesus gave to the apostle Paul a ministry to the Gentiles that differed from Peter's ministry. To teach that this present "grace" dispensation began when the twelve apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy concerning Israel's "last days", is to teach error, an error that leads to other delusions and hides from the Christian the most wonderful truth in the Bible for saints, the Divine truth of Ephesians and Colossians called "God's Secret".

The Word of God is made up of "the law and the prophets", and "the mystery". Christians are informed in Colossians 1:24 to 28 and in Ephesians that the mystery was revealed to Paul to complete the Word of God, and was truth completely outside Old Testament prophecy or its fulfillment. Therefore, even the babe in Christ should know that the ministry of the Twelve in the Book of Acts had nothing to do with "the dispensation of the mystery" or "the dispensation of the grace of God." Ephesians 3:9.

After James received his third baptism, his death, another radical change took place. The death of James reduced the number from "Peter and the Eleven" to "Peter and the Ten". Let us keep in mind that twelve Jews stood up on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:14. They addressed "all the house of Israel". Acts 2:36. That meant twelve tribes. They were devout Jews from every nation under heaven. Acts 2:5. There were some proselytes among them, but no uncircumcised Gentiles. Acts 2:10—11:1 to 3. They declared that Christ had been raised from the dead to be Israel's Prince and Saviour. Acts 5:29 to 32. So it was just as true in the ministry of the Twelve in the Book of Acts that Christ was offered unto His own and His own received Him not, as it was during the years of His incarnation. Israel rejected Jesus Christ in resurrection before God made known the mystery.

I quote from the writings of Dr. H. A. Ironside:

"The 'mystery' was not something of difficult, mysterious character, but a secret never known to mankind until in due time opened up by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul.

"It was not hid in the Scriptures to be brought to light eventually; but we are distinctly told it was hid in God until such time as He chose to manifest it.

"This was not until Israel had been given every opportunity to receive Christ both in incarnation and RESURRECTION."

Note "and resurrection".

When did "the dispensation of the mystery" begin? After Israel had had every opportunity in incarnation and resurrection to receive Jesus Christ. In another message this same brother says "the dispensation of the mystery" began with Peter on the day of Pentecost. I wrote him concerning the contradiction and he replied that he believed both statements.

Most assuredly Israel had not had every opportunity to receive Christ in resurrection when the Twelve stood up on the day of Pentecost. They hadn't had a single opportunity.

When Judas died a successor was chosen to keep the number of apostles "twelve". But when James received his death baptism no successor was selected or required. Why? Because the Lord was ready to usher in a new dispensation.

I again quote from the writings of Dr. H. A. Ironside:

"The mystery of the Church as the Body of Christ was never made known in Old Testament times, nor yet in the days when our Lord was on the earth. We are told distinctly it had been 'hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to the saints'. The Divine method of making it known was by a special revelation to the apostle Paul, as he tells us in Ephesians 3. But this revelation was not for him only. It was a ministry committed to him to pass on to the saints."

Note Acts 13:2:

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Then the heading in most Bibles over Acts 13:3 is "Paul's First Missionary Journey". Then later, "Paul's Second Missionary Journey", "Paul's Third Missionary Journey", and he took a fourth one. But why is there no mention of Peter's first missionary journey, or his second, or his third; or the first, second or third

missionary journeys of any of the Twelve? Because they remained at Jerusalem and agreed to go to the Jews. Galatians 2:9, Acts 8:1 and 15:1 to 3. This may be an ignorance of church history, but I prefer ignorance of church history to ignorance of the Bible.

Note Paul's testimony in Colossians 1:6 and 1:23, and II Timothy 4:17, and Romans 11:13.

"Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

With the baptism of James (in Acts 12:1 and 2) we find that the "Acts" record of the spiritual activities of Peter and his associates ceases, and the only mention of any one of them in the last sixteen chapters of Acts, is his dealings with the apostle Paul. These sixteen chapters give us the doings and sayings of Paul and mention only those who have dealings with him. Does not this convince you that Acts 13:2 marks the beginning of a radical change in God's program? If not, is it prejudice, pride, stubbornness, tradition or what? Perhaps you are afraid to differ with the so-called big men who are largely responsible for the faulty dispensationalism taught by most Fundamentalists today.

JAMES' FOURTH BAPTISM

Now, perhaps this is where I need some help, but I want it from and in the Word of God rightly divided. Any sane, intelligent student of the Word of God knows that the Joint-Body of Christ, the Church of the mystery, had its beginning before the close of the "Acts" period, for this is proven by Romans 8:28 to 32, I Corinthians 2:6 to 8, Romans 12:3 and 4, II Corinthians 5:13 to 21, I Corinthians 12:12 to 14, Philippians 1:3 to 10, and many other Scriptures. We heartily disagree with any man who says the beginning of the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6 was after the close of the "Acts"

period. That is wrongly dividing the Word of truth. But we do most heartily agree with the teaching of Dr. C. i. Scofield that a most radical change took place in the spiritual program of the Church after Paul's words in Acts 28 :25 to 28. According to Dr. Scofield's teaching, that brought to an end the sign-gifts, tongues and miracles of the "Acts" period.

There has no man presented any Scripture to prove when the Church of the mystery, the Body of Christ, had its historic beginning. What folly to try to prove it began on the day of Pentecost because Paul said, "I persecuted the Church of God". This word "Church" is "ecclesia" and the word is used many times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures. The "Body" of the Bible is the "ecclesia", but the "ecclesia" is not always the Body". The Body is called "the Joint-Body" in Ephesians 3:6. Some seven years after Pentecost it was unlawful for the Twelve to preach to Gentiles. Acts 10:28. In Acts 14:27 we learn how, when, and by whom, God opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. How could there have been the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, mentioned in connection with the unsearchable (unprophesied) riches of Christ of Ephesians 3:8, when this message had not yet been disclosed by Christ?

If we believe Matthew 19:28, we believe that the twelve apostles, including James, in the kingdom age, are to sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

There are some Christians who cannot understand how the twelve apostles can be members of the Church of the mystery, the Body of Christ, which was an unprophesied organism, and also reign on thrones in a prophesied kingdom. I wish this were the only thing in the Bible that I do not understand.

But some things we can all understand, or at least accept as Divine truth when stated specifically in the Bible. When Peter and his associates definitely stated that the ministry and happenings of Acts 2 and 3, and the Divine program of Acts 15:13 to 18, were all in fulfillment of, and according to, the words of prophecy, and Paul declares that not one of them knew or made known truth concern-

ing the Body of Christ and this present age or dispensation, we ought to settle once for all that whatever began on Israel's Pentecost in Jerusalem, it was not "the Church of the mystery".

Many Christians have failed to rightly divide the Word of truth by limiting the meaning of three words in the Bible to support their own personal religious ideas. The three words are "church", "gospel", and "baptism". There are actually respected Bible teachers who declare that the word "gospel" has but one meaning; that is, the truth of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4. It is true that those verses express the only fact that will save a sinner. But the word "gospel" is used to define and express many other spiritual benefits and blessings. There is only one way to be saved, but every blessing and benefit that the believer experiences and enjoys in Christ is "gospel" (good news).

Prejudiced Christians have made too much of their narrow interpretation of the word "baptism". It has many meanings. To say that the word always means a submergence, a putting-under, is the mark of ignorance.

You cannot prove when James became a member of the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6; but if and when he did, it was by a Divine operation which, according to the Scriptures, may be called "baptism". Whatever mode of baptism you may defend, cherish or worship be sure you do not, with it, cover up the only baptism for this age in which God is interested, the one Divine baptism of Ephesians 4:5, Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:3 and 4, Galatians 3:27 and I Corinthians 12:13.

All the water on this earth applied to the most sincere, consecrated religious person by the most sincere, religious, titled clergyman, in the language of a Chicago Fundamentalist, has not one millionth of a fraction of value; and yet this dear brother invites the public to his baptismal services to see him put the people in his tank of water.

But the one Divine baptism of the Tri-une God will identify a believing sinner with the Son of God in His death, burial, resurrection and heavenly seat in an inseparable and eternal union, and make him a member of the one and only true Bible Church that God is building.

If Paul had believed and preached what the majority of Fundamentalists today preach he would never have been in the Roman jail for the mystery. They teach that the dispensation committed to Paul began with Peter and Pentecost. Why were not Peter and his associates in prison for the mystery? Colossians 4:3 and 4—Ephesians 6:19 and 20.

Send for our new message concerning this truth.
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