

18- JESUS CHRIST DID NOT BAPTIZE HIMSELF!

It is very important that we recognize that scriptural baptism was **always** a prerequisite to becoming a member of any of Christ's churches mentioned in the scriptures. There were, indeed, seven churches in existence in Asia Minor to whom Jesus Christ sent seven letters in the book of Revelation. But the descriptions of those seven churches were also a description of most of the scriptural churches in each of the seven divisions of the Church Age. They described the condition and practices of most of the scriptural churches who are present in each of the seven divisions, beginning with the church that Jesus Christ established in Jerusalem when He began the first part of His earthly ministry and ending with the churches who will be in existence when Jesus Christ returns for the Catching Up or as some people call it, the Rapture. ¹⁶ *The eleven disciples went into Galilee to the hillside to which Jesus had directed them.* ¹⁷ *When they saw him they worshiped him, **though some had doubts.*** ¹⁸ *Then Jesus came up and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* ¹⁹ *Therefore, as you go, **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ ***teaching** them to obey all that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you every day until the end of the age."* Matthew 28:16-20 (International Standard Version)

Please note that Matthew 28:16 does not say that **only** the apostles met Jesus Christ in Galilee. When we consider the fact that Jesus Christ had revealed and identified himself to the apostles soon after His resurrection, the fact that "**some had doubts**" tells us that there were other members of the church in Jerusalem who were present when Jesus Christ met with them on a hillside in Galilee. ³ *I gave you the message that I received. I told you the most important truths: that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say;* ⁴ *that he was buried and was raised to life on the third day, as the Scriptures say;* ⁵ *and that he appeared to Peter and then to the twelve apostles.* ⁶ *After that **Christ appeared to more than 500 other believers at the same time.** Most of them are still living today, but some have died.* ⁷ *Then he appeared to James and later to all the apostles.* ⁸ *Last of all, he appeared to me. I was different, like a baby born before the normal time."* 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (Easy-To-Read Version)

We know Jesus Christ instructed the members of the local church in Jerusalem to (1) make **more** disciples (2) baptize them and (3) teach them what He had taught them. ¹³ *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee upon the Jordan, unto John to be baptized by him,* ¹⁴ *but John was forbidding him, saying, 'I have need by thee to be baptized--and thou dost come unto me!'* ¹⁵ *But*

*Jesus answering said to him, 'Suffer now, for thus it is becoming to us to **fulfill all righteousness**,' then he doth suffer him. ¹⁶ And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and lo, opened to him were the heavens, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him, ¹⁷ and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My Son-- the Beloved, in whom I did delight.'" Matthew 3:13-17 (Youngs Literal Translation)*

Jesus Christ Did Not Baptize Himself! Our Heavenly Father had given John the Baptist **the authority to baptize** in order for John the Baptist to prepare the material that Jesus Christ was going to call, organize, train, commission, authorize and empower as His priests from the time of His earthly ministry to the time of the "Catching Up" (the Rapture). Our Heavenly Father had also given His Son **the authority to baptize** in order for Jesus Christ to pass the authority to baptize on to His disciples, the local, scriptural church in Jerusalem. **Jesus Christ could not baptize Himself any more that John the Baptist could baptize himself.** That is why John the Baptist was not a member of a scriptural church. John the Baptist was killed before he could receive scriptural baptism by the authority of the church Jesus Christ established in Jerusalem. John the Baptist had been given **the authority to baptize** others but no one except Jesus Christ and the members of Christ's scriptural churches had **the authority to baptize** John the Baptist. Why didn't the disciples of John the Baptist baptize John the Baptist? Because although John the Baptist had been given the scriptural authority to baptize others, he could not pass that authority down to his disciples. Only Jesus Christ had the authority from His Father to pass His authority to baptize down to His disciples (Acts 19:1-7). ¹⁸ *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power (ἐξουσία - pronounced "ex-oo-see'-ah" in English and meaning authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* Matthew 28:18-20 (King James Version)

¹⁸ *And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All **authority** hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* Matthew 28:18-20 (American Standard Version)

¹⁸ *Mary Magdalene came and told **the disciples** that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.* ¹⁹ *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where **the disciples** were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* ²⁰ *And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.* ²¹ *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, **even so send I you.***" John 20:18-21 (King James Version)

While we are on the subject of scriptural baptism, we would like to ask two interesting questions. We should all agree that the disciples of John the Baptist were just as saved as we are. Otherwise, why would Jesus Christ call to the disciples of John the Baptist and invite them to be "fishers of men" if they were not saved? Why would Jesus Christ include some of the disciples of John the Baptist as members of the scriptural church He was establishing in Jerusalem after they came to Him when He called to them? Please recall that the Greek word "ἐκκλησία"(pronounced "ek-klay-see'-ah" in English) means "a called out assembly". Most of the time, the Greek word "ἐκκλησία" is translated "church" in the English translations.

Our first question is this. Who voted to accept those who were saved on the day of Pentecost as candidates for baptism and who voted, after their baptism, to accept them as a member of the local, New Testament church in Jerusalem? The local, scriptural church in Jerusalem voted to accept those who were saved on the day of Pentecost as candidates for baptism! The church in Jerusalem had been in existence for about **three years** before that significant day of Pentecost! We find in Acts 2:40-47, "⁴⁰ *And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.* ⁴¹ *Then they that gladly received his word **were baptized:** and the same day there were added **unto them** about **three thousand souls.*** ⁴² *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* ⁴³ *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.* ⁴⁴ *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;* ⁴⁵ *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.* ⁴⁶ *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,* ⁴⁷ *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord **added** to the **church** (ἐκκλησία - pronounced*

"ek-klay-see'-ah" in English) *daily such as should be saved.*" Acts 2:40-47 (King James Version)

We know that some the disciples of John the Baptist choose **not** to come to Jesus when He called to them to become one of **His** disciples. We know they remained a separate group of saved people. " ¹⁴ *Then came to him the disciples of John, saying: Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but thy disciples do not fast?* ¹⁵ *And Jesus said to them: Can the children of the bridegroom mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast.*" Matthew 9:14-15 (Douay-Rheims Version, New Catholic Edition)

Our second question is this. On the day of Pentecost, did those who chose to remain disciples of John the Baptist have a vote when the local church in Jerusalem accepted members? If your answer is that they did **not** have a vote, then you believe that there were two separate groups of saved people on the earth during and after the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. **We agree!** Just as there were two separate groups of saved people on this earth after the Lord established the Jewish Theocracy. One group were those who had descended from the twelve tribes of Israel. The Lord brought them out of captivity in Egypt, made a contract with them, made them His priests and led them to the land of Canaan (Exodus 19:1-8). But there were other saved people living on this earth who **were not** members of the Jewish Theocracy. One group of saved people on this earth after the Lord established the Jewish Theocracy were the Midianites, descendents of Abraham and his third wife Keturah. " ¹ *Abraham married again, and his new wife was Keturah.* ² *She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, **Midian**, Ishbak, and Shuah.* ³ *Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants were the people of Assyria, Letush, and Leum.* ⁴ *The sons of **Midian** were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.* ⁵ *Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac.* ⁶ *But before Abraham died, he did give gifts to the sons of his other wives, then sent them to the East to be away from Isaac."* Genesis 25:1-6 (New Century Version) Do you really suppose that Abraham raised Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, **Midian**, Ishbak, and Shuah and did not tell them about God's glorious plan of salvation? Do you really suppose that Abraham did not urge them to repent of their sins and request that the promised Messiah pay their sin debt?

Since the establishment of the church in Jerusalem, there has also been two separate groups of saved people on the earth, even up to this day. There will still be two separate groups

of saved people during the Millennial reign of Christ and there will also be two separate groups of saved people on the New Earth. Those who search the scriptures will find that in addition to members of the Bride of Christ living in the Holy City Jerusalem on the New Earth for eternity, there will be nations of other saved people living **outside** the city also. " ²² *I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.* ²³ *And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.* ²⁴ *The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.* ²⁵ *Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.* ²⁶ **People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.** ²⁷ *But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life."* Revelation 21:22-27 (New Revised Standard Version)

That would mean that not all of the redeemed of all the ages belong to the intuition of "the church", that is, the composite of all of the local, scriptural churches combined.. We urge you to read the paper "IS THERE A UNIVERSAL CHURCH" on our website, <http://www.bayourouge.net>, if you have not already done so. It is very important that we recognize that when the Bible speaks of **a church** or **"the church"** it is not speaking of a universal church that is composed of all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nations. All the redeemed of all the ages, make up the Family of the Living God. At the moment a person goes to the Living God in prayer, repents of their sins and asks that the payment Jesus Christ gave on Calvary pay their sin debt, the Lord adopts them into His family. The Lord becomes their Heavenly Father and they become one of His children. There is, however, a difference between the Family of God and the Bride of Christ. All members of the Bride of Christ are members of the Family of God but not all members of the Family of God are members of the Bride of Christ.

Most people do not understand the difference between the Family of God and the Bride of Christ. Apparently they have accepted the theory of the existence of a great big, invisible universal church that all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nations belong to, because someone they highly respected taught it. Usually the reason that person taught the theory is because someone they highly respected taught it. And usually the reason that person taught the theory is because someone they highly respected taught it. And so on and so on and so on. If someone in that chain would have taken the time to verify

what they had been told about the existence of a universal church they would have seen that the only scriptures that speak of a church are referring to either a particular local, scriptural New Testament church or to the **institution** that is composed of all the local, scriptural New Testament churches combined. In fact, if we consult the Bible we will see that **scriptural baptism was always a prerequisite to becoming a member of any of the churches mentioned in the scriptures.** We know, however, that not all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nations have received scriptural baptism.

Also, if they had searched the scriptures daily to see if the things they had been taught were so, they would have noticed that when the writer of the book of Hebrews listed the things the saved will see on the New Earth, **he listed two groups of saved people.** " ²² *But ye are come unto (1) mount Sion, and unto (2) the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to (3) an innumerable company of angels,* ²³ **(4) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in Heaven,** and to (5) God the Judge of all, and to **(6) the spirits of just men made perfect,** ²⁴ *And to (7) Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to (8) the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."* Hebrews 12:22-24 (King James Version)

Again, the descriptions of those seven churches were also a description of the scriptural churches in each of the seven divisions of the Church Age. They described the condition and practices of Christ's scriptural churches, beginning with the church that Jesus Christ established in Jerusalem and ending with the churches who will be in existence when Jesus Christ returns for the Catching Up or as some people call it, the Rapture.

Those seven churches represented all of Christ's scriptural churches and the information that the Book of Revelation reveals has continued to be distributed among Jesus Christ's scriptural churches in all divisions of the Church Age, even to our present day.

Does the following scripture sound like it refers to a universal group composed of all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nations or does it sound like it refers to a local, visible, scriptural church? " ⁴¹ *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.* ⁴² *And they continued steadfastly in the (1) apostles' doctrine and (2) fellowship, in the (3) breaking of bread, and in (4) prayers.* ⁴³ *Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders*

and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So (a) continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and (b) breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ (c) praising God and (d) having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to **the church** (ἐκκλησία - pronounced in English, ek-klay-see'-ah) daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:41-47 (New King James Version)

Again, the Greek word "ἐκκλησία" (pronounced in English, "ek-klay-see'-ah") refers to a **called out** assembly. As we shared in other places in this paper, during His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ **called out**, organized, trained, authorized, commissioned and empowered another group to be His priests from the time of His earthly ministry to the time of the "Catching Up" (the Rapture). How soon did He organize that group into a scriptural church? How soon did that group receive the authority to baptize others into their membership? ²² After these things came **Jesus and his disciples** into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. ²³ And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. ²⁴ **For John was not yet cast into prison.** ²⁵ Then there arose a question between some of **John's disciples** and the Jews about purifying. ²⁶ And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. ²⁷ John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. ²⁸ Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. ²⁹ He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but **the friend of the bridegroom**, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: **this my joy therefore is fulfilled.** ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease. ³¹ He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. ³² And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. ³³ He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. ³⁴ For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. ³⁵ The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. ³⁶ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. ¹ When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more

disciples than John, ² **(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)** ³ He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee." John 3:22 through John 4:3 (King James Version)

You are welcome to correspond with us.

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