

BRAINWASHED BAPTISTS

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Webster's New World Dictionary gives the meaning of "brainwashed" as: "to indoctrinate so intensively and thoroughly as to effect a radical transformation of beliefs and mental attitudes." This describes exactly what has taken place with many of the Baptists of our day. And, as in the case of brainwashing by Communists, this transformation has been decidedly for the worse.

Paul, in his address to the Ephesian elders said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also **of your own selves shall men arise**, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). This first class of deceivers Baptists have contended with for almost two thousand years and have overcome them, even when persecuted unto death by them. But this latter group is seemingly triumphing daily, and this, for the simple reason that Baptists have allowed themselves to be brainwashed.

Perhaps some will object to the application of "brainwashing" to the religious realm, yet, it is in no way less insidious because of its usage to change men's minds from spiritual truth than it is when used to corrupt political ideologies. Yea, it is admittedly more devilish to do so. Any departure from Biblical truth, however insignificant or unimportant it may seem, is devil inspired and can never be pleasing to God.

It is Satan's way to work cunningly to deceive men's minds and to lead them from the truth. Who would be deceived and led into error were the devil to appear as he is commonly pictured-in bright red array with horns and a tail-and to say "I'm going to lead you into error and thereby damn your soul and the souls of those that you influence?" None, of course! Hence Paul writes "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself **is transformed into an angel of light**" (2 Cor. 11:13-15). We might well expect the world to be deceived by Satan because "The whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19), literal rendering. "Wickedness" in the KJV translates the same two words rendered "the evil one" in verse 18, and is not in reference to evil in general, but to a specific evil, as the definite article shows. But how is it that saved people and Baptists especially, are so deceived? Is it not because they have been brainwashed? There is no other explanation! Baptists have been brainwashed in several important areas with the result that they have, in many instances, been led to compromise Bible, and so, historic Baptist, principles. May we note some of these areas.

I. BAPTISTS HAVE BEEN BRAINWASHED ABOUT MISSION WORK.

This becomes especially obvious when we consider the departure of many Baptists from the scriptural plan of missions, and their vain attempts to justify their actions by declaring that they have found a better way, or that the Bible plan won't work today, or that it isn't important how mission work is done so long as it is done.

Of course, what it all boils down to is that those in places of leadership have replaced the wisdom of God with the inventions of man, and the average Baptist church member has been

brainwashed into believing whatever they are told in the matter. But it was not always so. In fact, until recent times-until a little over two hundred years ago-there was no such thing as a board, fellowship, society, etc., which claimed authority to send out missionaries. It was all done by local churches according to the apostolic example as most obviously set forth in Acts 13:1-3, and so it should be done today, and would be so done by most Baptists had they not been brainwashed.

Acts 13 declares that: (1) The Holy Spirit calls to mission work. He first calls the men themselves (v. 2f), "whereunto I have called them," then He calls a church to send them out (v. 2). "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." (2) The church should feel a definite concern in this matter (v. 3): "fasted and prayed. . ." (3) The church is to officially recognize the call, (v. 3): "laid their hands on them." (4) The church is to send them out in obedience to the Spirit's call (v. 3-4). (5) The missionaries are under the authority of the church sending them out, and are to report back to this church concerning the work they have done. "And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:26-27).

If there be those who object that not one church in a hundred could support a missionary, we might ask, Can one church support a missionary board any easier? Yet, Scripture nowhere teaches that a single church must support a missionary all by itself, but it encourages churches to mutually support missionaries. Yet this in no way necessitates a human organization to do so. Paul commended the Philippian church for helping him financially while he did mission work (Phil. 4:15-18). He apologized to the Corinthian church for not asking help of them while he labored among them as a missionary (2 Cor. 11:7-9; 12:13). He also commended individual church members who had helped him in his work, as, for example, Phebe, the deaconess of Cenchrean church (Rom. 16:1-2), Priscilla and Aquila and the church in their house (Rom. 16:3-5), the household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:15-17), and others.

The objection falls to the ground when one considers that all of the so-called cooperative programs are based on this very idea of each church helping as they are able. Where then is the difference? The difference, and the exceptional thing, is that they are misdirected. They place a man-made organization between the church and the mission field. They take the glory that is due to God "in the church" (Eph. 3:21), and they put it in human institutions and programs. The authority to send out missionaries is taken from the church (something that Scripture nowhere authorizes) and is invested in mere human organizations. Funds that are designated for mission work are thereby channeled aside for the maintenance of a superfluous body. When our Lord said, "All authority is given unto me" (Matthew 28:18) (Greek), he clearly designated Himself as the sole agent with authority to commission work in His name. When He said, "Go ye, therefore," He manifestly delegates His church to do the work, but He does not authorize it to redelegate that work to someone else. Delegated authority is not redelegatable. Therefore, those who set up and support outside organizations to do missionary work, depart from the Divine plan of mission work, usurp the authority that belongs only to the churches, and exalt the inventions of man above the wisdom of God. It is to be feared that in many instances this is nothing less than a matter of laziness and unconcern on their parts. "I know that we have a duty to do mission work, but I don't want to be bothered with it. Therefore, let's palm it off on someone else, and pay them to do what we should do," is the underlying attitude in many cases.

Some are willingly ignorant of God's plan of mission work. Others, and they are perhaps in the majority, have simply been brainwashed in the matter, and probably know no better. Brethren, it is time that we all got back to the Christ-honoring, church-centered and Scriptural

way of mission work. "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:9-10). In the day of judgment for rewards, do you want to be rebuked for stealing God's glory and giving it to a man-made institution?

II. BAPTISTS HAVE BEEN BRAINWASHED ABOUT FELLOWSHIP.

Too often it is the policy of preachers to be cliquish, and this attitude, sadly enough, is passed on to the churches. What is sometimes nothing more than a clash of personalities between two preachers can easily be the means whereby a rift develops between churches, ruining their fellowship with one another. Nor is this restricted to inter-church squabbles. It can, and often does, occur within a church as it did in the Corinthian church, where there were schisms, each group claiming that the person it was following was more spiritual, or more wise, or more qualified to lead than the others. But Paul rightly denominated such strife when he said, "For while one with, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. 3:4).

But where many church members would be quick to add their vote of condemnation to such inter-church strife, they think nothing of alike strife between churches.

The fault for this often lies with pastors who brainwash their people into believing that only those who belong to their own little clique are sound. Or who make it a test of fellowship whether a person is in this or that board, fellowship or convention.

It is indeed sad when Baptists are brainwashed into believing that adherence to this or that human organization is a test of Christian fellowship. Yet, this writer is not alone in having been ostracized by other Baptists for the simple reason that he does not support unscriptural mission programs. To some it matters not that a man believes and practices all the historic Baptist principles that he does. The test is "Do you support **our program**?" if one does not, he will probably find himself quickly shunned, no matter how sound in the faith he may be. If the disciples' attitude of forbidding one "because he followed not us" (Mark 9:38-41), was deserving of the Lord's rebuke, how much more those who declare non-fellowship simply because a man desires to adhere to the Scriptural plan of mission work?

It is a common thing today for Baptists to lambaste the Southern Baptist Convention for their unscriptural programs, and certainly there is no excuse for such departures from the truth, yet many of these same ones have pulled out of the Convention only to build another similar organization, paint it a different color, give it a different name, and then think that they are Scriptural. But every organization that is put between the local church and the mission field is headed down the same road as the Southern Baptist Convention, and will ultimately arrive at the same place it has, no matter what name it may bear. To make the support of such a program a test of fellowship between Baptists is unscriptural and foolish to say the least.

It is the normal thing for pastors that are associated with such organizations to keep the church members in ignorance about independent, unaffiliated Baptists, or else to stigmatize them as a small minority of disgruntled, misguided malcontents who are little better than heretics. Yet, only one hundred and fifty years ago, there were very few who were anything other than independent, unaffiliated, missionary Baptists. And the study of church history shows that independent, church centered and directed mission work has been a cardinal belief and general practice among Baptists from the time the Lord called out and constituted His church during His earthly ministry until very recent times. It is the church sent missionaries who are supported by funds sent directly to them by churches, who exemplify the true, Scriptural "cooperative program," and not those who support man-made organizations.

But the question is, Should unscriptural mission programs be made a test of fellowship? Certainly no one should ever condone error in any form, yet, sometimes we are prone to get our gnats and camels mixed up. Some unaffiliated Baptists, who would be sorely shocked if anyone were to suggest that they should fellowship with those who do mission work through boards, have no qualms whatsoever about fellowship with those practicing alien immersion and open communion. But which is the more dangerous to church constitution and polity? Unscriptural mission programs, though not to be condoned, have no corrupting influence upon church constitution, but the practice of alien immersion and open communion operate directly upon the constitution of a church, corrupting it. The unscriptural practice of the ordinances will cause a church to lose its identity as a true church in God's sight almost as quickly as accepting unregenerate persons into its membership.

There are definitely some practices among Baptists today that need to be the test of fellowship, but there is also too much non-fellowship declared because of personalities, party-spirit, incidentals and just plain ignorance. It is time Baptists stopped to consider whether they have been brainwashed into accepting unscriptural teaching and contracting unscriptural alliances, and whether their non-fellowship of the brethren is scriptural. When this is done, the old time Baptist (without any sectarian or party spirit names tacked on to modify it) fellowship will be restored.

III. BAPTISTS ARE BEING BRAINWASHED ABOUT CHURCH UNITY.

Probably no one subject in the religious world occupies as much attention today as does the subject of **church unity**. It is prominent in almost every religious newspaper, radio and television news broadcast, and every religious discussion. Yet in point of fact, it is not so much church unity that is striven for as it is **church union**—the endeavor to bring all denominations into an organic religious union with one another.

The talk about "church unity" sounds good to the religious but carnal mind, but no born-again person who is up on Scripture teaching and church history will dare to align himself with this present day movement. This is because, first of all, it would be a compromise upon Bible principles. Those that cite our Lord's prayer "That they all may be one" (John 17:21), forget that Jesus restricted this when He said, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." There can be no spiritual unity, which is the professed desire of those in this movement, unless there is doctrinal and devotional unity as well. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3), is the question that disqualifies most from ever attaining a Biblical unity.

Second, this would mean only that all churches would have to come back home to "Mother Rome." Indeed, this is the central idea in Rome's invitations to Protestants to sit in on Ecumenical Councils, so called. Protestants may well flock back to Rome, for that is home to them, but what are Baptist representatives doing there? Baptists axe **NOT PROTESTANTS AND NEVER HAVE BEEN**, for they antedated Catholicism by hundreds of years, and they have no business dilly-dallying with such a corrupt system. This idea of a world wide, state-supported and enforced, universal church which Rome has so long promoted, is nothing more than the devil's pipe-dream. And it is hard to understand how any student of the Bible can be gullible enough to try to fellowship with that which Scripture has declared to be "**MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**" (Rev. 17:5).

It is at this point that some gullible but unbelieving soul will no doubt say, "O, the Book of Revelation is too mysterious to use as a proof-test for such a belief." But let us notice that the inspiring Spirit of the Lord gives His own interpretation of Revelation 17. (1) The woman is a great city (v. 18). (2) She is a great city that rules over the kings of the earth (v. 18). No city has ever exerted such rule as has Rome. (3) She rules over many peoples and multitudes and

nations and tongues (v. 15). Again, what system has ever had a rule over so many diverse kinds of people as has Catholicism. (4) Her geographical location is clearly given (v. 9). The seven heads are not seven kings, as some would interpret it, but they "are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." Men may try to make a symbol represent another symbol, but the Lord here interprets the symbol by declaring the substance that it symbolizes. What city is the most renowned city that sits on seven hills? Historically, Rome has been known as the "City of the Seven Hills" for more than two millennia of time. (5) This woman is drunken with the blood of the saints (v. 6). Again may we ask, Whose whole history has been one of bloody persecution of all that dissented from her wicked pretensions? (6) She is noted for her abominations and filthiness (v. 4). "Abomination" in Scripture is often associated with idolatry, as "filthiness" is with immorality. No denomination of professed Christians has had a longer or more extensive history of pride, false doctrine, idolization of saints and angels, and moral impurity than the one that is now inviting all of her Protestant daughters to come home. (7) She is also characterized by her wealth, ornate ritual, pomp and ceremony (v. 4), which again fits no religion so well as it does Roman Catholicism.

Thirdly, prophecy foretells that the Antichrist will not only head up a great world-wide empire, but that he will also be aided in his evil domination of the earth by this "Mystery Babylon" that rides upon the beast that represents the Antichrist's empire of evil (Rev. 17:3). This symbolizes a church-state relationship, which is again one of Rome's most common characteristics throughout the last sixteen hundred years and more. Beginning in 325 A. D. Catholicism has continually ridden and been supported by the State in every nation that she could dominate. The first beast in Revelation 13:1-10 is the Antichrist, but the second beast in Revelation 13:11ff, is the Antichrist's associate, who will probably be a Pope of Rome. The modern "church unity" movement is fitted and directed to fulfill this coming evil. What truly saved person, or sound church could possibly desire to be a part of, or have fellowship with, such a system that is so clearly under the Lord's curse?

Yet, in spite of these Scriptural warnings, some Baptists are rushing to kiss the Papa's toe. How gullible can one get? Rome isn't home for Baptists and never has been. It is time that nominal Baptists woke up! The action of some Baptists would seem to indicate that their brains have been washed, but not their souls.

In the fourth place, there is no Scriptural ground for supposing that the Lord ever intended that His church was to be a single, world wide institution in this dispensation. It is only "in the dispensation of the fullness of times" that He will "gather in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10). Today, there are only local assemblies that bear Christ's name, but carnal man does not like small, insignificant things. He must have everything big, and so constituted that it caters to his pride. And belief in a universal church of some sort is necessary to the modern drive for a union of all churches.

Every passage that is interpreted to teach a universal church in the present time is misinterpreted in one of the following ways. (1) An abstract or generic usage of the Greek word *ekklesia* (church) is interpreted to mean all churches in the aggregate, or, a universal church. But in the New Testament, when the abstract becomes concrete, it always takes the form of a local assembly. (2) The institutional usage of *ekklesia* is sometimes pressed into service to prove a present universal church, as for example in Matthew 16:18. In this passage, the church is viewed as an institution built upon Christ without reference to a given locality, nor to all localities, and without reference to a given assembly or to all assemblies. The principle idea in the institutional usage is that it will continue throughout this age, always having at least one such local assembly at every moment of time.

When men try to make this refer to **ALL CHURCHES** in the aggregate, they misinterpret it, and so, make this verse to be untrue. For if this is viewed as an aggregate of all churches in all

time, it could not be true that "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. The gates of Hades have triumphed over some churches when they were destroyed by persecution, or internal sin and strife caused them to pass out of existence. But viewed simply in an institutional sense, the gates of Hades have not prevailed over the Lord's church as an institution. There has been a continual chain of them in every day of every year of every century since the time that the Lord gave this promise to His churches. The literal rendering of Matthew 28:20, where one such promise was given, is "Behold, I myself am with you all the days to the consummation of the age." This is the word of Him that cannot lie, and we can depend upon it.

(3) Usage of the phrase "the church" is often applied to the supposed universal church which unionists are trying so hard to bring about by their unionizing. But in actuality the epistle from which it is taken limits it to a given church; for example, "the church" (in Ephesus, in Philippi, in Colosse, etc.) If the usage of "the church" in Ephesians 5 proves a universal church, then is not the usage of the phrases "the husband," and "the wife" (Eph. 5:23), likewise a proof of a universal husband and a universal wife? But who will be absurd enough to maintain that? Even if a reference to "the church" could not be applicable to a specified church, it would still mean no more than that it applied to a church in a generic sense, which is the sense in which "the husband" and "the wife" is used in this same place. It is dealing with a genus of beings, not with a specific case.

(4) Passages thought to teach a world wide church comprised of local assemblies are often the result of poor translations. For example (Eph. 2:21), which the A. V. translates "in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord," when rightly rendered according to the Greek, teaches the very opposite, viz., "in whom each individual building fitly framed together," etc.

(5) Passages that are definitely future in fulfillment are sometime used as proof texts of a present universal church, as in Hebrews 12:23.

We have dealt with this matter extensively simply because universal churchism is at the very heart and soul of the present trend toward church unionism, yet this is always based upon a misinterpretation of Scripture. The tendency in this desire however is not toward true "Christian unity," but is rather toward antichristian union. Its end, which prophecy foretells will ultimately come about, will be a universal world church giving its allegiance and worship to the Antichrist, and serving him.

State churches, which demand to be the universal and exclusive church in a nation, have historically been the bloodiest persecutors of Baptists since 325 A. D. when Emperor Constantine first made Catholicism the state church of the Roman Empire. And this is to come about again just as soon as false religionists have brainwashed enough of the world to accomplish their ends. Nominal Baptists, because they are unsaved, will rejoice be a part of this hellish conspiracy, for they have been brainwashed concerning it. True Baptists need to wake up, and to shake themselves out of their lethargy. God's word to His people is "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

The Lord will soon return to manifest that the present endeavor toward a world church union is nothing more than the foolish reasoning of carnal, deceived mankind, who want world wide union without submission to Christ, nor to His laws. There can be no true unity until there is unity of doctrine and devotion to Christ. True unity must begin within the local assembly, in individuals, and between members. When each and every professing Christian has submitted his will to Christ and to His Word, and has been reconciled to every other brother, then will there be true unity, and this without the necessity of organic bonds.

Many Baptists have been brainwashed into believing that any mission plan is all right. Many have been deceived into breaking fellowship with other Christians and churches simply because they did not follow man-made mission programs, or some other unscriptural plan. Many are being deceived by the oratory of man into believing that Baptists should answer to Rome's beck and call. These things can only lead to headache, heartache and backache.

Baptists awake! For you have been lulled into a dangerous sleep by brainwashers. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11). "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13:35-37).

The signs of Christ's coming multiply daily. Now is the time for a clean heart, clean hands, and a clear head, not a brain that is washed of Scripture sense. "Give diligence to approve thyself unto God, a workman unashamed, rightly handling the Word of the Truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), literal rendering.