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# THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

VOLUME XXIII ISSUE 6

JUNE 20, 1999

## 'Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed'

Readers who are near my age must immediately associate my title with Bob Nolan's song, especially as sung by Roy Rogers and the Sons of the Pioneers. Those a mere thirty and under, who know neither the song nor the singers, are the poorer for that lack. For the 'older generation,' I mention that the song was originally written as "tumbling autumn leaves"; had he not changed the words, I doubt you or I would have ever heard it. Words not only have meanings--words convey concepts. Remember that truth as you continue to read this article.

No generation of that people called Baptist is more fittingly described by Bob Nolan's western song than the

The venerable name of Baptist, easily traceable through a trail of martyrs' blood, has a two millennia pedigree that provides a clearly discernible definition.

(Continued on page 3)

## Requested Reprint: The Heritage Baptist Church Is Not 'The Church For Everybody'

Does this title appear to suggest a strange topic to you? It did to some readers in the 1980's, when it was first published.

The title may be more than a little jarring to you and may not be at all what you expected to find written by a pastor. It may even run contrary to what you have (or at least think that you have) always heard from preachers. Perhaps, you may consider this a strange subject to find in a church publi-

(Continued on page 8)



# this and that

Editors: Jerald Manley  
Gary Roland  
Dorothy Gundersen

We trust that the new format of The Baptist Heritage will appeal to our readers. To conform to coming mailing requirements and to do so within the abilities of our present printing equipment required some modifications to the layout of the paper. Hopefully, this present 'evolution' will solve both areas of problems.

Our mailing list is growing monthly, as many of you have been kind enough to send the names of other preachers, family and friends to be added. This has been a pleasant surprise and, frankly, a special encouragement. You may have this paper sent to anyone you choose with our promise that the paper will always be sent without charge and without financial hints or solicitations to anyone who would like to receive it. You are welcomed to add

anyone you desire by sending the name and address to

*This paper will be sent with out charge and without financial hints or solicitations to anyone.*

The Baptist Heritage  
2200 West Michigan Avenue  
Pensacola, Fl. 32526-2379;  
or, you may e-mail me at  
baptistheritage@juno.com.  
However, if the paper

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# this and that

(Continued from page 2)

has arrived at your home or church unexpectedly, please understand that someone believed that you might enjoy it. It has never been our intention to intrude. A request to remove an address is always honored or you may obviously discard the material.

The publication is designed with one purpose—to be a ministry of this church. Any good things resulting from this attempt are due to the grace and mercy of the Lord of the Harvest. All other results are the products of the weakness of our flesh and we deeply regret them. If we knew better, we would not make the mistakes that we do.

Thank you for taking the time to read our efforts. If you receive a blessing, it is, undoubtedly, in spite of us and to His glory.



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This is **VOLUME XXIII** and **ISSUE**  
**NUMBER 6** for **JUNE 20, 1999.**

**REQUESTED REPRINT***(Continued from page 25)*

You and I are in agreement, right? If so, we can stand together and declare that while the Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is open to ANYBODY, the Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is not the church for EVERYBODY.

*While the Heritage Baptist Church Of Pensacola is open to ANYBODY, the Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is not the church for EVERYBODY.*

The Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is now, and, as ordered by the Chief Shepherd, shall continue to be, solely through His grace, a New Testament Church

founded upon the Bible as the sole and final authority for all matters of faith and practice; operating with the autonomy, full, complete, and total, of the local church; where the priesthood of the believer is both believed and practiced; where the Lordship of Jesus Christ is admitted and accepted; where the order is the immersion of believers (upon a credible confession of faith) and reception by the church, to be followed by the Lord's Table; where salvation and security by grace is preached and loved and guarded; and where the separation of church and state is still the watchword.

Pastor Manley

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acknowledgment appreciated.

**Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed***(Continued from page 1)*

contemporaneous melange masquerading as Baptists. Many individuals now assuming the name Baptist seemingly have no concept of what their use of that name implies. Taking the name Baptist is to accept a name that connotes life, but many of those currently carrying that ancient and honored name are themselves, instead, 'grave-yard dead.'

*Baptists, since the days of the apostles, have been willing to die for doctrine.*

The venerable name of Baptist, easily traceable through a trail of martyrs' blood, has a two millennia pedigree that provides a clearly discernible definition. It is an honorable name established by a commitment to specific and distinctive doctrines that have identified individuals and churches, though widely separated in both time and location, as being 'Baptist.'

There are various ways to identify the particular doctrines that have marked these people called Baptist. Perhaps, the easiest is to focus on those peculiar teachings for which men and women have been forced to give their lives. The issue of whether Sunday School should start at nine, nine-thirty or ten may have split Baptist churches, but no Baptist was ever willing to die over the time to start a service. Many are the things that individual Baptists

*(Continued on page 4)*

*Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed**(Continued from page 3)*

have preferred, even to the point of fighting each other; but only the purity of doctrine has called for martyrdom. Baptists, since the days of the apostles, have been willing to die for doctrine and have done so by the millions. Those identifying doctrines that cost them their lives may be summarized very simply. Other Baptists may list them in a different order or state them in other terms, but the result will be the same. Baptists have lived and died contending for certain narrow truths. Whether Bogard, Armitage, Vedder, Christian, Torbet, Cross, Carrol, Newman, Orchard, Jarrel, Cramp, Mason, Hoard, Parker or Manley, Baptist and other historians affirm that Baptist men and women died because they believed these truths.

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*The fact of simply holding a belief in these (as I list them) seven doctrines has been the death sentence for millions in the past*

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1. The Bible is the sole and final authority for all matters of faith and practice.
2. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, and He alone is the Lord, the Chief Shepherd, of the church.
3. The local church is autonomous.
4. Every individual believer is a priest before God and each has personal soul liberty.
5. Baptism is for believers only, having nothing

*(Continued on page 5)**REQUESTED REPRINT**(Continued from page 24)*

in immorality without facing discipline, which is a convention bound, an association tied, or a fellowship dominated church, where having unity is more important than being godly, where a deacon board controls the church where the pastor is the dictator, where the pastor is a puppet on a string, where "approved" denominational materials are used, which is a perfect church, where there are no faults, where there are no problems, where there are no needs;

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*It is an honorable name established by a relationship to specific and distinctive doctrines that have identified individuals and churches, though widely separated in both time and location, as being 'Baptist.'*

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**THAT PERSON SHOULD NOT CONSIDER JOINING THE HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH OF PENSACOLA.**

One who is seeking that kind of a church, may be a good friend or neighbor, a fine co-worker, even a born-again believer; however, he or she will not be happy as a member of this church. That person, instead, will be very unhappy and, quite quickly, will become most miserable.

*That is both a guarantee and a promise.*

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**REQUESTED REPRINT***(Continued from page 23)*

where the King James Version has been replaced,  
 where "baptistic" has replaced Baptist in practice,  
 where doctrine is a subject to be debated  
 where practice is subject to cultural adaptations,  
 where cultic teachings are tolerated,  
 where the charismatic movement is acceptable,  
 where "anything" is tolerated in the name of missions,  
 where fellowship is extended to those who compromise doctrine,  
 which is a "spiritual social club,"  
 where the so-called "Christian rock" or contemporary music is used,  
 where political activism  
 in marches and picketing is endorsed and promoted,  
 where he or she can be "at ease in Zion,"  
 where standards of separation are ignored  
 where members can live

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*Taking the name Baptist is to accept a name that connotes life but many of those carrying that ancient and honored name are themselves, instead, "grave-yard dead."*

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*(Continued on page 25)***Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed***(Continued from page 4)*

- ing to do with obtaining salvation, and is by immersion administered through the authority of the church upon a credible confession of faith by the individual seeking baptism.
6. Salvation is by grace and by grace alone.
  7. There is to be maintained a separation of church and state.

The fact of simply holding a belief in these (as I list them) seven doctrines has been the death sentence for millions in the past, is the charge bringing imprisonment and/or death today for tens of thousands, and will be a capital offense in the dark days yet to be on this earth. The persecution of Baptists started early and is not yet over.

In our day, this historic and honorable name has been usurped by brigands that have no concept of the meaning behind the word. Those presently using the name fall into several categories: *those who are; those who are not and know they are not; those who are not, but who think they are; and those who use the name, but do not know what they are.* Without apology or hesitation, I write that a multitude of preachers, churches and schools that

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*The persecution of Baptists started early and is not yet over.*

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lay claim to being Baptist in 1999 do so under false pretenses with a deliberate intent

*(Continued on page 6)*

*Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed**(Continued from page 5)*

to deceive. They do not walk in the footsteps of Keach, Spurgeon, Clarke, Bunyan, Ireland, Backus, Carey, Pendleton, Judson, Graves, Holmes, Carroll, Doane, Lowery, Norris, Lee, Rice, Truett, or the multitude of others whose names would fill this volume and many more like it. They are not Baptists in any accurate use of the word. Instead, they have swooped like vultures upon the doctrine of soul liberty, separating it from all other truth, thereby wresting it as an occasion to the flesh. In doing so they have perverted that blessed truth into a lying license to believe anything they please and to do everything they might choose.

Soul liberty, the priesthood of the believer, has never been believed or taught by true Baptists so as to supersede the Lordship of Jesus Christ or the supremacy of the written word of God. Every soul is individually accountable before God for him/herself; but no soul is free to do that which is right in his/her own eyes in direct or indirect conflict with the revealed will of God as recorded in His word. True Baptists are not spiritual anarchists. They willingly bow the knee to Christ, but only to Him. Pseudo-Baptists, frauds, and phonies abound in such numbers that the use of the name is no guarantee of how it is being used or what it is representing. No

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*True Baptists are not spiritual anarchists.*

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*(Continued on page 7)**REQUESTED REPRINT**(Continued from page 22)*

repentant and continued indulgence in doctrinal or moral heresy ought to be "good and sufficient" grounds to discipline anyone from the membership of a church. Certainly, we should agree that these restrictive barriers are both right and proper to be erected. Only a person with a vested interest in opposing their application would raise any objections to their implementation. These are obviously sound in logic and in reason as well as biblical in mandate. Yet, are there not also other barriers, which are as valid, reasonable, and scriptural?

CAN IT BE THAT THE SUBJECT IS NOT FINISHED YET?

I submit that the following barriers are scriptural; and, therefore, entirely as right, proper, valid, and reasonable as the ones we have already accepted. If so, then these additional barriers are as firm, as restrictive, and as conditional as were the previously accepted barriers. The conclusion is obvious. The Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is not the church for everyone.

IF A PERSON IS LOOKING FOR A CHURCH--which supports an interdenominational or ecumenical program,

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*The Heritage Baptist Church of Pensacola is not the church for everyone.*

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(I hope!). A married couple once presented themselves for membership in a church on a Sunday morning. That very couple had told me during the previous week the following facts.

The Husband: "Pastor, my wife is not saved. She is mentally unbalanced."

The Wife: "Pastor, my husband is possessed by a demon. He is not saved. Besides, I am in love with '\_\_\_\_' and when his wife dies and God kills my husband, I will marry him."

Church membership must be restrictive and remains conditional.

Even so, Sunday morning, they came down the aisle, smiling and requesting membership in the church. Needless to write, I could not and

therefore did not present them to the church as candidates for acceptance as members.

ALL THIS SOUNDS BOTH SENSIBLE AND REASONABLE TO ME; HOW ABOUT TO YOU?

I believe that I have provided sufficient evidence to prove my premise. Church membership must be restrictive and remains conditional. Therefore, will you not agree with me that unrepentant and continued indulgence in doctrinal heresy as well as moral heresy (impurity) ought to be "good and sufficient" grounds to prevent anyone from receiving baptism and church membership; and, that un-

*(Continued on page 23)***Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed***(Continued from page 6)*

No honest soul would attempt to pass him/herself as a Baptist baby-sprinkler or a Baptist Charismatic.

honest soul would attempt to represent him/herself as a Baptist baby-sprinkler or a Baptist Charismatic, but such abnormalities and perversions are attempting to be passed in

the currency of the day. Baptists, among other things, do not 'speak in unknown tongues,' do not receive 'special words and new revelations,' do not deny the virgin birth, do not mock the blood of Christ, and do not hang around with those who do.

Some preachers, churches, and schools (*and I must and do credit them*) with more honor and integrity than these counterfeits who continue to attempt to pass as Baptist, carefully claim only to being 'baptistic.' While they do appropriate some particular truth and openly label it as Baptist and that in itself is a compliment to Baptists, one must acknowledge that a difference always exists between reality and imitation. I rejoice that they have seen partial truth: I only desire that they might accept the whole truth. The admixture of the errors to which they continue to hold separates them from Baptists *even in their own mind*. I do not challenge their salvation nor do I question their sincerity; but, they are baptistic and I am a Baptist. I have never cared to have much involvement with things that

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cation. After all, is not the name of the game to have as many in attendance as possible? Is not everyone welcome in a church?

Should there ever be any barriers erected to prevent anyone from attending the services of a church or to prevent them from later becoming a member of that church? Are not the church doors always open to everyone? If these questions express

the internal opposition you are feeling to the title, perhaps you and I could begin by finding some common ground in this statement: "Barriers should never be erected to restrict any sincere person from

*The admixture of the errors to which they continue to hold separates them from Baptists even in their own mind.*

attending the public services of a church."

At least, that statement expresses what my private and my public position has been for over thirty years. Without regard to whom or to what he or she might be, anyone is welcome to attend the public services of this church and to hear the gospel, if he or she comes to the service in sincerity.

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES MAY MAKE MY TITLE SEEM NOT TO BE QUITE SO STRANGE AS YOU FIRST THOUGHT.

Surely, you would agree that a person should not be welcomed who comes for the intentional pur-

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## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

(Continued from page 20)

*Where one to remove the fabricated stories, the joke-book frivolity, the one-liners, and the book found illustrations, what is left would not convict an Arkansas hound dog of having fleas.*

true. He/she keeps them packed up in the old kit bag and carries them around all day.

"Nowhere to go, but I'll find just where the trail will end"—untaught, Baptists no longer see the field white unto harvest and the laborers few;

they have eyes only for the pursuit of pleasure in the enjoyment of comfort.

"I know when night has gone that a new world is born at dawn."—Baptists do not seem to realize they are living in the darkest of nights. They continue to plod along thinking everything is fine and the world is getting better, becoming a more comfortable place in which to live today than it was yesterday. Frankly, they are not looking for the dawn of the Lord's return to bring a new world. They are quite content, following in the footsteps of Demas, to enjoy this present one.

"I'll keep rolling along, deep in my heart is a song"—the modern Baptist still sings. However, the great songs of grace and the blest hope of Glory that resided in the heart of the Psalmist and those of Baptists through the centuries have been replaced with a new tune. Of course, that new tune is "Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweeds."

Reprint permission always granted; acknowledgment appreciated,

Jerald L. Manley ☩



## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

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ration time' and 'the ability to be fresh' at the same time is the attractive sales pitch. I once asked Dr. Frank Bumpus how he managed to stay fresh in the pulpit week after week, year after year. He replied that he always found it wise to take a bath on Saturday night and to use a good deodorant. Better to follow his advice than to deliver warmed over, pre-cooked microwave meals, gleaned, not from study and prayer, but received in the mail for a buck-fifty each. To borrow a phrase used in a different context from Torrence, the average sermon today is as "weak as a rained-on bee."

Brethren, while the old cowboy song well describes the trend of contemporary Baptists, the sad fact is that the song actually contains more biblical theology than the average 'new millennium bound' Baptist knows and presents far better preaching than he/she hears from the pulpit. For instance, consider these lines from the song.

"See them tumbling down, pledging their love to the ground"—the tumbling and drifting is described as coming from a love of the ground, certainly not a yearning for heaven. How, and why, have Baptists stopped singing "This World Is Not My Final Home?"

"Cares of the past are behind"—the average Baptist does not believe that to be

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*Rather than preaching the life-giving word of the eternal God, preachers are espousing warmed-over Freud, gleaned from the latest self-esteem book.*

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pose of disturbing or disrupting the service. I would not hesitate to tell a noisy drunk to be silent or to leave the service; and if he did not conform to one or the other, he (or she) would quickly find that the sheriff and I both take a very dim view of a person creating a disturbance within a church service. This is true, though I have preached with inebriated individuals in attendance.

I make no apology for stating that should a person attend a service and suddenly decide that he or she is "led" to interrupt that service by speaking in an "unknown" tongue, I would be "led" to interpret that "unknown" tongue in a "known" tongue

and dismiss his or her service however necessary. I say this though I know that charismatics often have been present in services where I have preached (including from this pulpit).

I have never permitted smoking in a preaching service. Once, many years ago, while preaching in a youth camp, I had a young man escorted from a service because of that very issue.

Would you not now agree that there are indeed certain activities and certain attire and certain conduct (and unquestionably not all have been

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*Anyone is welcome to attend the public services of this church and to hear the gospel, if he or she comes to the service in sincerity.*

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listed) that could and should be barred from a church service?

If there are any valid and proper reasons (and surely you must now agree that there are such reasons) for placing a firm barrier in the way of any particular person attending or remaining in a service, there unquestionably must be equally valid reasons for preventing a particular person from obtaining membership in a church or retaining that mem-

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*Doctrinal heresies must be considered valid and sufficient grounds to prevent any person from being received into the membership of a church.*

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bership once it has been obtained. (If possible, do not judge me for having written such a harsh judgmental statement, because, as you know, it is written "judge not, lest ye be judged.")

**WOULD YOU CONSIDER DOCTRINAL HERESY TO BE A VALID REASON TO DENY MEMBERSHIP?**

Doctrinal heresies must be considered valid and sufficient grounds to prevent any person from being received into the membership of a church. Years ago, I discovered a "church" in Colorado that openly stated that it allowed anyone to join that "church" and therefore had both saved and unsaved members! Such a concept is at once ridiculous and repulsive. No person is a valid, proper, qualified can-

*(Continued on page 11)***Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed***(Continued from page 18)*

Baptists are no longer 'people of the Book'; they are people of programs. Promotions have replaced revivals as a means of attracting people. Individuals are not drawn through the power of prayer and the 'foolishness of preaching'; instead, they are assembled through the slickness of the advertising, the relevancy of the entertainment, and the foolishness in the pulpit. Many so-called sermons are far more entertaining than convicting. Were one to remove the fabricated stories, the joke-book frivolity, the one-liners, and the book-found illustrations, what is left would not convict an Arkansas hound dog of having fleas. Unbelievably, I have heard and read sermons delivered by Baptist preachers in which the only scripture found was that of the text. All else was entertainment and the people love to have it so.

Where amusement is not the chosen device, pop-psychology is. Whatever was consuming the attention of the world last winter becomes the summer message of the Baptist preacher. Rather than preaching the life-giving word of the eternal God, preachers are espousing warmed-over Freud, gleaned from the latest self-esteem book.

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*Preachers in Baptist pulpits reflect Willow Creek and Wal-Mart more than they resemble Antioch and Berea.*

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Almost weekly, I receive an invitation to purchase a 'plan' guaranteed to double our attendance. If I follow every detail and do not succeed, I can receive my money back. No week's mail fails to deliver an offer of sermons for a year. 'Reduction of prepa-

*(Continued on page 20)*

## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

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The problem with Baptists today is found in two words: Baptist preachers. Pastors have become executives; churches have become enterprises. The goal is an empire: the method is organization. Ministerial success is measured in only two ways, the size of the church and the size of the crowd. 'How many?' is the only question asked.

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*Baptist preachers. Pastors have become executives; churches have become enterprises.*

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Baptist churches have been 'super-sized.' Baptist churches no longer have pulpits for preaching; they have stages for entertainment. The pulpits of wood (Nehemiah 8:4-6) have been replaced with removable, plastic, crossed-shaped podiums. Churches have constructed gymnasiums costing millions in order to attract the clamoring crowds, while widows and orphans are neglected. Pure religion and undefiled is not fulfilled in the catering to the exercise of the flesh. Services in Baptist churches reflect Willow Creek and Wal-Mart more than they resemble Antioch and Berea. Services are choreographed. Sermons are calculated. Preachers are interested in production at the lowest bottom line.

Without faithful shepherds, Baptists have become sheep without folds. The importance of the church to Baptists has diminished. In days past, Baptists were known as 'folks who are there when the doors are opened.' They came together because they were drawn by the longing for fellowship with the saints and the desire for the preaching of the Book.

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*I once refused to present a man for membership in this church because he plainly confessed that he could not believe that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh, the very Son of very God.*

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didate suitable for church membership who cannot give a clear and credible confession of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her personal Saviour. It is absurd to contemplate otherwise.

I refused to present a man for membership in this church because he plainly confessed that he could not believe that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh, the very Son of very God. Because of that heresy, he was not a proper subject for baptism and I told him so. I must admit that my refusal to present him led to 'complications' but it was the proper course of action. Known belief in any heresy would also be a proper reason for denying membership to any individual. I recall, in a new pastorate, a member who was greatly offended when I preached "salvation and security by grace." When she "informed" me of her disapproval and "advised" me she was Pentecostal, I reminded her that the church was a Baptist church and that Baptists historically had believed in both grace and security and asked her why she had ever decided to join a Baptist church in the first place? She said, "The pastor who was here before you came said it made no difference what I believed about se-

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curity."

I asked her if I could show her from her Bible why Baptists believe in security and she replied, "Absolutely not!" She declared that she would be

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*She declared that she would be happier in a Pentecostal church. I replied that I did not know whether she would or not, but I was positive that she would no longer be happy in that particular Baptist church.*

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happier in a Pentecostal church. I replied that I did not know whether she would or not, but I was positive that she would no longer be happy in that particular Baptist church.

I will not knowingly present anyone for membership who has not received believer's

baptism under the authority of a local New Testament Church. I recall a person who thought that the sprinkling she had been given as a newborn baby ought to be sufficient for anyone; after all, she herself was satisfied. I also have known those who thought that "any" baptism ought to be adequate, even if it was a baptism to "wash away sins" or only "spirit" baptism.

Let this truth be clearly understood, a person can (and has the God given right to) believe anything he or she desires to believe. Each individual has that right and that opportunity, which, by the way, is the Baptist doctrine of soul liberty, the

*(Continued on page 13)***Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed***(Continued from page 16)*

tists by conviction and not through convenience. Today, many are baptized into a Baptist church and, thereafter, call themselves Baptists, although they can neither define nor defend what a Baptist is.

Preaching is so pitiful that a growth industry has arisen to provide crowd-drawing sermons for Baptist preachers. Several organizations are willing to provide packages of well-prepared 'promotions and sermons' especially designed for over-extended preachers and to do so at a most modest fee. The solicitations that regularly come to my attention include several formats from basic to complete. As I was making a purchase in a hardware store recently, the salesman asked "Do you get any of your sermons from the Internet?" I remarked that I stayed away from the Internet since I still felt lost using the telephone when the operator did not ask, "Number please." He then advised me that he had read where most Southern Baptist preachers were getting their messages from the net. Perhaps that is true; if so, then it is tragic. Somehow, I cannot imagine R. G. Lee, Vance Havner, or George Truett

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*There was a day when Baptists became Baptists by conviction and not through convenience.*

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preaching a message obtained via the Internet. Those men received their sermons on their knees with an opened Bible.

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## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

(Continued from page 15)

the only mention of the word 'election' in a Baptist pulpit is during the castigation of some particular candidate or officeholder.

Doctrinal messages are considered antediluvian and impractical. Sermons on Baptist distinctives are extinct. It

is embarrassing that many Baptist preachers cannot identify Baptist distinctives and do not own a Baptist theology. It is considered divisive to preach doctrine. It is most likely that the typical Baptist preacher could not define the differences between Biblical, Historical, Dogmatic, Systematic, and Practical Theology. I recall asking several young Baptist preachers if they would list the fundamentals of the faith and found they could not. I remember asking an ordination candidate why he was seeking Baptist ordination and hearing him reply, "I believe in baptism by immersion." Even now, I see an interview where the pastor of one of the largest 'Baptist' churches in America stated that he is a Baptist because he joined the nearest church after he was saved and it was Baptist. How does he define 'Baptist?'

There was a day when Baptists became Bap-

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*After several generations of concise, neat "three alliterated points and a poem" conversations from the pulpit, most believers claiming to be Baptists would not recognize sound doctrine were they to meet on the street.*

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(Continued on page 17)

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priesthood of the believer. However, membership in this church is, and should be, contingent on doctrinal integrity and agreement with the doctrinal statement of the church.

WOULD YOU NOT ALSO DENY MEMBERSHIP TO SOMEONE INVOLVED IN MORAL HERESY?

Surely, you would not wish me to present anyone for church membership, if I have knowledge that the person is living an impure moral life (as in adultery, living with someone "without benefit" of marriage, homosexuality, lesbianism, murder, stealing, etc.). While any individual is welcomed to hear the gospel, including those who would come under that listing, church membership is rightly and biblically denied to all who are engaging in these sins. Sadly, I also have had to take that exact step.

COULD THERE BE ANY OTHER POSSIBLE REASONS TO DENY MEMBERSHIP?

Obviously, I have not attempted to cover every conceivable, reasonable ground upon which to deny membership and could not do so, even if I tried. There are many and varied situations that might arise, some occurring only once in a lifetime

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*Membership in this church is, and should be, contingent on doctrinal integrity and agreement with the doctrinal statement of the church.*

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(Continued on page 22)

## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

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*(Continued from page 7)*

As Dr. Art Wilson wrote, "some churches are dropping the name Baptist and others ought to do so."

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are 'ic-y'; I much prefer that which retains purity.

Other preachers, churches, and schools have finally done something with some measure of decency and integrity after

years of misrepresentation and prevarication. As Dr. Art Wilson wrote, "some churches are dropping the name Baptist and others ought to do so." For those preachers who have come out of the closet, confessing that they have stolen Baptist money through willful deception, and who acknowledge that they are no longer (and, likely, never were) Baptists, I offer my gratitude for their 'honesty,' late though it be. Perhaps, having 'converted' themselves, they would now like to 'out' others who are even now as they once were. Were not men who flew false colors in order to capture the treasures others possessed known as pirates? Many the once stalwart Baptist church that now sails under a different banner because of a pirate in the pulpit.

However, there remains another dangerous group flying the Baptist flag. Blown by the winds of satanic influence, caught on the tide of contemporary trends, and tossed by the waves of the advice of experts, the super-majority of today's Baptists might be described, at best, as a school of debili-

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## Drifting Along With The Tumbling Tumbleweed

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tated jellyfish and, at worst, a floating assembly of dead seaweed. Jellyfish, even debilitated, are a living organism; drifting, dead seaweed is merely the residence of some life forms. These are folk far more like the tumbleweeds of the west than the cedars of Lebanon. They have no doctrinal anchor to weather the tempests and no principles of truth to root them in place to withstand the storms. They carry the name Baptist, but the 'hirelings' who have replaced the shepherds have failed to teach them the doctrines of the word of God. Ill fed and malnourished, they are easily victims of deceitful wolves.

Where truth is not taught, error will be exalted.

When truth is rejected, a lie will be received.

For too long, Baptist pulpits have failed to preach the whole counsel of God. After several generations of concise, neat "three alliterated points and a poem" conversations from the pulpit, most believers claiming to be Baptists would not recognize sound doctrine were they to meet on the street. In the typical Baptist church, the sermons of the past year did not include the 'old' words of justification, propitiation, providence, Godhead or trinity, holiness, or sanctification. Often

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*Today's Baptists might be described, at best, as a school of debilitated jellyfish and, at worst, a floating assembly of dead seaweed.*

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