

Thrasher - Barr Debate

on
the Missionary Baptist Church
and
the church of Christ

Thomas N. Thrasher
&
Vernon L. Barr



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Thrasher-Barr Debate
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Introduction

Until the last few decades, religious debates between representatives of Baptist churches and churches of Christ were frequent events in this country, particularly in the South. Many of them had audiences numbering in the thousands. Sometimes two or three sessions were conducted each day. Sadly, this is no longer the case. For whatever reasons, few religious leaders are willing to stand in public defense of what they say they believe the Bible teaches. Fortunately, the records of several such discussions are still available in printed form.

The present volume contains the text of a written debate between Mr. Vernon L. Barr of the Missionary Baptist Church and Mr. Thomas N. Thrasher of the church of Christ. It was conducted from 1971 to 1973, and originally published in 1973 by the Gospel Defender Publishing Company.

Mr. Barr was recognized by some of his brethren as the leading debater among Missionary Baptists after the death of Mr. Ben M. Bogard in 1951. He participated in 56 debates, several of which were published. He was a long-time resident of Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Thrasher began preaching in 1966. He has participated in 100 formal debates, twelve of which have been published. At the time this debate began, he was twenty-three years old and conducting only his second formal debate. He lives in Decatur, Alabama.

The subjects for discussion were expressed in "general church" propositions:

**The Missionary Baptist Church, of which I am a member,
is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.**

Vernon L. Barr affirms & Thomas N. Thrasher denies

**The church of Christ, of which I am a member,
is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.**

Thomas N. Thrasher affirms & Vernon L. Barr denies



Vernon L. Barr & Thomas N. Thrasher

Proposition # 1

**The Missionary Baptist Church, of which I am a member,
is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.**

Vernon L. Barr affirms

Thomas N. Thrasher denies

Barr's First Affirmative

Under the agreement signed by Mr. Thrasher and myself I proceed to prove that “The Missionary Baptist Church” located at 2414 South Buckner Boulevard, in Dallas, Texas is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice. Mr. Thrasher is probably laboring under the false assumption that I am a member of a large universal church of some sort. But I am a member of a local congregation, named above. The Bible does not speak of a universal church of any sort, visible or invisible, here on the earth.

The proposition which I am to affirm reads: “The Missionary Baptist Church of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.” It is my duty to define the proposition, but as all can see, it needs little defining. By “The Missionary Baptist Church” I mean the church that meets for worship at 2414 South Buckner Blvd., in Dallas, Texas. This is the church and the only church of which I am a member. I mean by it being scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice just that. It originated according to the teachings of the Scriptures. It teaches the doctrines the Church Jesus started during His personal ministry taught. It practices as the early church of our Lord practiced.

Jesus began calling out His Church or “Called out group” at the Sea of Galilee. The record is given in Matthew 4:18-22. He called Simon Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother from their fishing nets to follow Him. They did follow Him, and thus we have the divine record of the beginning of the Lord’s Church as an institution. He promised that the “gates of Hell would not prevail against” His Church as an institution (Matthew 16:18). The Missionary Baptist Church, 2414 South Buckner Blvd., Dallas, Texas is just such an institution as Jesus brought into being at the Sea of Galilee, with the same foundation as the first one, Jesus Christ being that foundation (1 Cor. 3:11).

Jesus Christ called His disciples to Himself as He had gone up into a mountain as recorded in Mark 3:13-19, and it was the same group He began to call at the Sea of Galilee. It was on the

mountain that He ordained the twelve to be with Him and to preach. We also find the record of this happening in Luke 6:12-16. In 1 Cor. 12:28, Paul tells us that God set the apostles first in the church, and all should be able to see that when Jesus ordained the twelve to be apostles on the mountain top that there was a church there for them to be set in.

The same group or church that Jesus began to “call out” at the Sea of Galilee, and that He called to Himself on the mountain top, where He ordained the twelve to be apostles, He commissioned to preach among all nations as recorded in Luke 24:46-48. To this same group or Church He said in verse 49 of Luke 24: “And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Please remember that Jesus instructed this “called out group” or His church to tarry in Jerusalem until they were empowered from on high.

After Jesus was crucified, buried, and risen from the dead, He assembled together with the same group we have studied about above, the church He began to call out at the Sea of Galilee. He told them in Acts 1:4 not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father which they had heard of Him. He again told them in Acts 1:8 that they would receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon them, and that they would witness unto Him throughout all the earth. This same group or church, in obedience to the instructions of Jesus, waited in an upper room in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:13-14). In Acts 2:1-4 we find this same group or church together in one place in Jerusalem receiving the promise of the Father, being baptized in the Holy Spirit, and thus empowered to witness for Jesus in all the world. It is said of the Lord’s called-out group or church in Acts 2:42: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

I believe all Bible readers will see that the ones who are mentioned in Acts 2:42 are the same group Jesus began to call at the Sea of Galilee, whom He had with Him all during His personal ministry, and who were with Him just before He ascended back to heaven. It is the same group He told to tarry in Jerusalem; it is the same group that received the promise of the Father on Pentecost; and it is the same group that continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine. Now please read Acts 2:47: “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” I believe it should be plain to all that the church referred to here is the same group or church that Jesus had with Him during His personal ministry beginning with the call of the first members at the Sea of Galilee.

Missionary Baptists have ever contended that Jesus brought into existence His own church during His personal ministry. I believe this is proven from the Scriptures given in this article. We do not contend that the Church Jesus started during His personal ministry as an institution is still in existence itself. That is, we know that all the members of the first church are dead physically, and that same body or church no longer exists. But we believe that like churches or institutions are in existence, and that such churches have been here on the earth in every age since Jesus started the first one, and that such churches will continue to be here until Jesus comes again. This is proven by Ephesians 3:21: “Unto Him [Jesus] be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” If Jesus is to be glorified in the church throughout all ages then there must be churches here in every age of the world. Missionary Baptists believe that Ephesians 3:21 and other Scriptures teach us that the Lord has had churches on this earth in every age since Jesus started the first one. We believe all the churches of our Lord in every age are and have been patterned after the one Jesus Christ Himself started. The Missionary Baptist

Church worshipping at 2414 South Buckner Blvd. in Dallas, Texas is patterned after the one Jesus started as I purpose to show in this discussion. The Missionary Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas does possess the Bible characteristics of the Church Jesus started during His personal ministry.

The Missionary Baptist Church I defend in this debate, as other Missionary Baptist churches, contend that Jesus is the founder of His own church, and that He is the Head of Missionary Baptist churches. Col. 1:18, “And He [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.” We Missionary Baptists acknowledge no founder but Christ, and we have never recognized any but Jesus as Head over His churches. If Jesus Christ is not the founder and Head of Missionary Baptist churches then I ask Mr. Thrasher in his reply to this speech to please name the founder and head of Missionary Baptist churches.

The Missionary Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas and other Missionary Baptist churches accept the New Testament and nothing else as their rule of faith and practice. We are not governed by human laws written by men, but we are governed by the Word of God. The Missionary Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas and other such churches possess the Bible foundation, and that foundation is Jesus Christ.

Now, let me speak of the foundation as regards doctrine. Eph. 2:19-20, “The foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone.” Missionary Baptists claim the teaching of the apostles and the prophets, as being the doctrinal foundation of their churches. We Missionary Baptists teach that the very same plan of salvation we preach was preached by the ancient prophets, as well as the apostles.

Acts 10:43, “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” In the scripture above the apostles appealed to the Old Testament prophets—who taught that, through His name, every believer in Him, was to receive, and would receive remission of sins.

The Missionary Baptist Church is scriptural because we accept into the membership of our church only those who are scripturally prepared. To be scripturally prepared for church membership they must be children of God—“ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” Gal. 3:26. If they are not taken in as children of God, then they are taken in as children of the devil. We will wait to see if Mr. Thrasher believes in taking in children of the devil to make children of God out of them.

The Missionary Baptist Church believes the sinner is justified by faith in Jesus Christ, without any work of law of any sort. “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). “Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). The love of God for a lost world is the moving cause of our justification; the atonement of Jesus Christ is the procuring cause; and faith is the instrumental cause. One was never saved by faith in obeying one of the ordinances, but all who are saved are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Luke 7:50, “Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.” The Missionary Baptist Church contends and will ever contend that one must come to Jesus Christ by faith in order to be saved, although we teach that all who have come to Jesus Christ for salvation should live obedient lives. Jesus made it very plain that the sinner must come to Him for salvation. John 5:39-40, “Search the scriptures for in them ye think ye have

eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.” Jesus Christ is the life giver, and he gives spiritual life or salvation only to those who come to Him for life. Heb. 7:25, “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost **that come unto God by Him** [emphasis mine, VLB] seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” 1 John 5:12, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” To have the Son the sinner must come to Jesus, the life giver, by faith in order to have spiritual life or salvation.

1 John 3:14, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” Love for the brethren is proof that one has passed from death unto life, or that one is justified or saved. Romans 5:5 says: “Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” Missionary Baptists believe in a heartfelt religion. We believe there is **feeling** in love. Does Mr. Thrasher believe that love for the brethren is evidence of salvation? Some of his brethren seem to ridicule feeling as an evidence of salvation.

Note 1 John 4:7—“Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” In this instance we find love before baptism, because to baptize a man hating God is ridiculous and out of the question. But the one in 1 John 4:7 is born of God and knows God. Does my honorable opponent believe in an internal evidence of pardon?

The Missionary Baptist Church observes church government as prescribed in the Bible. We claim the Bible and the Bible alone as an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice for the Lord’s churches. Jesus Christ during His personal ministry gave a rule of discipline to His church, then in existence, as recorded in Matthew 18:15-17.

From Scriptures given previously in this speech we find that there is a succession of churches like the one Jesus started during His personal ministry. My contention is that The Missionary Baptist Church, 2414 South Buckner Blvd., and many other Missionary Baptist Churches like her are successors to the church Jesus started during His personal ministry. A succession of the first church must exist somewhere. Whether one can trace it by uninspired history or not, that succession does exist according to the teachings of the Bible. I have shown and will continue to show that the succession falls to Missionary Baptist churches by inheritance. No church originating since the time of Christ and His apostles upon earth can possibly be a true church of the living God.

Let me give you the testimony of two of the most learned historians in the Kingdom of Holland, Ypeig and Dermout, appointed to write the history of the Dutch Reformed Church. These two distinguished Pedobaptists had access to all the archives and libraries of Germany. They affirm that the “Baptists who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses; and have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society, which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages.” This quotation is from the *Religious Encyclopedia*. In the *American Cyclopaedia*, page 596 we find: “The Baptists, properly defined, are those who hold that the baptism of Christian believers is of universal obligation, and practice accordingly. And they hold this because they acknowledge no master but Christ; no rule of faith but His word; no baptism but that which is preceded and hallowed by personal piety; no church

but that which is the body of Christ, pervaded, governed, and animated by his spirit. Whatever diversities of opinion are found among them, these are their common and characteristic principles; by these they are known and distinguished in every country, and in every age,”

Mr. Alexander Campbell, head and founder of the Modern Reformation, now variously wearing several different church names, said in his debate with Mr. McCalla, these words: “Clouds of witnesses attest the fact, that before the reformation from popery, and from the apostolic age, to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and the practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced.”

Even the greatest enemy to Baptists among ecclesiastical historians, Dr. Mosheim, is constrained to say, Vol. 4, Page 424: “**The true origin** of that sect which **acquired** the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism, to those that came over to their communion, and derived the name of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity is **hid** in the **remote depths** of antiquity, and is of consequence difficult to be ascertained.” (*Campbell-McCalla Debate*, pp. 378-379; emphasis mine, VLB). There is abundant proof in public libraries everywhere that the ancient Anabaptists finally became known as Baptists. They finally dropped the Ana and became known as Baptists.

Mr. Alexander Campbell, Head and Founder of the self-styled “Church of Christ,” tells the truth in several statements in print about who composes the true churches. For instance, he said in the book he wrote on baptism, page 409, editions 1851 and 1853: “The Baptist denomination in **all ages** and all countries has been, as a body, the constant asserters of the rights of man and the liberty of conscience. They have often been persecuted by Pedobaptists; but they never politically persecuted, though they have had it in their power.” (emphasis mine, VLB).

In a book titled, *Crossing the Centuries*, which was published in 1912 by the Educational Association of Springfield, Mass., edited by Wm. King, and assisted by Catholic J. Cardinal Gibbons and Patrick J. Healy, and two ex-presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, we find this concerning Baptists: “Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers. These people comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek churches, have had an unbroken continuity of existence from apostolic days down through the centuries. Throughout this long period they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands, yet they swerved not from their New Testament Faith, Doctrine and Adherence.”

I am glad and thankful to God that He privileges me to defend the Missionary Baptist Church, 2414 South Buckner Blvd., Dallas, Texas and her sister churches throughout the land against the attack of any and all.

The *Illustrated Book of All Religions* (page 29) says: “The origin of the Baptists is claimed to have been in apostolic times. They claim no such continuity as is involved in apostolical succession. They do not assert that there has always been an organized or associated denomination, but that at all times and in all quarters of the Christian world there have been congregations and individual teachers who have strenuously upheld the immersion of believers.... The American Baptists deny that they owe their origin to Roger Williams. The English Baptists will not grant that John Smyth or Thomas Helwysse was their founder. The

Welsh Baptists strenuously contend that they received their creed in the first century, from those who had obtained it direct from the Apostles themselves. The Dutch Baptists trace their spiritual pedigree up to the same source. The German Baptists maintained that they were older than the reformation, older than the corrupt hierarchy which they sought to reform. The Waldensian Baptists boasted an ancestry far older than Waldo, older than the most ancient of their predecessors in the vales of Piedmont. So, too, may we say of the Lollards, Henricians, Paterines, Paulicans, Donatists, and other ancient Baptists, that they claim an origin more ancient than that of the men or the circumstances from which they derived their peculiar appellations.”



Thrasher’s First Negative

With great joy I enter into the denial of the proposition that is before us, which Mr. Barr has endeavored to prove in his first affirmative speech. I deeply regret that there is a need for such discussions as this. If all men were willing simply to open-mindedly study, accept, and practice what is revealed in the inspired word of God, we could be a united people and serve God together.

The differences between us in this discussion do not spring from contradictions in the Bible, but rather from the unwillingness of either Mr. Barr or myself to teach and practice what is taught in the Scriptures, Mr. Barr is affirming that “the Missionary Baptist Church ... is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.” I am denying the accuracy of this affirmation on **scriptural** grounds. If the Missionary Baptist Church of which Mr. Barr is a member, or any other Missionary Baptist Church, can be shown to be identical to the New Testament church in origin, doctrine, and practice, then I shall immediately admit my error and stand with my opponent in defense of that institution. However, if I am able to identify the church of Christ of which I am a member, and other congregations like it, as being “scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice,” then I would expect any honest person to willingly become a member of this organization. Let us examine Mr. Barr’s affirmative speech.

In defining the terms of the proposition, Mr. Barr says that the Missionary Baptist Church “being scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice” means that “it originated according to the teachings of the Scriptures” and that “it practices as the early church of our Lord practiced.” Now, friends, this is the very point that will be the center of controversy in this debate. If my

opponent can **prove by the Scriptures** that the Missionary Baptist Church “originated according to the teachings of the Scriptures” and practices what the church of the Lord practiced as revealed in the New Testament, then he will have fulfilled his responsibility. However, he did not even come close to proving that in his first speech. As a matter of fact, the last one-third of his speech consisted of quotations from uninspired men, **without a single reference to Scripture contained in it!** Let me remind my honorable opponent that we are not discussing what uninspired men say, for that is not what the proposition demands. If it were, I could produce numerous quotations from **Baptist** historians, showing that the Baptist Church originated over 150 years after the Lord’s church was established. However, such matters are irrelevant to this discussion.

Mr. Barr asserts that Jesus started His church during His personal ministry on earth. Notice, he says, “Jesus began calling out His Church . . . at the Sea of Galilee . . . Matthew 4:18-22 . . . thus we have the divine record of the beginning of the Lord’s Church as an institution.” Mr. Barr, where does that passage of Scripture (or any other) teach that Jesus’ church had its beginning on that occasion during His personal ministry? I know that you must be mistaken about that, because Jesus later said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). Mr. Barr says that the church had its beginning in Matthew 4:18-22, but Jesus said that His church was not yet in existence (Matthew 16:18). Perhaps if Mr. Barr had been there, he would have corrected the Lord, and reminded Him that He had already started His church back in Matthew 4:18-22. Mr. Barr, where is the scriptural proof that Jesus started His church during His personal ministry?

My fellow disputant cites the apostle Paul’s statement: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). Amen! Jesus Christ is the One in whom we have salvation and He who established His church. However, the church that Jesus built and of which He is the foundation is not the Missionary Baptist Church, for no such organization is ever claimed by Christ anywhere in the word of God. I am asking Mr. Barr: **Where is the Missionary Baptist Church mentioned by name in the Bible?** Since we are discussing whether or not the “Missionary Baptist Church” is **scriptural**, I would like to know if it is ever mentioned in the Scriptures. We will await an answer!

In his efforts to try to show that “Jesus brought into existence His own church during His personal ministry.” Mr. Barr introduces several verses of Scripture; however, not one single verse states that the Lord’s church was in existence during His personal ministry, Remember that Jesus said, “**I will build My church**” (Matthew 16:18). With this simple promise of the Lord, all of Mr. Barr’s efforts to prove the church existed prior to this time are overthrown. The apostle Paul proves beyond all doubt that the church could not have been established before Jesus’ death upon the cross, when he speaks of “the church of God, which he [Jesus] hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Since Jesus purchased the church with His blood, it could not have existed before His blood was shed. Therefore, the Lord’s church was not in existence before Jesus’ death, contrary to the claims of my opponent.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Barr quotes from Acts 2 with reference to the church being in existence; however, we observe that this is the first time that the church is spoken of as existing in fact: “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). Mr. Barr, if the church was established during Jesus’ personal ministry, as you have asserted, why is there no mention of anyone’s being a member of it until Acts 2:47?

Mr. Barr summarizes his obligation in this debate when he says, “The Missionary Baptist

Church worshipping at 2414 South Buckner Blvd. in Dallas, Texas, is patterned after the one Jesus started.” This is what we expect him to try to prove, and anything short of this will be an announcement of his inability to find such an organization in the Bible.

My friend says that “Jesus is the founder of His own church.” I wholeheartedly agree, because the Scriptures teach that this is so (Matthew 16:18). He is also the head of His church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23). Now, Mr. Barr claims that Jesus is the “Head of Missionary Baptist churches.” Please notice that he produced no Scripture to support that statement! I am quite certain that he would have given it if one could be found in the Bible. Perhaps he knows of a verse that says Jesus is the head of Missionary Baptist churches, and he simply forgot to tell us where it is found in the word of God. So, to be fair about this, I want him to tell us the Scripture where Jesus is mentioned as head of Missionary Baptist churches. As a matter of fact, I would be satisfied if he will give us **just one verse of Scripture** that says anything about “Missionary Baptist churches” (plural) or “Missionary Baptist Church” (singular). If Mr. Barr can produce any verse that mentions either the “Missionary Baptist Church” or “Missionary Baptist churches,” then I ask him to write in the verse on the chart. Please do not forget to do it, Mr. Barr!

WHERE IS THE SCRIPTURE?

Missionary Baptist Church

(singular)

Missionary Baptist Churches

(plural)

With regard to the plan of salvation, Mr. Barr cites various passages that teach salvation by faith (Acts 10:43; Gal. 3:26; Romans 5:1; etc.), and he concludes that the alien sinner is saved even though he refuses to be baptized. Mr. Barr, I believe that the sinner is saved by faith as strongly as you do; however, I do not believe that faith is all that is involved in salvation. The Scriptures teach that repentance is necessary (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30). The Scriptures teach that confession of one’s faith is necessary (Romans 10:9-10). The Scriptures teach that baptism in water is necessary (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). I believe that we ought to accept and practice ALL that the Scriptures teach we must do in order to be saved. Mr. Barr, do

you believe that a person must repent in order to be saved? Confess Jesus with the mouth in order to be saved? Be baptized in order to be saved? If not, are you taking all of the Bible, or just part of it?

Most assuredly I affirm that salvation is **in Christ**: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Not one single spiritual blessing is given, nor one sin remitted, except **in** Jesus Christ. But, we ask, who is **IN** Christ? The Scriptures answer: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). The person who has been obedient to the instructions of Jesus, whose faith has led him to do what God has said (James 2:17, 22, 24, 26; Gal. 5:6; 1 John 2:3-5), who has been baptized into Christ, is the person who receives these spiritual blessings.

I am not saying that a person earns salvation through obedience to God’s commands. My honorable opponent and I agree that salvation is by the grace of God. Jesus’ sacrifice upon the cross was an act of God’s grace; however, this does not exclude obedience to His commandments: “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments” (1 John 2:2-3). God extends His grace to all mankind, but we must be willing to accept that grace by coming to God (Hebrews 7:25),

Mr. Barr says, “Love for the brethren is proof that one has passed from death unto life, or that one is justified or saved.” That is right, my friend! But how can we know if we love the brethren? The apostle John answers, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments” (1 John 5:2). People who say they believe and love God, and yet refuse to do as the Bible reveals, do not really have the kind of faith that will save. The faith that saves is “faith which works by love” (Galatians 5:6).

Our friend reasons that, since a person loves God before baptism, he is saved before being baptized. Not so, Mr. Barr! We have proved that one does not truly love God unless he is willing to obey His commandments (1 John 5:2). Baptism is a command of God: “And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord” (Acts 10:48). Therefore, one does not truly love God until he is willing to obey the Lord’s command to be baptized!

Mr. Barr asks, “Does my honorable opponent believe in an internal evidence of pardon?” I do not believe that emotions alone are indicative of a person’s spiritual condition. However, the Scriptures teach how a person can know that he is a child of God: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God ... The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:14, 16).

When we turn to the Scriptures, we find the revelation of God’s wisdom to man, as He made it known through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10, 13). Thus, we are “led by the Spirit” when we walk according to the teachings of the Spirit, as revealed in the Bible. When we compare our own conduct to that which the Scriptures teach, and they are identical, then the Holy Spirit (through the word of God) bears witness with our spirit (manifested through our actions) that we are children of God. Emotions alone (feelings) do not prove that one is a Christian.

My fellow disputant asserts, “The Missionary Baptist Church observes church government as prescribed in the Bible.” Although he makes such a claim, there is no Scripture given which

prescribes any such government as Missionary Baptists observe. Please remember that he is supposed to be affirming that “the Missionary Baptist Church is **scriptural** in origin, doctrine, and practice.” Did he produce any passage proving that the government or organization of Missionary Baptist churches is identical to that found in the New Testament church? Not one verse did he give on this point! Mr. Barr, we will expect you to do better in your next speech, and find in the Bible the organization which Missionary Baptist churches have.

I can turn to the Bible and read about the organization of congregations in the New Testament: “Paul . . . to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1). Notice that the organization of the church at Philippi consisted of bishops, deacons, and saints.

The bishops (also called elders) are men who possess certain qualifications specified in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. Their responsibility is to oversee the work of the congregation (1 Peter 5:1-2), and there was always a plurality of elders in a congregation. The deacons are also men who are required to meet certain qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8-13), and who serve the church under the oversight of the elders. Saints are Christians: members of the local church such as the one at Philippi. This is the organization which New Testament congregations had, Mr. Barr. Is *this* the organization that Missionary Baptist churches have? If not, where do “the Scriptures teach” any such organization as those churches have?

Mr. Barr states: “My contention is that The Missionary Baptist Church, 2414 South Buckner Blvd., and many other Missionary Baptist churches like her are successors to the church Jesus started.... I have shown and will continue to show that the succession falls to Missionary Baptist churches by inheritance.” Wrong again, Mr. Barr. You have not offered even one iota of proof from the Bible for the “origin, doctrine, and practice” of Missionary Baptist churches. The verses that you have cited prove nothing for your proposition, for they make no reference whatsoever to the Missionary Baptist Church.

My worthy opponent says, “A succession of the first church must exist somewhere. Whether one can trace it by uninspired history or not, that succession does exist according to the teachings of the Bible... No church originating since the time of Christ and His apostles upon earth can possibly be a true church of the living God.” I agree with Mr. Barr when he says that it really does not make any difference whether or not we can trace the history of the Lord’s church through the pages of uninspired history. The thing that matters is: Can we identify the characteristics of the New Testament church and put those same things into practice now? I believe that it is possible if we are willing to follow the teachings of God’s word. Jesus said, “The seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). If the word taught in the first century produced Christians, then the same word may be taught today with the same result, as long as there are people who “in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15).

I ask Mr. Barr as kindly as I know how: where in the Bible can I read where any person ever became a Missionary Baptist as a result of God’s word being preached? I know that the disciples were called Christians (Acts 11:26), and that the apostle Peter said that we ought not to be ashamed to suffer as a Christian (1 Peter 4:16); however, I have never read where followers of the Lord were called “Missionary Baptists” as a consequence of obeying God’s plan. If people today preach the same gospel that was preached in the first century and which made those people Christians, will it not produce Christians today? Mr. Barr, I hope that you will face up to this

matter, and try to affirm your proposition based upon what “the Scriptures teach.”

I have already mentioned the great amount of time that my opponent devoted to quotations from uninspired men, and it should be quite obvious that they do not even approximate what his affirmation requires. However, I would like to make an observation concerning one statement that he made in that section of quotations. He says, “Mr. Alexander Campbell, Head and Founder of the self-styled ‘Church of Christ’...” Mr. Barr implies that the church of Christ, of which I am a member, originated with Alexander Campbell and his teaching. Sir, I deny that Alexander Campbell is the “Head and Founder” of the church of Christ, and I challenge you to prove that he is. I would be perfectly willing, after this discussion is finished, to deny that “Alexander Campbell is the Head and Founder of the church of Christ, of which T. N. Thrasher is a member,” if you are willing to affirm that proposition.

The church of which I am a member is the church that we read about in the word of God, for it teaches and practices exactly what the New Testament church did: it has the same terms of membership, the same organization, the same worship, the same work, as I shall prove in my affirmative speeches. I ask that Mr. Barr prove that this is true of the Missionary Baptist Church.

Questions For Mr. Barr

1. Is the Missionary Baptist Church the bride of Christ?
2. Can a person be a member of the Missionary Baptist Church without believing that Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected?
3. When a passage of Scripture stipulates salvation and only one condition of obedience (such as, “faith”) is mentioned, is every other item excluded as a condition of salvation?
4. Where do “the Scriptures teach” that mechanical instruments of music maybe used in worship to God in the New Testament church?
5. Do you believe and teach that infants are born totally depraved?



Barr's Second Affirmative

I am privileged to continue my affirmative proving the scripturalness of the Missionary Baptist Church of which I am a member, which church is located in Dallas, Texas. The word "church" is translated from the Greek word "Ekklesia," and the word Ekklesia is derived from ek-kaleo, meaning to call forth; hence it denotes an assembly summoned or called out, a select group separated from the mass of the people. The word church used in the New Testament to refer to the church of our Lord refers to the "congregation of the Lord." The word is used to designate a specific, local assembly of God's people, organized for the purpose of worship, and the maintenance of the doctrines, the ordinances and the discipline of the gospel, and united, under special covenant, with Jesus Christ and with one another; as "the church at Jerusalem," and "the churches of Galatia." The word church is sometimes used in the Bible in an institutional sense as in Matthew 16:18 "...Upon this rock I will build my church," meaning any local body of baptized believers meeting together in covenant relationship. The word church never means a universal church of some kind, seen or unseen as my friend will no doubt seek to prove.

In my first affirmative I called attention to the fact that Jesus began calling out His church or "called out group" at the Sea of Galilee, and I cited the Scripture in Matthew 4:18-22 as proof. I traced this "called out group" or church in the Scriptures to Acts 2, and it is the same "group" Jesus began to call at the Sea of Galilee. Mr. Thrasher in his first negative sought to do away with the array of proof I presented that Jesus started His own church during His personal ministry by citing what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18; "I will build my church," and thus arguing that the beginning of the church was yet in the future. But please note that Matthew 16:18 does not say I will begin or organize my church, but that I will build my church. The word "build" is translated from the original meaning, according to Mr. Thayer, means to embellish or build up, or add to, and it does not mean to start or organize as Mr. Thrasher mistakenly seems to think. This is the only attempt my opponent made to disprove the beginning of the church during the personal ministry of Christ. We must not array Scripture against Scripture. This is mishandling the Word of God.

Mr. Thrasher thinks the church could not have existed before Jesus shed His blood upon Calvary, and he cites Acts 20:28 as proof. It is true that Jesus purchased the church with His own blood, but if Mr. Thrasher would have investigated further he could have read Ephesians 5:25 where it is said, "...Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." He had a church to love before He gave Himself for it according to this Scripture. It did not have to be mentioned that people were members of the church when the names of the first members were given in Matthew 4:18-22, and in other places cited in my first affirmative.

My affirmative calls for me to prove that the church of which I am a member is scriptural in origin, doctrine and practice, I shall continue to present such proof. I showed in my first speech that the Bible taught, as do Baptist churches, the perpetuity of the Lord's churches. I cited Ephesians 3:21 where we are told that Jesus Christ is to be glorified in His church in all ages. There had to be churches here in every age belonging to Jesus Christ since the first one He began at the Sea of Galilee according to the Bible. 1 Timothy 3:15 says, "But if I tarry long, that thou

mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth according to God’s Book. Should the church have ceased to exist on earth since its establishment then the truth itself would have been destroyed. The Bible doctrine of the perpetuity of the church is a very important doctrine. But Mr. Thrasher out of necessity must deny this Bible doctrine as it would eliminate the church he represents.

My opponent seemed to object to my quoting from authentic historians proving that Baptist churches are the only one who have been perpetuated on earth since Jesus started the first one. I did this to show the readers that Missionary Baptist churches are by inheritance the true churches of our Lord. Mr. Thrasher says, “...I could produce numerous quotations from **Baptist** [emphasis his] historians, showing that the Baptist church originated over 150 years after the Lord’s church was established.” I deny his ability to do the same, and I challenge him to produce his Baptist historians. The man does not live that can name the beginning of the first Missionary Baptist Church or the name of the man that started it unless he goes back to Jesus Christ and His personal ministry. Mr. Thrasher must be careful about printed assertions when he does not have his proof at hand. He does not have proof that Baptist historians prove the church had its beginning 150. years after the church was organized. I will go back of any date he names or any date his historians name and find a Missionary Baptist Church, all the way back to Jesus Christ and His personal ministry.

My opponent pursues the same course all his brethren take and he demands that I show **“Where the Missionary Baptist Church is mentioned by name in the Bible?”** We do not trace the New Testament church by name but by her doctrines and practice, and origin, and this is what I agreed to affirm. Though the name is not mentioned in the Bible every church mentioned in the Bible that belongs to Jesus Christ is a Missionary Baptist Church in origin, doctrine and practice. Should the Lord have given to His church one specific name every heretical cult that comes on the scene would have appropriated that name unto themselves. Many have taken names from descriptive or possessive terms of the Lord’s churches hoping thereby to gain respectability for their man-made churches.

No, you will not find the name “Missionary Baptist Church” in the Bible any more than you will find the name “The Church of Christ” or “Church of Christ” in the Bible. Fact is, you will not find the name or the church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership mentioned in the Bible.

Mr. Thrasher agrees that Jesus is the founder of His own church even as the Bible teaches, but the doctrine of the false church he represents forces him to take the position that someone else founded the church on Pentecost. Jesus was at the right hand of the Father where He is now when the day of Pentecost came. Baptists teach, as does the Bible, that Jesus Himself founded His church while Jesus was here on the earth in bodily presence.

I will not take up space to draw a block as did Mr. Thrasher in which I will place the scriptures he requests, but I will oblige him. Place on your first line Matthew 16:18 as this scripture refers to a Missionary Baptist Church. Then place on your second line Romans 16:4 as the churches of the Gentiles were all Missionary Baptist churches in origin, doctrine and practice. Then, Mr. Thrasher, just place every church referred to in the Bible at the bottom of your “Where Is The Scripture” chart and you will have references to Missionary Baptist churches

in origin, doctrine and practice.

My opponent like most all his brethren unfairly seeks to put words in their opponent's mouth. He says, "He [Barr] concludes that the alien sinner is saved even though he refuses to be baptized." Barr concludes no such thing, and Mr. Thrasher you need to reply to what is said and not what you want me to say. Baptists believe that "They that gladly received His Word were baptized" not in order to become children of God but because they are children of God. Mr. Thrasher says he believes the sinner is saved by faith as strongly as I do. I deny that as being true. He and his brethren teach that faith is no good until the sinner is baptized. The sinner may hear the Word, believe in Jesus Christ with all his heart, repent to God of all his sins, confess Jesus Christ before men, and yet should he die before he gets to the baptismal waters he will go to hell. Don't try and make the readers think you believe in salvation by faith as strongly as do my brethren and I. I take all the Bible, and I believe the sinner must repent to be saved as Luke 13:3 teaches. But where in the Bible does it teach, "Except ye are baptized ye shall all likewise perish." This is the doctrine my opponent tenaciously clings to. It is a false doctrine. Mr. Thrasher mistakenly thinks that there are no spiritual blessings for those who are not baptized. Just one example; many could be given: "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1. It is a spiritual blessing to be justified, and it is a spiritual blessing to have peace with God. Even Mr. Thrasher admits a scriptural candidate for baptism must have faith in Jesus Christ preceding his baptism.

A further word about the church of our Lord being established during the personal ministry of Christ. Mr. Thrasher thinks because Jesus said in Matthew 16:18 "I will build my church," that he meant he would start His church in the future. But Jesus in giving a rule of discipline in Matthew 18:15-17 said in verse 17 "...tell it unto the church." Perhaps if Mr. Thrasher had been there, he would have corrected the Lord, and reminded Him that he didn't have any church yet "to tell it to." Mr. Thrasher, do you deny that Jesus Christ had a church when He spoke these words "to tell it to"? Just following my opponent's way of debating!

Honorable opponent, will you accept Matthew 18:17 as "one single verse that states that the Lord's church was in existence during His personal ministry"? This is what you called for, and I ask you to be honest enough to accept and acknowledge it.

I seek to agree with my opponent on any point the Bible teaches, He believes salvation is by the grace of God, and so do I. He believes Jesus' sacrifice upon the cross was an act of God's grace, and so do I. He believes that this does not exclude obedience to His commandments, and so do I and my brethren. "And hereby we do know we know Him if we keep His commandments" (1 John 2:2-3), We must know Him first in order to prove we know Him by keeping His commandments. We don't come to know Him by keeping His commandments, but we prove we know Him by keeping His commandments. "And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John 17:3. In order to know Him or to be saved one must obey His commandments to repent (Luke 13:3) and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:18). All other commandments God's child obeys proves he is a child of God. I agree that the faith that works by love (Gal. 5:6) is the faith that saves. But my faith was working by love before I got to the baptismal waters. Was Mr. Thrasher's faith working by love while on his way to the baptismal waters? Baptists believe and love God, and do as the Bible reveals and they do not refuse to do as the Bible reveals as Mr. Thrasher would like to have the readers of this debate believe.

Mr. Thrasher said in his first negative speech: “Therefore, one does not truly love God until he is willing to obey the Lord’s command to be baptized.” Does my opponent really believe this statement? If so then one would be saved when he agrees to be baptized (read 1 John 4:7). The believer is saved and loves God before he gets to the baptismal waters according to the verse just cited. He still loves while being baptized and after he is baptized.

Neither do I, Mr. Thrasher, believe that the emotions alone are indicative of a person’s spiritual condition. But as I contended in my first speech I believe in a heartfelt salvation, and I wanted to know if you believe in such a salvation, You haven’t answered yet.

Do you believe a child of God has any feelings about the matter? Do you believe his emotions are involved in any way in his salvation?

I stand on what I said in my first affirmative that Missionary Baptist churches observe church government as prescribed in the Bible, and I know the formula is given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17, the verse I gave previously. This is the one that says “tell it to the church.” Mr. Thrasher denies the words of Jesus, and would say, “Jesus, you don’t have any church yet” as it is in the future.

Baptists believe all the scriptures Mr. Thrasher gives concerning bishops, elders, and saints in the Lord’s churches, but Baptists reject the unscriptural teaching of either of the officers named bossing the churches. Even most of Mr. Thrasher’s preaching brethren are tired and disgusted with the bosses in their churches,

Mr. Thrasher, as most of his debating brethren, seems to think it necessary to tell the readers how I have failed and how he has succeeded. The people are intelligent and I am perfectly willing to let them make their own judgment as to who proves what. Every scripture I presented referred to Missionary Baptist churches in origin, doctrine and practice. This is the only kind of churches spoken of in the New Testament. If the church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership cannot be traced in every age then his church is in bad shape, as Jesus said His church would be here in every age (Ephesians 3:21). You can’t trace the church with which Mr. Thrasher is identified as far back as you can trace the Masonic order.

The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26), and this was fifty days after Pentecost when Mr. Thrasher contends the church has its beginning. I ask my opponent to cite us to one time where any of the New Testament churches were addressed as Christians, the Church of Christ, or Church of Christ. My opponent has the difficulty of seeking to get into heaven by wearing some particular name he thinks is the one to wear exclusively. Most all people who have believed in Jesus Christ refer to themselves as Christians, but this may or may not be so. That is, they may or may not be a child of God. The gospel preached and believed in the first century produced children of God (Gal. 3:26) even as it does in this century. But Mr. Thrasher is so very mistaken when he thinks and teaches that there are no children of God outside the membership of the church of which he is a member. And if he takes the same position as other of his debating brethren then he believes that a majority of those composing the membership of the church of his identity are lost and on their road to hell.

Mr. Thrasher, in his very first negative, challenges for another debate on another proposition. I once heard a leading debater say that when one challenges for another debate while engaged in a debate, he is unsure of himself and realizes he is not doing a good job, and wants to

have another chance to do better next time. I agree with that philosophy. There is a proper time and place to challenge for a debate.

Most all the debaters of the faith of Mr. Thrasher that I know are arrogant, egotistic, and disdainful of all who disagree with them. They are usually pugnacious, and some of them are rude and crude, and don't even know how to write a courteous letter to an opponent. But I am use to them as I have met all their best debaters.

Mr. Thrasher asks me 5 questions in his first negative, and I will follow the course of school debaters and wait until I am in the negative to ask him questions. But my answer to his questions:

1. All Missionary Baptist churches that are scriptural will be a part of the bride of Christ.

2. One could not be a member of a Missionary Baptist church without believing Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected. Many believed in Jesus to the salvation of their soul before the church was organized (Genesis 15:6). They did not understand about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus before His crucifixion.

3. When the Scripture stipulates salvation by faith every other item is not excluded, only those that are not required in order to salvation. For instance, the Bible in no place says, "Therefore being justified by baptism we have peace with God." But this is the teaching of Mr. Thrasher and his brethren.

4. 2 Chron. 29:25, Psalms 15, and many other scriptures teach that mechanical instruments may be used in the worship of God in His churches. Where is the law found that one cannot use them in the worship of God? I give Scripture in answer to Mr. Thrasher's question. Let him please give us Scripture for his law.

5. I teach that infants are born depraved, and if you mean by totally, that they are depraved in every part of their being, body, soul and spirit, then I so teach. I do not teach that babies are born as mean as the Devil, or that they do not progress in their meanness as they grow older, or that they are born as mean as can be. But I teach what the Bible teaches about it. Please read Psalms 51:5; Job 14:4; Ephesians 2:3; Isa. 48:8; Isa. 1:5-6; Romans 5:12 and Job 25:4.

Missionary Baptist churches are right and scriptural in their order of preaching repentance and faith. Mr. Thrasher and his brethren reverse God's order. Baptists do not believe nor teach that a man is to repent before he knows there is a God; but there is a vast difference between knowing there is a God, and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ to the salvation of the soul. The following scriptures show Baptists to be scriptural in the order they preach repentance and faith: Mark 1:15; Matthew 21:32; Acts 20:21. It will be seen that every time these commands are mentioned together in God's Word, repentance is first. This order is fixed by the Word of God, but my opponent and his people reverse God's order. Missionary Baptists follow the Saviour, and Paul, and put repentance where they put it.

Missionary Baptist churches are scriptural in their teaching of the eternal security of those saved by the blood of Jesus Christ: John 5:24; John 10:27-30; 1 John 5:13, and many others. Mr. Thrasher and his brethren teach that God will damn His own children in hell. Many who are God's children, saved by the grace of Cod, saved by His blood, saved by His power will be captured by the devil and live in hell forever is the pernicious doctrine taught by my opponent

and his brethren. Such a doctrine is an insult to God.

Missionary Baptist churches are scriptural in voting to receive members. And in their democratic form of government in the churches. Mr. Thrasher believes in ruling elders that carry on most of the business for the church; like exercising discipline, hiring a preacher, etc. The preacher does all the voting about receiving members. Baptists do not vote on anyone's salvation, but we do vote on who we receive into the fellowship of the church. In the church at Jerusalem we find the principle of election established in the choice of Matthias in place of Judas by vote, Acts 1:23-26. The deacons were chosen by the church, Acts 6:5-6. The discipline of the man guilty of incest was in the hands of the church, 1 Cor. 5:4, 5, 12, 13. There are no little "I's" and big "you's" in Missionary Baptist churches. We be brethren. Romans 14:1: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."

I am most happy to let the people who read these debates ascertain who is correct and scriptural in their argument. I will not feel it necessary to tell you when I succeed or when I fail. I do not minimize the intelligence of the people of this world.

Honest hearts and honest minds will find God's truth, and I believe most people honestly want to know the truth of God. Prejudiced and biased minds are seldom helped by hearing or reading a discussion or by anything else. I trust all who read will read with an open mind.



Thrasher's Second Negative

Through the providence of our God I am given this opportunity to present further denial of the proposition affirmed by Mr. Barr: "The Missionary Baptist Church... is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice." My opponent has made a fatal admission in his second affirmative speech when he says with reference to the name "Missionary Baptist Church": "the name is not mentioned in the Bible." Thank you, Mr. Barr. Since the name "Missionary Baptist Church" is not mentioned in the Bible, then it is not a scriptural name for the church. Now, Mr. Barr may quibble about the fact that the proposition does not specifically state that the "Missionary Baptist Church" is scriptural in name; however, it states that the church of which Mr. Barr is a member is scriptural in "practice," and the church for which he preaches practices the wearing of the name "Missionary Baptist Church." I have several letters written on their stationery with the

letterhead “Missionary Baptist Church.” This is the name under which they practice their doctrines, and Mr. Barr ought to have the courage to try to defend that name. Of course, I know why he wanted to eliminate the “name” of the church from this discussion. He knows very well that the name he wears is unscriptural. He cannot and will not find the name “Missionary Baptist Church” in the Bible. I challenged him to do it and he could not. Notice the chart that I introduced in my first negative speech.

WHERE IS THE SCRIPTURE?

Missionary Baptist Church

(singular)

Missionary Baptist Churches

(plural)

I asked my opponent to give me the verse of Scripture that mentions either the “Missionary Baptist Church” or “Missionary Baptist Churches.” Did he do it??? No! There is not a man alive who can find either of these terms in the word of God. I call upon my friend to at least try to find a verse that mentions the organization of which he is a member. Wait and see if he does!

Notice also that I asked Mr. Barr: “Is the Missionary Baptist Church the bride of Christ?” He answered, “All Missionary Baptist churches that are scriptural will be a part of the bride of Christ.” Mr. Barr, if “Missionary Baptist Churches” are the “bride of Christ,” why do they not wear the name of the husband? In Ephesians five, the apostle Paul compares the relationship of Jesus Christ to the church to that of a husband to his wife. It is only natural and fitting that a wife wear the name of her husband. I am certain that most men would consider it rather necessary that their wives wear their names. However, Mr. Barr and his brethren deprive Christ of the honor he deserves by the fact that they wear the name “Missionary Baptist,” which gives no glory at all to Christ. What name should the Lord’s people wear? Let the apostle Peter speak: “If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evil-doer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God” (1 Peter 4:14-16, NASB). What was that, Peter? If anyone suffers as a “Missionary Baptist”? No! **“If anyone suffers as a Christian, ...in that name let him glorify God”!** That is the name that glorifies God, and it is the name that we ought to wear. Mr. Barr,

where do we read of anyone in the Bible wearing the name “Missionary Baptist”? Don’t forget to tell us!

In reference to the establishment of the church, Mr. Barr tried very hard to find the church in existence during Jesus’ personal ministry. He cited Matthew 4:18-22 as the beginning of the church. However, those verses say nothing about the church being in existence at that time. Read them and see! I also pointed out that the Lord said in Matthew 16:18, “I will build my church.” This shows very clearly that He had not yet build His church, as my opponent claims that He had. In replying to this, he asserts that Jesus meant that He was going to “embellish or build up” the church, and that it had already been built at that time. He says, “The word build is translated from the original meaning according to Mr. Thayer means to embellish or build up, or add to, and it does not mean to start or organize as Mr. Thrasher mistakenly seems to think.” My dear Mr. Barr, how can you so misrepresent what Mr. Thayer says about the word build in this passage? He says the word means “**To found ...** i.e., by reason of the strength of thy faith thou shalt be my principal support in the **establishment of my church**, Mt. xvi. 18” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon*, page 440; emphasis mine). Hence, according to Thayer, the passage teaches exactly what I said that it teaches: Jesus had not yet founded or established His church when He spoke in Matthew 16:18. My opponent either ignorantly or intentionally misrepresented Thayer on the meaning of the word “build” in this verse. I hope that he will be honest enough to correct his error in his next speech.

Mr. Barr agrees with me that Acts 20:28 teaches that Jesus purchased the church with His own blood. This being true, it necessarily follows that, if the church existed before Jesus shed His blood to purchase it, the church did not belong to Christ at the time Mr. Barr claims it was in existence. Please understand this point, If the church existed during the personal ministry of Jesus, as my opponent claims, then it did not belong to the Lord at that time, for He had not yet purchased it with His blood. Mr. Barr, to whom did the church belong during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ? Will you tell us???

Mr. Barr’s contention that the Lord’s church was established during Jesus’ personal ministry on earth is false. Even more, his assertions that the “Missionary Baptist Church” was established then is entirely unproven by the Scriptures. The following chart lists some of the reasons that the church could not have existed before Jesus’ death upon the cross.

SOME REASONS WHY THE CHURCH COULD NOT EXIST DURING JESUS’ PERSONAL MINISTRY

- 1) The New Testament Was Not In Force
- Hebrews 9:16-17

- 2) Christ Was Not Head
- Ephesians 1:19-23

- 3) The Spirit Was Not Given
- John 7:39
- 4) Jesus' Blood Was Not Shed
- Hebrews 10:1-4; 9:22-23
- 5) It Was Before The Atonement
- Matthew 20:28; 26:28
- 6) The Church Was Not Yet Purchased
- Acts 20:28
- 7) Jesus Was Not Then Priest
- Hebrews 7:28; 8:4
- 8) The Gospel Was Not Preached In Completeness
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
- 9) The Apostles Did Not Know About It
- Acts 1:6
- 10) It Was Contrary To Jesus' Parable
- Luke 19:11-12ff
- 11) It Would Contradict Passages Indicating Its Establishment In The Future

Matthew 4:17; 6:10; 10:7; 16:18

Mark 1:15; 15:43

Luke 10:9; 22:18; 22:29; 23:42

Acts 1:6

My opponent thinks that I objected to his quoting from historians in his first affirmative speech. Yes, I objected to his placing so much weight upon what historians say about these matters, when his proposition says "The Missionary Baptist Church... is **scriptural**..."!

Mr. Barr cannot prove that Missionary Baptist Churches are **scriptural** by going somewhere besides the Scriptures. Therefore, I pointed out that we are discussing what the Scriptures teach, whereas he used about one-third of his speech in quoting from non-scriptural writings, without a single scriptural reference being given in any of those quotations! Is that my friend's way of proving the Missionary Baptist Church scriptural?

Mr. Barr refers to my statement that "I could produce numerous quotations from **Baptist** historians, showing that the Baptist Church originated over 1500 years after the Lord's church was established." This statement was in relation to his attempts to trace the Missionary Baptist Church through the use of uninspired history. Please notice the following quotations from Baptist sources. "The first regularly organized Baptist Church of which we possess any account, is dated from 1607, and was formed in London by a Mr. Smith, who had been a clergyman in the Church of England" (Benedict, *History of the Baptists*, page 304). "John Smyth's church of baptized believers, established in Holland, was the first Baptist church whose history we can now trace" (Stealey, *A Baptist Treasury*, page 12). "The history of the Baptist churches cannot be carried, by the scientific method, farther back than the year 1611, when the first Anabaptist church consisting wholly of Englishmen was founded in Amsterdam by John Smyth, the Se-Baptist. This is not, strictly speaking a Baptist church, but it was the direct progenitor of churches in England that a few years later became Baptist, and therefore the history begins here" (Vedder, *Short History of the Baptists*, page 4). "The word, Baptists, as the descriptive name of a body of Christians, was first used in English Literature, so far as is now known, in the year 1644 ... The name Baptist seems to have been first published in 'The Moderate Baptist.' The first official use of the name is in 'The Baptist Catechism' issued by the authority of the Assembly ... There had been no such churches before, and hence there was no need of the name" (Vedder, *Short History of the Baptists*, page 3). Quotations such as these could be given from other sources; however, these suffice to show that many historians, even Baptist historians, state that the Baptist Church had its origin many years after the Lord's church was established.

In his first affirmative, Mr. Barr asserted that Alexander Campbell was the "Head and Founder" of the church of Christ. As I mentioned before, such statements have nothing whatsoever to do with the proposition that Mr. Barr is supposed to be affirming. However, since he made the charge, I challenged him to prove it. Furthermore, I offered to debate that question after we have finished with this debate. Mr. Barr replied, "Mr. Thrasher in his very first negative challenges for another debate on another proposition." Please notice that my opponent admits that the subject which he introduced is **another proposition!** I ask: Since he admits that a discussion of Alexander Campbell's relationship to the church of Christ is another proposition, why did he bring it up in the first place? Could it be that Mr. Barr recognizes his inability to defend the "Missionary Baptist Church," and, therefore, he wants to bring up other matters in order to cloud the issue?

As additional evidence that Mr. Barr recognizes the weakness of his position, he has begun to deal in personal remarks, Ho says, "Most all the debaters of the faith of Mr. Thrasher that I know are arrogant, egotistic, and disdainful of all who disagree with them. They are usually pugnacious, and some of them are rude and crude, and don't even know how to write a courteous letter to an opponent." Friends, such statements by my opponent are solely for the purpose of inciting prejudice against the truth. The fact that he says such things is proof positive that he cannot sustain his proposition by the Bible. Any honest person can see this.

My opponent teaches that the alien sinner is saved before he obeys the Lord's command to be baptized. However, the Scriptures teach that one must be baptized in order to be saved from his past sins. Please notice the chart [see next page] on the relationship between baptism and salvation.

From the Bible verses given on the chart, one can learn that a penitent believer must be baptized in order to be saved, have the remission of his sins, obey God's commands, wash away his sins, get into Christ and into His death, get into the one body of which Jesus is Savior (Ephesians 5:23), put on Christ, be saved by the resurrection of Christ.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

Mark 16:16	"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ."
Acts 2:38	". . . Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ."
Acts 10:48	". . . And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord . . ."
Acts 22:16	"And now why tarriest thou, arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
Romans 6:3	". . . baptized into Jesus Christ . . . baptized into his death"
1 Cor. 12:13	". . . baptized into one body . . ."
Gal. 3:27	". . . For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
1 Pet. 3:21	". . . baptism doth also now save us . . ."

The Person Who Has Not Been Scripturally Baptized Does Not Have These Blessings!

Please do not misunderstand what I am saying. There is nothing in the water that saves a person who is scripturally baptized. Baptism is simply an act of obedience to the command of God. God does the saving, but He saves the person who obeys His will: “He [Jesus] became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:9). Let me illustrate this idea from the Scriptures.

In 2 Kings 5:1-14 we have the record concerning Naaman the leper. The prophet Elisha sent his messenger to Naaman and told him what to do in order to be cleansed of his leprosy: “Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean” (verse 10). At first Naaman was angry at what he heard. Perhaps he could not understand the relationship between dipping in the river Jordan and being cleansed. However, his servants persuaded him to do as the prophet had instructed, so he went down, “and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean” (verse 14). Please observe that Naaman was not cleansed of his leprosy as soon as he believed the prophet’s words. Although faith was necessary in order for him to become obedient to the command to “wash,” he was not cleansed at the point of faith. Nor was he cleansed when he had dipped only once, or twice, or six times. The command was to dip seven times in Jordan in order to be cleansed, and he was not cleansed until he did exactly that. Notice also that the water did not cleanse his leprosy. God was the one who cleansed him; however, God used the water in connection with His command to Naaman to “wash and be clean.”

When one understands the cleansing of Naaman, he ought to be able to understand the part that baptism has in salvation. The water does not save a person, but God has chosen water as the element through which a person obeys God’s command. “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21).

Mr. Barr apparently thinks that Romans 5:1 proves that one is saved before he is baptized. That verse states: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” My friend, this verse does not teach that we are saved by faith only or faith without obedience. The faith mentioned here is the active, working, obedient faith (Galatians 5:6). The faith that saves does not exclude obedience. In fact, the faith that saves is the faith that obeys.

James 2: THE KIND OF FAITH THAT SAVES

- Verse 17: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”
- Verse 24: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”
- Verse 26: “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

QUESTION: What kind of faith saves a person?

My opponent teaches that a “DEAD FAITH” saves
(FAITH WITHOUT WORKS).

The Bible teaches that a “LIVING FAITH” saves
(FAITH WITH WORKS).

WHICH WILL YOU ACCEPT???

The inspired writer James discusses this idea in James 2:14-26. The chart illustrates what he says.

Relative to Romans 5:1, we see that repentance is not mentioned explicitly as a condition for salvation. Does this mean that one need not repent of his sins? Of course not! Jesus said, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5). The apostle Paul stated that God “now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). Therefore, repentance is absolutely essential for salvation. However, according to my opponent’s logic, since Romans 5:1 does not mention repentance, it is not a condition of salvation. Of course, the truth is that one should take all of the Bible and accept what it teaches. My friend Barr tries to disregard those passages which mention baptism as a condition of man’s salvation from alien sins (e.g. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-4, 17-18; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Peter 3:21; etc.).

With regard to the organization and government of the church, Mr. Barr claims that “Baptists believe all the scriptures Mr. Thrasher gives concerning bishops, elders and saints in

the Lord's churches, but Baptists reject the unscriptural teaching of either of the officers named bossing the churches.”

Mr. Barr's statement reflects the fact that he does not understand the Bible, and that he did not read carefully what I said. I cited Philippians 1:1, “Paul . . . to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the **bishops** and **deacons**.” The organization of a local church should consist of men who meet specific qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Bible shows that there was always a plurality of bishops (or overseers, elders, presbyters, pastors, or shepherds—these designations refer to exactly the same office) in a local church (Acts 14:23; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Titus 1:5). The work of these elders is described by Peter in these words: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:2). Please note that the elders (bishops, etc.) are to **oversee** the work of the local church. Acts 20:28 tells the elders to “take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.” Baptist Churches do not have the kind of organization which I have described from these Bible verses; therefore, Baptist Churches are not scriptural in their organization.

My friend Barr remarks, “The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26), and this was fifty days after Pentecost when Mr. Thrasher contends the church has its beginning.” Mr. Barr's chronology is about as accurate as his doctrine, and neither of them is anywhere near close to being correct. Certainly the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. The Bible says so. However, this was about **eight years** after the church was established on Pentecost, not **fifty days** as my opponent stated! Friend, you had better check up on your dates as well as your doctrine!

Furthermore, Mr. Barr says, “I ask my opponent to cite us to one time where any of the New Testament churches were addressed as Christians, the Church of Christ, or Church of Christ!” Friends, it seems that Mr. Barr simply refuses to stick to his proposition. In case you have forgotten, his proposition is that “the Missionary Baptist Church... is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.” This is what Mr. Barr is supposed to be affirming. However, he insists on talking about the church of Christ... of which I am a member. Mr. Barr, we are discussing the Missionary Baptist Church in this proposition, or at least I am. We will get to the church of Christ in the second proposition. The problem with my opponent is that he is worried about what I am going to say about the Missionary Baptist Church, so he tries very hard to change the subject to something else. Those who are honest with themselves can see that this is true.

In his last affirmative, I hope that Mr. Barr will address himself to his obligation in this debate. He has very obviously failed to find the Missionary Baptist Church in the Bible in his first two speeches. Please give your close attention to his next effort.



Barr's Third Affirmative

My opponent mistakenly thinks I have made a fatal mistake in admitting that the name "Missionary Baptist Church" is not mentioned in the Bible. But I will continue to show as I have in previous speeches that all New Testament churches were Missionary Baptist churches in origin, doctrine and practice. He once again draws his block titled, "Where is the Scripture?" Wherein he asks for a verse of scripture that mentions Missionary Baptist Church, singular or plural. This in spite of the fact that in my second affirmative speech I gave him chapter and verse for his chart, and furthermore pointed out to him that he could place any scripture that refers to church or churches in the New Testament in his block and it would be referring to Baptist churches in origin, faith and practice.

I once asked the late W. Curtis Porter, prominent preacher and debater brother of Mr. Thrasher if a doctrine must be mentioned in so many words for the doctrine to be scriptural. His reply: "The principle may be taught without mentioning it in so many words." Does Mr. Thrasher agree with Mr. Porter's statement? The word "immersion" is not found in the New Testament in any of the commonly used versions. But both my opponent and I believe that baptism is by immersion, and that the Bible so teaches, and that the principle of immersion is taught throughout the New Testament. Will Mr. Thrasher please read us or cite us to the verse of scripture that says the church was organized on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Should I desire to follow his tactics I could draw a block and call for a verse that so says and it would remain empty to the end of this discussion. But I have no such desire.

The principle of calling New Testament churches Missionary Baptist churches is taught in the Bible, John 1:6 says, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." Please note that John was a God-sent man, and that God sent him on a mission—hence a Missionary—a God-sent Missionary. Matthew 3:1 says, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching, "So he [John] was a God-sent Missionary Baptist Preacher. This same God-sent Missionary Baptist Preacher baptized Jesus Christ the Head of New Testament churches. (Matthew 3:13). The Triune God was present to sanction the baptism administered by John to the Head of New Testament churches (Matthew 3). One of the qualifications one must have to be elected to take the place of Judas Iscariot was that they must have companied with each other since the baptism of John (Acts 1:21-22). Jesus Christ organized His Church with disciples won largely by John, and baptized by John. So, both Jesus Christ the Head of His church, and the charter members of the first church were baptized by the God-sent Missionary Baptist Preacher. The principle of calling the New Testament churches "Missionary Baptist churches" is taught in the Bible.

Six different times in the New Testament John is referred to as the Baptist. He was called the Baptist by the mouth of the Lord and by inspired apostles. It is true he was sent to introduce baptism, but he was also called the Baptist because he taught the doctrines of God. Let me call to your attention that God's children were never called "Christian" by the mouth of the Lord or by an inspired apostle.

John certainly suffered as a Baptist as he had his head cut off, and millions of other Baptists

have suffered martyrdom because of their stand for God and His truth.

My honorable opponent desires to know why Missionary Baptist churches do not wear the “name of the husband?” If Mr. Thrasher’s assertion is true, then Christian is the name of Christ, or Christian equals Christ. This could fulfill the prophecy, “Many will come saying I am Christ.” This Mr. Thrasher and his people do, if Christian is His Name, and this they assert by saying they wear His Name. Then the husband’s name is Christian if they are wearing His Name. But a betrothed bride is not to wear the name of her husband before the wedding. The marriage of the bride is not yet come (Rev. 19:7-9 and Psa. 45:13-15). Shame on a people who would wear a bridegroom’s name when they are only betrothed! I would not live with a woman who insisted on wearing my name before marriage, or who wanted to wear my name in adjective form. My name is not Barrian. Is Mr. Smith’s name Smithian? Our Lord’s name is not Christ as this is His title. Jesus is His Name (Matthew 1:21), So, my friend and his people should call themselves Jesuits, but others have beat them to that name.

My honorable opponent thinks I either “ignorantly or intentionally misrepresented Thayer” on the meaning of the word build. This bears out some things I have said in this discussion about many of the preaching brethren of Mr. Thrasher. One of the meanings of the word translated “build” in Matthew 16:18 as given in Thayer’s lexicon when he speaks as a Greek scholar is “to embellish or build up.” There are, as my opponent knows, usually several meanings given for any Greek word in Greek lexicons. I do not accept Mr. Thayer as an expositor of the scriptures, and I do not believe Mr. Thrasher will either. Mr. Thayer as a lexicographer is recognized as giving good definitions of words. Even though Mr. Thayer interprets the word build in Matthew 16:18 “to establish or found,” I do not accept his interpretation of the scripture. He gives several definitions of the word, and I reserve the right to tell from the context, as to the exact meaning of any given scripture. One of the Greek words translated “build” is the word "oikodomeso" and it means “to build up or edify.” Some scriptures where it is used are: 1 Cor. 8:1; 1 Cor. 8:10, it means “emboldened.” 1 Peter 2:5 used the word in the sense of “build up.” Besides the fact that the word build as used in Matthew 16:18 should and does bear the meaning, “to build up or edify.” Jesus Christ said in Matthew 18:15-17 “**Tell it to the church.**” (emphasis mine).

Mr. Thrasher to defend his doctrine must say to Jesus Christ, “There is no church yet in existence to tell it to.” It is a mystery to me how my opponent can argue that Matthew 16:18 means to build on the day of Pentecost. If he is correct, then the church was set up after Jesus Christ left the world, and therefore He could not have set it up Himself, but He would have had to have it done through others.

Although Mr. Thrasher seems to question my honesty I assure him that I do not intend to be dishonest in any way in my dealings with him in this debate he asked for.

The church during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ belonged to Christ as she belongs to Him now. Does Mr. Thrasher believe the church mentioned in Matthew 18:15-17 belonged to Christ? “**Tell it to the church**” (emphasis mine). I previously called his attention to the fact that according to Ephesians 5:25 that Jesus “loved the church, and gave himself for it.” He had His church to love first and then afterwards gave Himself for it. Also it might profit my opponent to read Rev. 13:8, “...whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Mr. Thrasher draws a chart wherein he seeks to prove that the church could not exist during

the personal ministry of Christ. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and I will proceed to break his chain. (1) While Christ was with His church he enforced His will Himself. (2) Christ was given all authority in Matthew 28:19-20, and this was before Pentecost. (3) The Spirit was given contrary to Mr. Thrasher's denial (John 20:22). (4) Jesus a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). (5) Same answer as number 4. (6) Same answer as number 5. (7) Wrong again, Mr. Thrasher, as usual. Hebrews 5:6 teaches that Jesus was high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. He had no beginning or end as a priest. (8) Wrong again! Read Gal. 3:6-8. Abraham had the gospel preached to him, I have jerked most of his links out, and I desire to proceed with my affirmative. Like all his brethren he seeks to get me in the negative while I am affirming.

I made an argument on the perpetuity of the Lord's churches, and my friend cannot contend for this Bible truth because historians prove the people he is identified with had their beginning in modern times. I gave history to prove that Missionary Baptist churches are the only ones who are able to trace back to Jesus Christ and the apostles, I do not blame Mr. Thrasher for objecting to the truth given in former speeches concerning the testimony of reputable historians, as it leaves his group out in the cold.

My friend seeks to produce historians who prove the Baptist church originated 1500 years after the Lord's church was established. Either ignorantly or deliberately he misrepresents Mr. Benedict. Simply playing the game as he chooses to play it. His quotation from Benedict, *History of the Baptists* (page 304), he fails to tell you, was not the saying of Mr. Benedict, but it was a quotation from the Jubilee Report, which was inserted in the book he quotes from. Also he fails to tell you that the report from which his quote is found is in a chapter dealing with English Baptists. On page 302 of the book he quotes from, and I have the book open before me now, it says chapter 6, and in large print it is titled, "**The English Baptists**" (emphasis mine).

In a footnote under English Baptists, Mr. Benedict says on page 337: "From all the fragments of history, I am inclined to the belief that Baptist churches, under various circumstances, have existed in England from the time of William the Conqueror, four or five centuries prior to those of which any definite accounts have come down to us; and that the more the history of the dark ages is explored, the more this opinion will be confirmed. Baptist churches, in persecuting times, were merely household affairs—which must, of necessity, be hid from public view. More than three centuries had elapsed before any of the Baptists in England had any knowledge that a church of their order existed in Chesterton, in 1457." If Mr. Thrasher had been familiar with Benedict's history he would have known that Mr. Benedict contends in his history that the New Testament churches were Baptist churches. Let any man or woman name the person who started the first Missionary Baptist Church and the year they started it, and I will go behind them and find a Baptist church unless they go back to Jesus Christ and the apostles. So Mr. Thrasher flunks his history test. And he does no better with the Bible!

I have no desire to cloud any issue, and I am totally unaware that I am unable to defend the "Missionary Baptist Church."

Mr. Thrasher says in his second negative, "the Scriptures teach that one must be baptized in order to be saved from his **past sins**." (emphasis mine). Please put chapter and verse in the chart:

WHERE IS THE VERSE?

Mr. Thrasher has another chart titled, "What the Scriptures Teach About the Purpose of Baptism." He does not make argument on the scriptures but seeks to slyly get me in the negative. He quotes but parts of the verses cited. I will quote his top verse and comment briefly upon it. Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Note that it says nothing here about past sins. It does say **shall be saved** (emphasis mine), My opponent believes he may be saved if he does not become lost. The latter part of the verse tells us that it is the unbeliever who will be damned. The verse speaks of a future salvation in heaven and a future damnation in hell. Let us ask Jesus, "What about the believer that has not yet reached the baptismal waters?" Jesus says, "but he that believeth not shall be damned."

I have given many scriptures in my other speeches proving that one is saved when repenting to God of his sins he believes in Jesus Christ to the salvation of his soul, Heb. 10:39; John 3:18; Acts 16:31; John 3:36; Romans 5:1, and many others. Baptism is a beautiful and scriptural ordinance commanded of Jesus to such as believe in Christ from the heart, Acts 8:37.

My opponent in his last negative states: "The person who has not been scripturally baptized does not have these blessings." And he names above his statement a number of blessings. It should be plain to all the readers of this debate that my opponent and his people believe one has nothing until he is baptized. One may repent to God, but he has no blessings; one may believe in Jesus Christ with all his heart but he has no blessings; one may confess Jesus Christ before men, but he has no blessings; one may agree to be baptized but he has no blessings according to this pernicious doctrine taught by Mr. Thrasher and his brethren. Baptism brings all the spiritual blessings, if my friend is correct.

It seems to me that my opponent contradicts himself when he places on one of his charts a small portion of the verse 1 Peter 3:21, "...baptism doth also now save us..." Also he cites Acts 22:16, "...be baptized and wash away thy sins." Then he says, "There is nothing in water that saves a person who is scripturally baptized."

Baptists believe we should obey all the commands of the Saviour. But we do not make a god out of the ordinance of baptism. Where is the scripture that says, "Be baptized and thou shall be saved and thy house"? or "He that is baptized is not condemned"? Please read Acts 16:31 and John 3:18.

Surely Mr. Thrasher does not intend to use Naaman the leper as an illustration of one being

saved. It has nothing whatever to do with God's plan of salvation. Please read the verses Mr. Thrasher cites and you will find that Naaman went down into the waters an unbeliever. Does my opponent believe in baptizing unbelievers? Does my friend dip unbelievers seven times to wash them and make them clean?

According to Romans 5:1 the one who has faith in the Lord is justified and has peace with God, and both Mr. Thrasher and I agree that a proper candidate for baptism must have faith in Jesus Christ. I believe also that the faith that saves is the faith that obeys. I know that it does not exclude obedience. Was Mr. Thrasher's faith active when he repented and believed in Jesus Christ, when he confessed Christ before men, when he was on the road to the baptismal waters? If Mr. Thrasher will work a dead horse and thus make him come alive I will ride his horse. You work a horse because he is alive and not to make him come alive when he is dead.

I believe all of James chapter 2, but my friend does not. According to Gen. 15:6, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. In James 2:21 Abraham was justified by works, when he offered his son on the altar. This was many years after Abraham was justified in the sight of God. His act of offering his son was an act of a man of faith in God and not the act of an unbeliever. A faith that does not work is an inactive faith or one that is dead so far as works are concerned. I do not teach as my opponent falsely accuses me that a "**dead faith**" (emphasis his) saves, From the time I repented to God of my sins and trusted in Jesus Christ with all my heart to save me, my faith has been active and alive. But according to Mr. Thrasher and his brethren one's faith is dead and inactive until he is baptized. They are stronger in their belief about baptism saving than is the Roman Catholic Church.

I disregard not one scripture, and I believe with all my heart in all the scriptures, but I strongly oppose the interpretation my friend puts on many of the scriptures.

I repeat again that I believe the Bible quotes by my opponent concerning bishops and deacons, and I believe they are to oversee the work of a local church (the only kind of church mentioned in the Bible). But they are not to boss the church as do the officers in the church of Mr. Thrasher's identity.

When I said in my last affirmative that the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, and that this was fifty days after Pentecost, I erred. I must have had in mind that from the time Jesus shed His blood on the cross until Pentecost was fifty days. I have no hesitancy in acknowledging an honest mistake. But Mr. Thrasher said concerning this error, "Mr. Barr's chronology is about as accurate as his doctrine, and neither of them is anywhere near close to being correct." I am willing for the readers of this debate to decide whose doctrine is correct. But Mr. Thrasher's statement bears out what I said in my last affirmative concerning many of their preachers.

The Bible does teach, as both my friend and I agree, that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. But he is correct in saying it was **eight years** (emphasis his) after Pentecost. Surely all are able to see that this makes my case stronger and his weaker. What were they called during the eight years? Several titles were given to them, but not the title Christian. But I know they were children of God.

My opponent accuses me of being worried about what he is going to say about the Missionary Baptist Church. If I am worried about anything Mr. Thrasher has said or will say I

am totally unaware of it All who fail to see, according to my opponent, that, such statements are solely for the purpose of inciting prejudice against the truth. Any honest person can see this.” Now, all who read this debate and refuse to believe that I made statements to incite prejudice are dishonest according to this gentle opponent.

Mr. Thrasher cites 1 Peter 4:14-16 to seek to prove that we should all get together around the name “Christian.” He puts in all caps the following part of the verse: “**If anyone suffers as a Christian ... in that name let him glorify God.**” He says “that is the name that glorifies God, and it is the name that we ought to wear.” This was a name which they blasphemed in calling upon them (Jas. 2:7) and which in consequence made them ashamed. Peter says be not ashamed, but glorify God in this name, as he would have them glorify God in all their persecutions and tribulations which they endured. Christ was glorified in death, and He signified to Peter by what manner of death he should glorify God. Now, if the name was right because they should glorify God in it, then the tribulations and persecutions were right, because they should glorify God in them, or the manner of Peter’s death was right, because he should glorify God in it. One should be careful about seeking to ride into heaven on a name. And I am sure that the name “Christian” is not necessary to be worn to be admitted to heaven. Does Mr. Thrasher so believe? We will wait and see.

I sincerely believe I have proven that the Missionary Baptist Church of my membership is scriptural in origin, doctrine and practice. I further believe I have shown those who will read that the principle of calling the New Testament churches “Missionary Baptist churches” is taught in the Bible.

My opponent would have done well to try and show that the Bible and Baptist doctrine of church perpetuity is unscriptural; also he should have told us something about the church. Jesus said, “**Tell it to the church**” (Matthew 18:17, emphasis mine). Also, he should have told us if his emotions were involved when he was saved.

It would have helped his cause if he would have answered my argument on Baptists being right on what they teach about repentance and faith, and the order given in the Bible. It would certainly have helped his cause should he even have attempted to answer my argument on the Bible and Baptist doctrine of the eternal security of the children of God. It might have helped his cause to have answered or at least attempted to answer what I said about their teaching of apostasy. Also, he failed to mention what I said about Baptists voting to receive members, and their democratic form of government. It seems to me, and I believe it will to those who read the debate, that Mr. Thrasher quibbled much more than he answered argument. He well may take up the things he neglected to answer in his other two speeches in his last speech when I will have no opportunity to notice his replies as this is my last speech on the proposition wherein I defend the Missionary Baptist Church of my membership. Should he do the same he will break the rules of honorable controversy. I will not believe he will do it until, and if, I find differently.

I do not believe that salvation is in church membership, but that salvation is in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8-9). But I know that all churches belonging to the Lord mentioned in the New Testament are Missionary Baptist churches in origin, name, doctrine and practice.

I will not presume to tell you who may read who is correct in their teaching on this proposition, Mr. Thrasher or myself. I respect your intelligence, and I am perfectly willing to meet God and mankind in the things I have taught. Read carefully what we both have written and

make up your own mind as you are the jury. Both of us can't be right. We both could be wrong, but both cannot be right in our opposing views on the proposition.

I desire and pray that all who read may go some day to live with God in heaven, and I beg of you to look to Christ and be saved, Isa. 45:22; John 5:39-40; John 14:6; John 10:9; Acts 4:12 and many, many others. Then find a true New Testament Church and be baptized scripturally and identify yourself with a true church of the living God, and not with a man-made organization less than two hundred years old.



Thrasher's Third Negative

In recognition of the completeness and inerrancy of the Bible as God's revelation to man, I reply to the affirmative statements of my friend Mr. Barr. Please give your careful attention to the proposition under discussion: "The Missionary Baptist Church ... is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice." In his three speeches, my opponent has endeavored to prove the truthfulness of this proposition. Whether or not he has been successful is left to the decision of each individual who studies what has been said by Mr. Barr and me. However, I ask each person to honestly consider the comments that will be made in this final speech on the proposition, and then make your decision in the light of what the word of God teaches.

Mr. Barr has positively failed to find the Missionary Baptist Church mentioned in the Bible, as is evidenced by the fact that he has not placed a single passage of Scripture on the chart that I introduced in my first speech. Notice the chart again.

(Chart on next page)

WHERE IS THE SCRIPTURE?

Missionary Baptist Church

(singular)

Missionary Baptist Churches

(plural)

If the Missionary Baptist Church is a **scriptural** institution, it must have originated in the Scriptures, since my opponent claims that it is the church of the New Testament. However, the church was never referred to as a Missionary Baptist Church in the Bible, Why? Such an organization as the Missionary Baptist Church did not exist at the time the New Testament was being written. It developed many years later, after there had been an apostasy from the Truth. If it had been in existence in the first century, we would be able to read about it in God’s Book. Mr. Barr’s utter and complete failure to show us a passage mentioning the Missionary Baptist Church is proof that it is not **scriptural in origin**; that is, it did not originate in the Scriptures.

Mr. Barr quibbles about his not being able to read about the Missionary Baptist Church in the Bible by saying, “The word immersion is not found in the New Testament in any of the commonly used versions.” In other words, he argues that, since the word immersion is not found in the Bible, but the principle is there, so it is with Missionary Baptist churches—the words “Missionary Baptist Church” are not in the Bible, but the principle is. My friend, your “parallel” is simply not parallel! The word “baptism” is a transliteration of the Greek word meaning “immersion.” In other words, when the Greek word for “immerse” was rendered into English by some of the translators, they used the word “baptize” so as not to offend those who practiced “sprinkling.” However, the translation should have been “immerse” since that is what the original Greek word actually means. As a matter of fact, many translators do use the word “immerse” (for example, Macknight, Rotherham, Anderson, Living Oracles, The Emphasized New Testament, American Bible Union Version, and others). Mr. Barr will admit that this is true. However, let my friend find **any translation** that mentions the **Missionary Baptist Church**. Certainly, if the word “church” refers to the Missionary Baptist Church, there should be some translation that so renders it. Can you find one, Mr. Barr??? I know that the word “baptize” means “immerse” and I have produced several translations that say so; however, I have never found a single translation that says “church” means “Missionary Baptist Church.” My opponent

knows that he was just trying to dodge the effects of the chart on this point. He cannot produce the passage of Scripture mentioning the church of which he is a member, and therefore his proposition falls.

My opponent's attempt to establish the name "Missionary Baptist Church" would be humorous if it were not so serious. He says that John was a **Baptist** who was sent on a **mission**, thus he was a Missionary Baptist. Since John baptized those who were the first members of the church, that made the church a "Missionary Baptist Church." If that is not the most ridiculous reasoning I have ever heard, it is certainly close to it. Even his effort to try to come up with the name in such a manner demonstrates his awareness of his failure to find it in the word of God. However, his reasoning is erroneous, for he concludes that those whom John the Baptist baptized became Baptists. In other words, his reasoning is that an action upon a person thereby makes the subject of the action the same in kind as the administrator of the act. For example, the doctor doctors patients; therefore, the patients are doctors, Or, my opponent is a man; he baptized a woman; therefore, the woman becomes a man. This is the same type of "reasoning" (?) that Mr. Barr uses in trying to come up with the name "Missionary Baptist Church." It would be so much easier if he could turn to the Bible and read where **anyone** was ever called "a Baptist" because he was a member of a Baptist Church. But he cannot do it, and he would rather be called by an unscriptural designation than be called by a scriptural term. Such is the pride men take in human wisdom.

Because Mr. Barr cannot find where members of the New Testament church were called "Baptists," he tries to do away with the name "Christian" as being divinely approved. He says, "Let me call to your attention that God's children were never called 'Christian' by the mouth of the Lord or by an inspired apostle." My friend needs to read his Bible more closely. The inspired apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 4:16, "If any man suffer as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf [**in this name**]." My opponent surely would like to find a verse of Scripture where the disciples of Christ were ever called "Missionary Baptists"! But he'll never read it in a million years. No one can "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11) and call people "Baptists"; therefore, the church of my opponent's proposition is not scriptural in the practice of calling its members "Baptists."

With reference to the bride of Christ (the church) wearing the husband's name, Mr. Barr makes fun of the idea that we should wear the name of Christ now. However, the apostle writes in 1 Peter 4:14-16, "If ye be reproached for the **name of Christ**, happy are ye ... Yet if any man suffer as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed." The name "Christian" means "a follower of Christ." So when one wears that name he glorifies Jesus Christ. But the name "Missionary Baptist" does not indicate in any way that Jesus Christ is the husband of the Missionary Baptist Church. In fact, he is not!

But my opponent claims that we are not yet "married" to Christ, and therefore we should not wear his name. However, Paul wrote to the Roman Christians: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4). In order to bear fruit unto God, we must be "married" to the husband (Jesus Christ). However, Mr. Barr contends that he bears fruit without being married to the Husband. This is contrary to what the apostle Paul says. If Mr. Barr would simply determine to be guided by the teachings of God's Book, he would not need to quibble around and try to dodge these matters. Why not use

scriptural terms in referring to the church, rather than taking a name not found in the Bible?

My friend just will not accept the statement of our Lord in Matthew 16:18, “I will build my church.” The church was not yet in existence when Jesus spoke these words, because he said he would build it in the future.

However, in replying further to Mr. Barr on this point, we notice that the church was to be built upon Jesus Christ as the “chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20). We all understand that a building cannot be built until the cornerstone has been laid. But Jesus stated that the cornerstone could not be laid until it had been rejected by the Jews (Luke 20:9-19), and this rejection would be when Jesus was crucified (Acts 4:10-11).

Therefore, the church could not be built before the death of Jesus, according to the Scriptures. My opponent’s false view of Matthew 16:18 contradicts these verses in God’s word.

Mr. Barr argues that Matthew 18:15-17 teaches that the church was in existence during Jesus’ personal ministry. Not so, my friend! While Jesus was on the earth, he was preparing his disciples for the coming of the kingdom or church, and he instructed them regarding the nature of the church that would be set up. However, the church could not have existed at this time, because Jesus had not yet been crucified, and Hebrews 9:15-17 points out that the New Testament did not come into force until **after** His death. Therefore, since the New Testament was not then in force, the New Testament church certainly could not have been in existence.

In my second negative speech, I presented the chart [see chart on next page] which proves that the church did not exist during Jesus personal ministry.

Mr. Barr tries his best to dodge these plain scriptural references, but he cannot change what the word of God says. Notice his quibbles, as given in his last affirmative. On the second point, we observe that Jesus was not the Head of the church until he was raised from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:19-23).

Mr. Barr quibbles by saying that “Christ was given all authority in Matthew 28:19,20 and this was before Pentecost.” This is a dodge. The point is that the Bible says Jesus was not the **Head of the church** in Matthew 28:19-20. But even this quibble does nothing for my opponent’s cause, for he teaches that the church had already existed for at least two years before Jesus’ statement in Matthew 28:19-20. Also, on the fourth point, we showed that Jesus’ blood had not been shed during His personal ministry and, therefore, there was no actual remission of sins until His death (Matthew 26:28). Mr. Barr quibbles again by saying that “Jesus [was] a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Certainly this is true as far as God’s **plan** was concerned. But His blood was not actually shed until His death upon the cross; therefore, the church was not purchased by Christ before His death (Acts 20:28). My opponent makes the same dodge on points five and six.

SOME REASONS WHY THE CHURCH COULD NOT EXIST DURING JESUS' PERSONAL MINISTRY

- 1) The New Testament Was Not In Force
- Hebrews 9:16-17
- 2) Christ Was Not Head
- Ephesians 1:19-23
- 3) The Spirit Was Not Given
- John 7:39
- 4) Jesus' Blood Was Not Shed
- Hebrews 10:1-4; 9:22-23
- 5) It Was Before The Atonement
- Matthew 20:28; 26:28
- 6) The Church Was Not Yet Purchased
- Acts 20:28
- 7) Jesus Was Not Then Priest
- Hebrews 7:28; 8:4
- 8) The Gospel Was Not Preached In Completeness
1 Corinthians 15:1-4
- 9) The Apostles Did Not Know About It
- Acts 1:6
- 10) It Was Contrary To Jesus' Parable
Luke 19:11-12ff

11) It Would Contradict Passages Indicating Its Establishment In The Future

Matthew 4:17; 6:10; 10:7; 16:18

Mark 1:15; 15:43

Luke 10:9; 22:18; 22:29; 23:42

Acts 1:6

With regard to point seven, he does not attempt to answer what I showed on the chart, but he simply denies the verses I presented. Hebrews 8:4 states: “Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all” (NASB). Mr. Barr would say, “Yes, he could. In fact, he was!” Such is the predicament one faces when he contradicts the word of God! On the eighth point, I noted that the gospel was not preached in its completeness during Jesus’ personal ministry; therefore, the church could not have existed then. What does my opponent say? “Abraham had the gospel preached to him.” He cites Galatians 3:6-8. Notice, however, what that tells us: “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham.” **What “gospel” was that?** “All the nations shall be blessed in you” (verse 8, NASB) Mr. Barr, was this the **complete** gospel that was preached unto Abraham? Is this all that you preach when you preach the “gospel”? Why, my opponent was simply trying once more to dodge the effects of the argument I made. The complete gospel includes the “death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)—which could not be proclaimed to be a fact until after these things had occurred. Therefore, the church could not exist (and be founded upon the complete gospel) before these events happened. This idea is easily demonstrated by the fact that people cannot become members of the Missionary Baptist Church today without believing that Jesus dies, was buried, and was raised from the dead. If they cannot be members of it today without believing those things, how could they have been members of the church in the New Testament without believing those same things? Incidentally, Mr. Barr conveniently skipped the last three points on the chart, so I ask that each person go back and read the passages given relative to those points.

My friend seeks to find comfort for his doctrine in the writings of uninspired men; however, I have already shown that history is against his doctrine that the Missionary Baptist Church has existed since the first century. He does not attempt to answer most of the quotations I gave showing that the Baptist Church had its beginning in the early seventeenth century (1600’s). In fact, he noticed only one of the quotations: Benedict’s *History of the Baptists*, and he claims that I misrepresented what that historian said.

The quotation I gave was: “The first regularly organized Baptist Church of which we

possess any account, is dated from 1607, and was formed in London by a Mr. Smyth, who had been a clergyman in the Church of England” (page 304). My opponent says that I failed to tell you that this “quote is found . . . in a chapter dealing with English Baptists.” Mr. Barr, I do not deny that Mr. Benedict was talking about English Baptists, because the first Baptists were English Baptists! So this does not help my opponent at all!

Since my friend challenges me again on this matter of the history of the Baptist Church, I present the following quotations on this very same point. Actually, these matters that he has introduced are irrelevant to our proposition, because he is supposed to be affirming that the Missionary Baptist Church is **scriptural**, not **historical**! But I mention these historical quotations because he has implied that I was dishonest and that I misrepresented what historians tell us about the Baptist Church. “Baptists, the name of a religious denomination which was an offshoot of English Congregationalism in the 17th century and thus a part of the left-wing of English Puritanism” (*The Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 3, page 219, 1963). “Baptists are members of a religious denomination that originated within English Puritanism in the 17th century as an offshoot of Congregationalism” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 3, page 139, 1970). “Baptists trace their history as a denomination to a 17th-century congregation of English Puritan separatists who had taken refuge in Holland” (*Grolier Universal Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, page 534, 1965). “The Baptist church developed as one wing of the English Congregational church in the early 1600’s.” (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, page 71, 1971). I have many more quotations from various historians telling us that the Baptist Church originated in the seventeenth century, but these should be sufficient. If Mr. Barr denies these things, let him reply in his next speech. I certainly would be willing for him to attempt successful contradiction to what I have shown.

Mr. Barr challenges me to find where “the Scriptures teach that one must be baptized in order to be saved from his **past sins**” and to put the verse on his chart. I do it very gladly.

WHERE IS THE VERSE?

Romans 6:3-7, 17-18; Colossians 2:11-13, 20; 3:1, 9-10

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:26-27

Ephesians 4:22-24; 1 Peter 3:20-21; 2 Peter 1:9

In my second negative speech, I introduced the following chart, to which Mr. Barr makes some response.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

Mark 16:16	“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . .”
Acts 2:38	“. . . Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . .”
Acts 10:48	“. . . And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord . . .”
Acts 22:16	“And now why tarriest thou, arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
Romans 6:3	“. . . baptized into Jesus Christ . . . baptized into his death”
1 Cor. 12:13	“. . . baptized into one body . . .”
Gal. 3:27	“. . . For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
1 Pet. 3:21	“. . . baptism doth also now save us . . .”

The Person Who Has Not Been Scripturally Baptized Does Not Have These Blessings!

Mr. Barr quotes Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” He comments, “My opponent believes he may be saved if he does not become lost.” Mr. Barr’s logic defeats his own doctrine, for the latter part of the verse says, “he that believeth not **shall be damned**.” Mr. Barr believes that one who does not believe

shall be saved, if he becomes a believer. So his kind of logic(?) refutes his own argument. Now, really, the verse simply teaches that a person must believe and be baptized in order to be saved from his sins (those he has already committed). If he does not believe God enough to be baptized, he does not really have the kind of faith that saves (Galatians 5:6; James 2:24).

Whether Mr. Barr is willing to admit it or not, he is teaching that salvation is given to those who have a “**dead** faith,” that is, a faith that does not obey God’s commands.

My friend Barr says, “I have given many scriptures in my other speeches proving that one is saved when he believes in Jesus Christ.” Not one passage that he has given teaches that one is saved by a faith that does not obey God. The kind of faith that saves is the faith that obeys: “he [Jesus] became the author of eternal salvation unto **all them that obey Him**” (Hebrews 5:9). This is not my opponent’s doctrine. He says a person may be saved even if he does not obey.

In the case of Naaman the leper, Mr. Barr comments, “Surely Mr. Thrasher does not intend to use Naaman the leper as an illustration of one’s being saved.” No, I don’t intend that. But I do introduce his case as an example where a person received a blessing from God, and that it was not received until the person did what God said! The point is this: Naaman was commanded to dip seven times in Jordan in order to be cleansed of his leprosy. He was not cleansed when he had dipped **once**, although he certainly had to do that. Neither was he cleansed the second, third, fourth, fifth, or sixth dip, even though he had to do those things in obeying the voice of the Lord’s messenger. It was not until he had done **all** that he was commanded to do that he received the promised blessing from God. Isn’t that easy to understand? Even children can understand an illustration like this. However, it appears that my opponent cannot.

When it comes to our salvation from sin, God offers us the blessing of forgiveness in Christ. However, his promise is conditioned upon our hearing his word (Romans 10:17), believing (Hebrews 11:6), repenting of sin (Luke 13:3), confessing our faith (Romans 10:9-10), and being baptized (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21). One must do **all** of these things in order to receive the blessing of forgiveness of sins, and the blessing is not given until one does **all** that is commanded. Many people get angry at what God tells us to do, just like Naaman did (2 Kings 5:12), but that does not change what God has said. We must have a change of our attitude or we will never receive the spiritual blessings promised to those who **obey** God (Hebrews 5:9).

In reference to the organization of the local church being composed of bishops, deacons and saints, Mr. Barr comments that the bishops (or elders) “are not to boss the church as do the officers in the church of Mr. Thrasher’s identity.” Now, I do not know for certain what Mr. Barr means by “bossing” the church, but I do know what the Bible teaches about the work of the bishops. The apostle Peter instructs them to “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof... Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:1-3).

Paul the apostle told the elders to “take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Paul wrote to Timothy: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour” (1 Timothy 5:17). These passages, and others in the New Testament, express the duty of the bishops in a local church. Incidentally, I should point out that the terms “bishop,” “elder,” and “pastor” refer to the same person or office, and not to different offices. A person who is a scriptural “bishop” is also an “elder” or “pastor.” In order to

be a pastor, as the term is used in the New Testament, one must possess the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. I know of several Baptist “pastors” who do not possess all of these qualifications— in fact, many of them do not! I might also mention that, in the New Testament churches, there was always a **plurality** of elders (or pastors) in each local church (Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17). Most Baptist churches have **one man** who is called the “pastor”; however, this is an unscriptural organization.

I appreciate Mr. Barr’s willingness to admit his mistake concerning when the disciples were first called “Christians.” However, he should be as willing to admit his many doctrinal errors made in this discussion. Incidentally, the disciples were first called “Christians” (Acts 11:26) **after** the Gentiles were converted (Acts 10 and 11).

Mr. Barr says, “I am sure that the name ‘Christian’ is not necessary to be worn to be admitted to heaven. Does Mr. Thrasher so believe?” If a person has lived under the law of Jesus Christ since the time the name “Christian” was first given, he must be a “Christian” in order to enter heaven (I am referring to those who are accountable for sins, not to infants). Certainly so! But let me turn this around for Mr. Barr to answer: Can a person today be saved in heaven without being a Christian??? Let him tell us!

My worthy opponent states, “I do not believe that salvation is in church membership, but that salvation is in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8-9).” Apparently Mr. Barr is misinformed concerning the relationship of salvation to the church. The Bible teaches that one must do God’s will in order to be saved (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9), and that those who are saved are added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47). Thus, the saved are members of the church because they have been added to it, The apostle Paul made it very clear: “Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body” (Ephesians 5:23). Since the body of Christ is the church (Colossians 1:18, 24), we conclude that Jesus Christ is the saviour of those who are members of His church. There is no way that one can reach any other conclusion without misunderstanding the Scriptures.

I ask that every individual honestly consider what the Bible teaches, and search the pages of God’s Truth, to see if you ever read about the Missionary Baptist Church, of which Mr. Barr is a member. If you cannot find it mentioned in the oracles of God, then examine the Book carefully to see what the church was like in the New Testament. Upon examination of its pages, determine to obey God and He will add you to His church. And, having been added to it, begin to work and worship with a local church that teaches and practices the same things that the New Testament church did. When you do this, there cannot be any doubt that you are pleasing the Lord in those matters we have discussed.

End of the First Proposition

Proposition # 2

The church of Christ, of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.

Thomas N. Thrasher affirms

Vernon L. Barr denies

Thrasher's First Affirmative

In the earnest desire to proclaim the Truth of God, I stand in affirmation of the proposition that “The church of Christ, of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice.” It will be my intention to offer Bible evidence in proof of this proposition, and to make it clear enough for all to understand what I believe about the church of our Lord.

Before presenting my affirmative arguments, I will define the terms of the proposition. “The church of Christ” is that body to which the saved are added by the Lord (Acts 2:47). The local church consists of the Christians in a certain area who meet together to carry out those activities authorized by Christ in the New Testament. The phrase “of which I am a member” specifies the church I am defending. There may be groups calling themselves the “church of Christ” that I am not affirming as scriptural. “Scriptural” means that there is a Bible command, approved example, or necessary implication for the “origin, doctrine, and practice” of the church of Christ. “Origin” refers to the source or beginning of the church; “doctrine” refers to what is taught; “practice” refers to what is done. Please keep in mind that we are discussing what is **scriptural**! Anything not related to what the Bible teaches should not be introduced into this discussion.

The first point in proof of my proposition is that the “church of Christ” of which I am a member is scriptural in **name**. By this I simply mean that the term “church of Christ” is a scriptural designation or descriptive term used with reference to the New Testament church.

Please notice chart # 1 [see chart on next page].

The apostle Peter states an important Bible principle in 1 Peter 4:11, “If any man speak, let

him speak as the oracles of God.” When we apply this idea to the church, we find that there are several descriptive terms employed by the inspired writers. For example, in addressing the Corinthians Paul said, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Corinthians 12:27; Cf. Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:12; 5:23; Colossians 1:18, 24). The term “body” is used to show that Jesus Christ is the “head” of the church, and he is the one who directs the body. In other words, the members should follow His instructions.

N A M E	
1 Peter 4:11	
BODY OF CHRIST	1 Cor. 12:27
BRIDE OF CHRIST	Rev. 21:9
KINGDOM	Col. 1:13
TEMPLE OF GOD	1 Cor. 3:16
FLOCK OF GOD	1 Peter 5:2
HOUSE OF GOD	1 Tim. 3:15
CHURCH	Matt. 16:18
CHURCH OF GOD	1 Cor. 1:2
CHURCHES OF CHRIST	Romans 16:16
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCHES	???

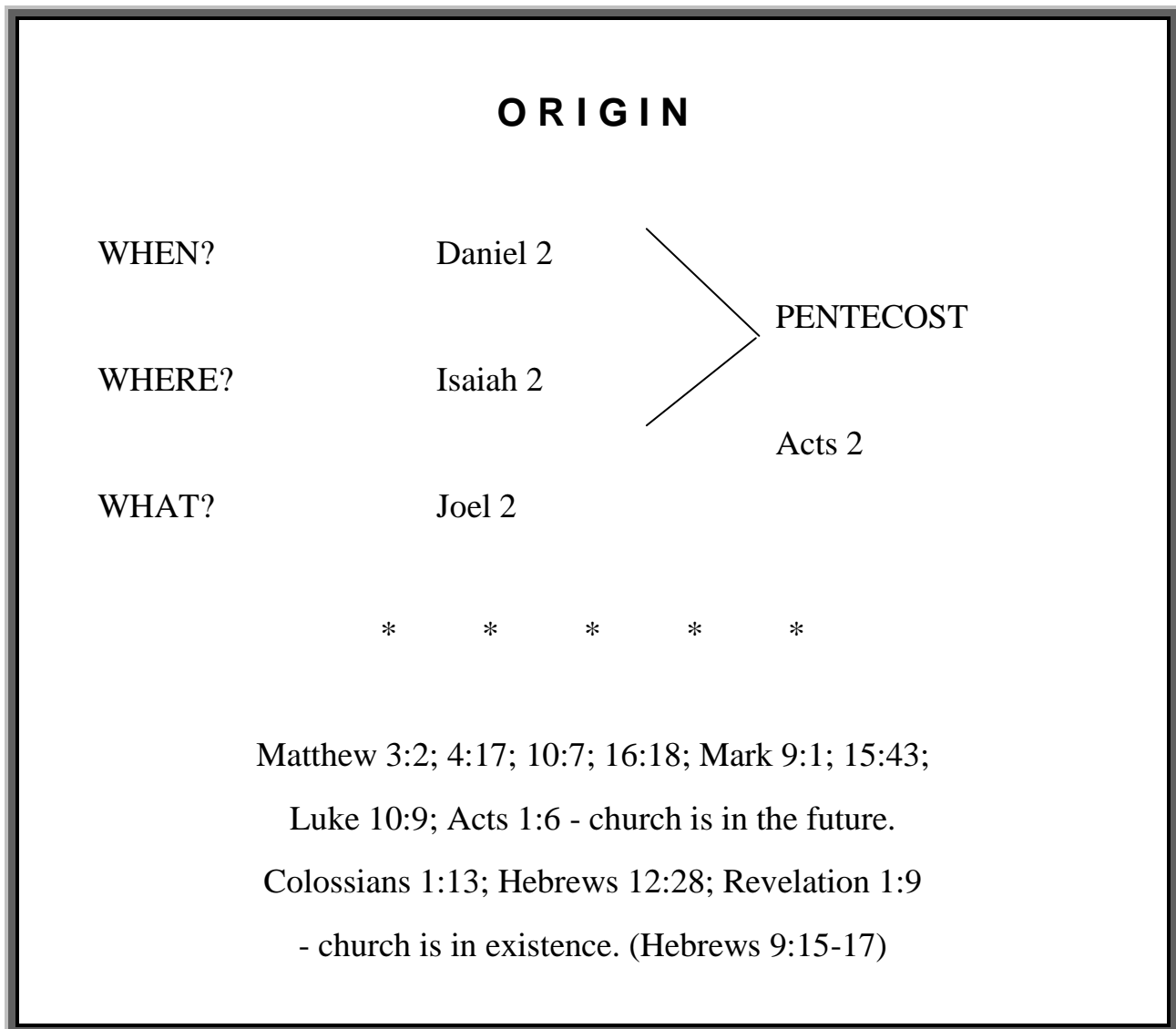
Another scriptural term for the church is the “house of God”: “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). This term refers to the idea of the church as a house or family. God is over the house and the children of God are in His family. Such terms as this, as well as other descriptive terms given on the chart (bride of Christ, kingdom, temple of God, flock of God, church, and others found in the Bible), are **scriptural** designations for the church. They point out relationships between Jesus Christ and Christians.

When one uses these terms, he is “speaking as the oracles of God.”

The term “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16) refers to the local churches or congregations in various places throughout the world, and it emphasizes the fact that the church belongs to Christ. The same idea is indicated by Jesus’ words in Matthew 16:18, “I will build **My church**” (that is, the church would belong to Him). When we consider one of these churches in any particular location, what would it be?

If there are a plurality of congregations that are called “churches of Christ,” then one of these congregations would be a “church of Christ.” In other words, each local church that belongs to Jesus Christ is a “church of Christ.” Therefore, the church of which I am a member is **scriptural** in its practice of calling itself the “church of Christ.” If Mr. Barr denies this fact, let him tell us if one can rightfully refer to a congregation patterned after the New Testament church as a “church of Christ.”

In the second place, the church of Christ is scriptural in **origin**. Chart # 2 emphasizes this point.



The Old Testament contains several statements indicating that the church or kingdom would come into existence. These passages were fulfilled when the church was established on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Notice, for example, that Daniel 2 tells us **when** the church would begin: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed” (verse 44). This refers to the days of the Roman kings. Also, Isaiah tells us **where** the church would have its beginning: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:2-3). This passage was also fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Furthermore, Joel tells us **what** would happen when the church was established. Certainly there can be no doubt that this was fulfilled on Pentecost, since Peter made it very plain: “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16). Thus, we see that these passages all point to the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 as the beginning of the Lord’s church.

But let us come to the New Testament and notice some verses on this same point. In Matthew 4:17 Jesus said, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Notice that the kingdom or church was not in existence yet, but it was “at hand.” Jesus later sent forth his disciples under the limited commission and said to them, “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:7). Again, in Mark 9:1 Jesus stated, “Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” Please observe that the church or kingdom had not yet come, but it would come within the lifetime of some of those present when Jesus made this statement. After our Lord had been crucified, the Bible says that Joseph of Arimathea “waited for the kingdom of God” (Mark 15:43). And, furthermore, as Jesus was about to ascend back to heaven, the apostles asked him, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” If the kingdom or church existed at that time, the apostles of Jesus did not know it! Therefore, as we read these verses of Scripture, we are impressed with the fact that the kingdom or church was not in existence at any time up to Jesus’ ascension in Acts 1. However, in the very next chapter, on the day of Pentecost, in the city of Jerusalem, Peter preached the gospel to a multitude of people. The inspired record tells us that about 3000 people were obedient to God (Acts 2:38-41), and “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (verse 47). For the first time we are told that people were added to the church. These matters are very simple to understand. Throughout the personal ministry of Jesus the church was in preparation, but it was not until Pentecost that the church actually came into existence, as all of these passages of Scripture prove. Thus, the church of Christ originated on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, as recorded in God’s Book. It is **scriptural in origin**.

But we also want to show that the “church of Christ” is scriptural in **organization**.

ORGANIZATION

JESUS CHRIST

Purchaser	Acts 20:28
Builder	Matthew 16:18
Head	Colossians 1:18
Savior	Ephesians 5:23

Philippians 1:1

“Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”

(BISHOPS	1 Timothy 3:1-7)
()
(DEACONS	1 Timothy 3:8-13)
()
(SAINTS	1 Corinthians 1:2)

When one examines the Scriptures concerning the organization of the church, it is easily seen that Jesus Christ is the **Founder**: He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28); He is its Builder (Matthew 16:18); He is its Head (Colossians 1:18); He is its Savior (Ephesians 5:23). However, when we observe the kind of organization that each local church had in the New Testament, we find that each congregation had bishops, deacons, and saints (Philippians 1:1). The bishops possessed the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and they were to engage in specific works. For example, in Acts 20:28 they were told to “Take heed therefore

unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Furthermore, Peter told them to “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-3). Thus, the bishops were to oversee the local church of which they were members. We should also take note of the fact that there are other terms that are used to refer to the bishops. Such terms as elders, pastors, overseers, presbyters, and shepherds are descriptive words referring to this same office. Not only this, but we observe that there was always a **plurality** of these individuals in a local church—not one person who served as “**the pastor**”! The idea of a congregation having one person who is the bishop, or the elder, or the pastor is an unscriptural idea. Elders (plural) were appointed in each local church (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5). This is the New Testament pattern.

We also notice that the word of God shows that each local church had deacons who possessed the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The Bible indicates that there was a plurality of men in each congregation who served the church in various capacities under the oversight of the elders of that congregation (Phil. 1:1).

The organization that I have described from the Scriptures is a **scriptural** organization. When the churches of Christ have this type of organization, they are perfectly scriptural. Therefore, my proposition is sustained on this point of **organization**. Mr. Barr, will you deny that such as I have described (as stated in Philippians 1:1) is a scriptural organization? If not, we go on to the next point.

The “church of Christ, of which I am a member,” is **scriptural** in its **worship**.

W O R S H I P

John 4:24 - Worship God in spirit and in truth.

Lord’s supper	1 Corinthians 11:17-34
Teaching	Acts 20:7
Singing	Ephesians 5:19
Praying	Acts 12:5
Giving	2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Will My Opponent Tell Us If It Is Unscriptural
To Engage In These Acts Of Worship?

When a local church assembles for worship, the Bible authorizes us to worship God by engaging in certain acts to glorify Him. For example, in following the instructions of Christ (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20), the New Testament congregations commemorated the death of the Lord by eating unleavened bread and by drinking the fruit of the vine (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34). The time that they met for the Lord's supper was upon the first day of the week or Sunday (Acts 20:7). Each individual Christian was to "examine himself" so that he would not partake of the supper "unworthily" (1 Corinthians 11:28). This is exactly what churches of Christ do when the members come together on the first day of the week; therefore, they are scriptural in so doing. Will my opponent deny that it is scriptural to commemorate Jesus' death as an act of worship unto God, as the passages of Scripture I have mentioned point out?

Also, the church of Christ of which I am a member teaches God's word when it meets at various times throughout the week. Many Bible examples could be cited for our doing this, but let us notice Acts 20:7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." This is a clear instance of the word being preached when the church assembled. We also cite Acts 2:42, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine [apostles' teaching, ASV] and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." I do not believe that Mr. Barr will deny the scripturalness of teaching as a part of our worship to God. Therefore, he would admit the fact that churches of Christ are scriptural in this matter.

Furthermore, the New Testament indicates the importance of "singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" in praise to God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Now, my friend will say that it is perfectly right to sing in worship, although he thinks it is all right to play upon mechanical instruments of music, too. But I do not believe that he would say it is wrong to sing without playing. If he does, let him tell us so. In any case, I have given Bible authority for "singing" and, therefore, he cannot deny that congregations are scriptural on this point without denying these passages in God's Book.

The word of God also teaches that we need to pray unto God, and that praying is a scriptural act for the church to do. As the apostle Peter was imprisoned by Herod, the inspired writer says, "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). The same writer records in Acts 2:42 that the disciples continued stedfastly in "prayers." Other references could also be given, but I do not think that Mr. Barr will deny the scripturalness of the church praying unto God in worship. Thus, the churches of Christ are right in this.

The Bible further points out that each Christian should give as he has been prospered (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Paul tells us when it was to be done: "upon the first day of the week." With reference to one's attitude towards the collection, God's word says, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Thus, the contribution of one's goods for the carrying out of the Lord's work is a scriptural act, when done as the Bible authorizes. Again, I do not believe that Mr. Barr will deny the scripturalness of the church of Christ of which I am a member as it relates to this idea. I might mention, however, that the Bible never authorized the church to raise money by means of car washes, rummage sales, selling chances on articles (gambling), or any other way except through the "laying by in store upon the first day of the week" (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

Those organizations (churches) that do so are not scriptural in such practices.

Therefore, when we study the Scriptures, we learn that Christians are authorized to partake of the Lord's supper, teach and study God's word, sing, pray, and give when the church assembles in keeping with the passages I have introduced. If Mr. Barr contends that churches of Christ are not scriptural in doing these things I have mentioned, let him tell us. If he does not, then he admits this part of my proposition.

Another matter that I want to notice is that the church of Christ of which I am a member is scriptural in its **work**.

WORK

EVANGELISM 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8

EDIFICATION Acts 9:31

BENEVOLENCE 1 Timothy 5:16

Will My Opponent Contend That These Are Not
Scriptural Works In Which The Church May Engage?

The New Testament sets forth the work of the church as being three-fold: evangelism or preaching the gospel; edification or building up the church; and benevolence or helping certain needy individuals among the saints. The chart summarizes these points. When a local church does these things, it acts by the authority of Christ. However, when a church enters other areas of work, it violates the Scriptures. For example, the church has no authority to become an agency for the entertainment of the young or old, nor to become involved in all kinds of recreational promotions. Such things may be good in the eyes of men, but they are not works for the church to do. The work of the church is to preach the gospel, strengthen the members, and relieve certain needy among the saints. These are the works that the church of Christ of which I am a member does. Thus, it is scriptural in practicing these things.

In discussing the church of Christ of which I am a member, one might very reasonably ask: What must a person do in order to become a member of the church of Christ? Let me devote

some time to this question. I believe that this question really can be answered by showing what an individual must do in becoming a child of God, because one who is a child of God is in His family, the church. Please study the chart.

TO BECOME A CHILD OF GOD: Gal. 3:26-27

HEARING the Gospel	Romans 10:17
BELIEVING (Faith)	Hebrews 11:6
REPENTING of Sin	Acts 17:30
CONFESSING one's Faith	Romans 10:10
BAPTIZED into Christ	Acts 2:38 & Romans 6:3-4
ADDED To The Church By The Lord	Acts 2:47

The apostle Paul wrote, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:26-27). We learn in these verses that one becomes a child of God by being **in Christ**. But one gets **into Christ** by being baptized. This summarizes God’s plan for one’s becoming a Christian. Other verses also emphasize the necessity of certain conditions on man’s part in order for him to be saved. Hebrews 11:6 shows that it is impossible to please God without faith. Luke 13:3 says that the person who does not repent will perish. Romans 10:10 states that confession of one’s faith with the mouth is unto salvation. 1 Peter 3:21 teaches that baptism “doth also now save us.” When we take all that the Bible says about our being saved from sin, the inspired Book specifically mentions each of these conditions. One who does not have enough trust in God to do all that He says will not be saved (Galatians 5:6; James 2:24; Matthew 7:21; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9). The Hebrews writer made it simple enough for anyone to understand: “He [Jesus] became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9). The person who truly loves God will have the determination to do all that God says. He will not quibble and dodge what God commands, but he will humbly submit his own will to that of the Father in heaven.

Let me give an illustration of salvation from sin. Mr. Smith is walking in a field one day and he sees a sign that says “**WARNING—DANGER.**” However, he disregards the message and walks on. Suddenly, he falls into a well which had been covered with grass. Mr. Smith is going

to drown because he cannot swim and he cannot escape from the well by himself. However, Mr. Jones, the owner of the property who had put up the warning sign, discovers Mr. Smith's plight and he desires to help him. He gets a rope and throws it to Mr. Smith in the well. Now, Mr. Smith has a choice: he can believe that Mr. Jones can and will pull him out of the well, and thus he will grab hold of the rope; or, if he does not believe, he will not grab hold, and he will drown. Also, if he grabs hold of the rope, he must hold on until he has been pulled out. If he lets go before he is out, then he will fall back into the well.

Notice the parallel when it comes to the scriptural teaching about salvation. All men have sinned because they have transgressed God's law (Romans 3:23; 1 John 3:4). They are in danger of spiritual drowning and destruction (Romans 6:23; 1 Timothy 6:9). However, God extends His grace (unmerited favor) to man (Titus 2:11; Romans 3:24). Man does not deserve or merit God's grace, any more than Mr. Smith did anything to deserve Mr. Jones' grace or favor. But he must accept that grace by believing (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 4:16; 5:1-2), and acting by faith to obey God (Galatians 5:6; James 2:17, 20, 24, 26; Hebrews 5:9). Just as Mr. Smith could not be saved from drowning until his faith acted by grabbing the rope, even so the sinner cannot be saved until he acts through faith to obey the Lord's commands. Then one must continue to do God's will in order to receive the final reward or eternal salvation (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Colossians 1:22-23; Revelation 2:10). I should mention that, once Mr. Smith is saved from the well, he has no right whatsoever to say to Mr. Jones, "I earned my salvation from the well, because I did something when I grabbed the rope." He could not justly say that! His act was simply one of accepting or receiving the unmerited favor or grace of Mr. Jones, and it did not nullify the fact that it was brought about by grace. And when a sinner obeys the Lord, his actions do not eliminate God's grace, but those acts are the means whereby one accepts those blessings offered by the grace of God.

In this affirmative speech I have offered scriptural proof that the church of Christ of which I am a member is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice. I invite your careful attention to the remarks that my opponent will make in denial of this proposition. Please observe if he replies to the affirmative statements and tries to refute them with the Scriptures.



Barr's First Negative

Realizing the importance of rightly dividing the word of God and of exposing that which is false, I gladly reply to my opponent in his attempt to establish a false proposition.

I will show in denying the proposition that the church of Mr. Thrasher's membership is scriptural that the church of his membership cannot be found in the Bible either in name or in fact. One must go elsewhere to find the church Mr. Thrasher defends, and I will plainly show where said church had its beginning.

In defining his proposition my opponent says, "The church of Christ" is that body to which the saved are added (Acts 2:47). Then Mr. Thrasher speaks of a local church. The church mentioned in Acts 2:47 was a local church, and the members companied with Jesus from the time He called the first ones at the Sea of Galilee. It seems that Mr. Thrasher believes in two churches. Which one is he defending in this debate?

I ask my opponent some questions, and a clear-cut answer, without evasions will show his desire to have the readers of this debate know the truth concerning the proposition under discussion.

Questions

1. Where is the church of your membership located?
2. Must an accountable person be a member of the church of your membership in order to be saved?
3. Are you a member of one church or two churches?
4. Is the name "church of God" as good and scriptural a name as 'church of Christ'?
5. Where is the scripture that gives the specific name "church of Christ" as the name the church should wear?

My opponent in his desperation to find the church of his membership in the Bible gives us chart # 1 wherein he cites seven verses of Scripture. The first verse (1 Cor. 12:27) speaks of the body of Christ at Corinth, and the First Corinthian letter is addressed "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth..." (1 Cor. 1:2). Meaning that the church there belonged to God. It was not named "church of God," but the church at Corinth belonged to God.

A careful search of the first Corinthian letter will show that Mr. Thrasher's church name, "church of Christ," or said church of his membership is not mentioned in the letter.

He next gives Rev. 21:9 where one of the seven angels talked with John, “saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” The verse speaks of the bride and not the “church of Christ” of Mr. Thrasher’s membership. You may read the entire book of Revelation and you will not find the name “church of Christ” much less find the church my opponent belongs to in the entire book.

Col. 1:13 speaks of the kingdom, but you will not find “church of Christ” in the book anywhere.

1 Cor. 3:16 speaks of the church as the temple of God. But nothing in the entire book about the “church of Christ.”

In 1 Peter 5:2 it speaks of the flock of God, and instructions are given to feed the flock, a local church, or local churches. One may search the entire book of First Peter with a magnifying glass and will not find church of Christ” in the book.

He next cites 1 Tim. 3:15 where Paul refers to the church as the house of God. But Mr. Thrasher may search the book of 1 Timothy until his eyes are weary, and he will not find “church of Christ” in the book. Please tell us, Mr. Thrasher, if babies are in the house of God, or the family of God, to which you belong?

Next on chart # 1 is cited Matt. 16:18 where Jesus refers to “my church,” but he is not even hinting at the “church of Christ” of my opponent’s membership.

Next on the chart we are cited to Romans 16:16 where it says, “The churches of Christ salute you.” Mr. Thrasher correctly says, “. . . it emphasizes the fact that the church belongs to Christ.” And this is all the verse does as it does not give “church of Christ” as a name the New Testament churches are to wear,

Mr. E. M. Borden (deceased), a prominent preacher and debater of his day, and a member of the same church as Mr. Thrasher, said in his book “Jacob’s Ladder,” on page 65: **“To tell the truth about the matter, I have not found where the church, as a body, has been named, unless you would call such expressions as ‘church of the first born,’ ‘church of God,’ ‘churches of Christ’ names, and then it would have several names. If there was a special name given to the church as a body, we could surely find it.”** (emphasis mine).

Now, Mr. Thrasher, why don’t you tell the truth as did Mr. Borden, and admit that your name is not found in the Bible, and hence it is unscriptural.

At the bottom of chart # 1 my opponent puts “Missionary Baptist Churches” with question marks after the writing. He seems to still be hurting over my affirmative wherein I proved that every verse in the New Testament that refers to the Lord’s churches is speaking of Missionary Baptist churches in origin, doctrine and practice.

My opponent draws chart # 2 and by Scriptures in his chart seeks unsuccessfully to prove the church of his membership originated on the day of Pentecost. Not one of his Scriptures says that the church was started on Pentecost and he knows it. But if he could show that the church started on Pentecost it would only prove that a Missionary Baptist Church originated on that day, and not the church to which Mr. Thrasher belongs.

The defender of the “church of Christ” cites Daniel 2, Isaiah 2, and Joel 2 and gives them as prophecies concerning the church and they are in fact prophecies concerning a future millennial kingdom. He thinks Dan. 2:44 refers to the days of the Old Roman Empire. But read the scripture and find that the kingdom spoken of is to “break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” Did this happen on Pentecost?

The kingdom referred to in Isa. 2 (not the church) will be free of wars (Isa. 2:4), nation will not lift up sword against nation. Did wars cease on Pentecost?

Joel 2 says absolutely nothing about the origin of the church. It does speak of the day of the Lord. Acts 2:16 speaks neither of the church, its origin, or its starting on Pentecost. Acts 2:17 tells of the fulfillment of Joel 2 as God baptized the church in the Holy Spirit. The church that had been waiting in the upper room per God’s instructions. The church that had companied together from John’s baptism.

My friend cites Matt. 4:17 and Matt. 10:7 where it speaks of the Kingdom of heaven being at hand, In Mark 14:42 Jesus said, “... he that betrayeth me is at hand.” Verse 43 says Judas appeared as Jesus yet spake. What Mr. Thrasher needs to help his cause is a verse that says, the church is at hand, and that “at hand” means the day of Pentecost.

He, my opponent, cites Mark 9:1 as proof that the church would come on Pentecost, It says nothing about the church in Mark 9:1, but the kingdom Jesus referred to did come in the transfiguration scene as given in Mark 9:1-3. The trouble with Mr. Thrasher is that he does not seem to know the difference between the kingdom of God and the church.

We are told that Acts 1:6, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” proves the church was not in existence then. But note it speaks of the kingdom and not the church. The apostles asked if He would restore the kingdom. To restore something it must have existed previously. Does my opponent take the position the church had existed before these words were spoken? We will wait and see.

In Matt. 18:17 Jesus said, “ ... tell it unto the church.” And this was long before Pentecost. Mr. Thrasher thinks Jesus was giving a rule of discipline to a non-existent church. But he is mistaken, as common honesty will force one to know that Jesus was giving a rule of discipline to a church then in existence.

The question could be legitimately asked: Where did the “church of Christ” of Mr. Thrasher’s membership originate if it cannot be found by name or in fact in the Bible. Many historians give the answer to that question.

The *Universal Encyclopedia* (Vol. 3, p. 456), “Disciples of Christ: A religious body often in the southern and western U. S., called the ‘Christian Church’ or ‘Church of Christ,’ sometimes Campbellites ...”

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Ninth Edition, Vol. 4, Section of *Revisions and Additions*, p. 391) “Alexander Campbell in 1827 organized the church which is variously called ‘Disciples of Christ,’ ‘Christians,’ ‘Church of Christ,’ and Campbellites.”

Appleton’s Encyclopedia: “Disciples of Christ..., called the ‘Christian Church,’ or ‘Church of Christ,’ sometimes Campbellites.”

A trip to any public library and a search of encyclopedias, history books, and histories of religion will convince any honest person that many authentic scholars testify that the “church of Christ” of Mr. Thrasher’s membership had its origin with Alexander Campbell and others in or near the year 1827. History teaches this as clearly as it teaches that George Washington was the first president of the United States.

In chart # 3 my opponent cites several Scriptures as to the organization of the church He gives Acts 20:28, Matt. 16:18, Col. 1:18, and Eph. 5:23 proving Jesus Christ to be purchaser, Builder, Head and Saviour of the church. There is no argument between us on these facts. But I deny that either of the Scriptures refer to the “church of Christ” started by Campbell and others, I also believe the Lord’s churches are scriptural in having Bishops, Deacons and Saints in the membership, 1 Tim. 3:1-7, 1 Tim. 3:8-13, and 1 Cor. 1:2. But there is no Scripture for the bishops to hire and fire preachers, exercise discipline, and boss the churches as they do in the church Mr. Thrasher seeks to defend.

My friend gives chart # 4 that has to do with worship, and I agree that it is scriptural to take the Lord’s Supper, but I disagree that the Bible teaches the Lord’s Supper is to be taken every Lord’s day, I agree it is scriptural to teach, sing, pray and give. But if this proved the “church of Christ” of my friend’s membership to be scriptural it also proves many other religious groups scriptural. I would say it is right to sing in worship, and it is also right to play upon mechanical instruments of music, Psa. 150.

In chart # 5 my friend speaks of the work of the church. I agree that the church should practice evangelism, edification and benevolence. But the threefold mission of the church is given in Matt. 28:19-20. It is to make disciples, baptize disciples and teach the baptized disciples to observe the all things Jesus has commanded.

Mr. Thrasher finally in chart # 6 gets to his five-step plan of salvation. Hearing, Rom. 10:17—agreed. Then he reverses the Bible order and puts believing or faith before repentance. This is contrary to the Bible order. Then he makes confession and baptism the final two steps to being saved. But one who has heard the gospel, repented to God of his sins, and trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation is saved and ready for scriptural baptism, John 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; Rom. 5:1; Gal. 3:26 and many others could be given. The Lord does add to the church those who are saved, Acts 2:47, He does not add children of the Devil to the church to make children of God out of them,

In Philippians 3:9 we are taught that one gets into Christ by faith. This conforms with hundreds of other Scriptures in the Bible, We believe into Christ actually, John 3:18, and we are baptized into Him figuratively, Gal. 3:27 and 1 Peter 3:21.

Mr. Thrasher and his brethren teach one may take the first four steps given on his chart and he has nothing. He has no spiritual blessings until he is baptized according to this pernicious doctrine. I have taken all five of the steps given on his chart 4 6, and more and yet he believes all accountable beings not members of the “church of Christ” are lost and on their road to Hell. Will he deny this?

Missionary Baptists take all the Bible says about being saved from sin, and we believe in obeying all the Lord’s commands, But where does it say, “Except ye are baptized ye shall perish” or “He that is baptized shall be saved?” Mr. Thrasher mishandles the word of God and

gets a phrase out of the middle of 1 Peter 3:21 that “baptism doth also now save us.” This is the difference between Mr. Thrasher and his brethren and my brethren and me. We teach that Jesus Christ saves from sin, and they teach that baptism saves from sin. A study of 1 Peter 3:21 will show that baptism saves in a figure, but that one is actually saved from sin by the resurrected Christ.

My opponent gives an illustration of Mr. Smith ignoring a warning danger sign and falls in a well, about to drown, Mr. Jones throws him a rope and tells him to grab the rope and hold on. When and if he grabs the rope and holds on until he gets pulled out of the well, he will not drown. But if he lets go, he will fall back and drown. Mr. Thrasher needs to find a verse that says “be baptized and thou shalt be saved and thy house,” and he could make his rope to be baptism. Should Mr. Smith get out of the well without drowning, it will all depend on his ability to hold on till he gets pulled out. But God does the holding, Psa. 37:24. His illustration makes one’s salvation in heaven depend entirely upon one’s ability and strength to hold on till he dies.

The child of God has eternal life of the soul now, 1 John 5:12-13, and he will receive eternal life of the body in the world to come, Mark 10:30.

Mr. Thrasher says, “...one must continue to do God’s will in order to receive the final **reward** [emphasis mine] or eternal salvation.” A reward is something given to one who has done something to earn the reward. But Rom. 6:23 R.S.V., says, “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ our Lord.” One does not do something to earn a “free gift” but he receives it by faith, Rom. 5:1.

Mr. Thrasher said in the defining of his proposition, “There may be some groups calling themselves the “church of Christ” that I am not affirming as scriptural.” It is not difficult to see from my opponent’s statement that the church of his membership is not found in name or in fact in the Bible. Should he find the name “church of Christ” in the Bible it would be extremely difficult to discover which “church of Christ” is scriptural, Is it the local church or a universal church of some sort? We will wait and see.

There is not a religious group in the world more divided and split asunder than the “church of Christ.” They have “church of Christ” that teaches modernism. They have the Sunday School type “church of Christ” and the non-Sunday School type “church of Christ.” They have the organ type “church of Christ” and the non-organ type “church of Christ.” They have the tuning fork type “church of Christ” and the non-tuning fork type “church of Christ.” They have the one-cup type “church of Christ” and the more-than-one-cup type “church of Christ.” They have the type “church of Christ” that believes in women bobbing their hair, and they have the type that believes a woman should not bob her hair. They have the type “church of Christ” that believes in supporting colleges and radio broadcasts, and they have the type “church of Christ” that believes it is unscriptural to support colleges and radio broadcasts. They are hopelessly divided among themselves. Let my opponent spell out for those who read the “church of Christ” he believes to be scriptural. The truth of the matter is that one may search until his eyeballs jump out of their sockets and you will not find any type “church of Christ” either in name or in fact in the Bible.

Since my friend Thrasher has not found any type “church of Christ” in the Bible I give you more evidence of the origin of this man-made organization.

Illustrated Book of All Religions, Star Publishing Company, Illinois, p. 92 says, “Church of

Christ popularly called the Disciples of Christ or Campbellites.

Lincoln Library, 1931 Edition, p. 1752 says: “Campbell, Alexander, American theologian . . . in 1827, founded the Disciples of Christ . . . His followers are known as Christians, Church of Christ, and Campbellites.”

Religious Denominations of the World, p. 146: “As individuals this people wear the name ‘Disciples of Christ’ or Christians. In their organized capacity they are known as ‘church of Christ,’ ‘church of God,’ or simply ‘The Christian church.’”

I urge the people who read to go to any public library and search all books that give knowledge concerning the “church of Christ” and you will find that authentic historians make clear the origin of this impostor church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership.

Henry Clay, an eminent American statesman, presented Alexander Campbell with a letter of endorsement which he (Campbell) took with him on his trip to Europe. In the letter Clay says:

“Dr. Campbell is among the most eminent citizens of the United States, distinguished for his great learning and ability, for his successful devotion to the education of youth, for his piety and as the **Head and Founder** [emphasis mine] of one of the most important and respectable religious communities in the United States” (*Memoirs of Campbell*, Vol. 2, p. 548). Richardson who wrote the *Memoirs of Campbell*, was Alexander Campbell’s son-in-law, and a preacher in the Campbell movement. Henry Clay wrote the truth in his letter and Alexander Campbell carried the letter to Europe with him, His son-in-law, a preacher in the “church of Christ,” published the letter when he wrote *The Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*.

The church of my friend’s membership is unscriptural because it inverts the order of God’s commandments—repentance and faith. Always in the Bible it is repentance first and faith second, Matt. 21:32.

It is unscriptural because of its many contradictions. In religious debates with a number of “church of Christ” preachers in asking them the question: “Do you baptize a child of God or a child of the Devil?” I have received the following conflicting answers:

1. “I baptize a rebellious child of the Devil.”
2. "I baptize neither one."
3. “I baptize a penitent believer."
4. "I baptize a man in a transitory state.”

Mr. Thrasher, please tell us which one you baptize?

It is unscriptural because they mishandle God’s Word by saying Jesus did not have a church when He said in Matt. 18:17, “tell it unto the church.” The blessed Son of God would not have given such instructions should there have been a non-existent church. To say that He was giving instructions for a church that was to appear in the future is taking liberties with the Word of God and adding to the Word of God (Rev. 22:18).

It is unscriptural as they claim to believe that their evangelists are to travel and preach the gospel, but the majority of them settle down to a fat salary, and a definite field of labor. They don't believe in a pastor, but they become pastors.

It is unscriptural because it did not begin in the right place. Instead of beginning in Jerusalem as they claim it had its beginning at Brush Run, Pa., U.S.A.

It is unscriptural because out of necessity it must deny that the Lord's churches have been here in every age since Jesus started the first one, Please read Eph. 3:21, Matt. 16:18, 1 Tim. 3:15.

A church that cannot trace its history back any further than the "church of Christ" could not possibly be the Lord's church that has been here in every age since its beginning, Eph. 3:21.



Thrasher's Second Affirmative

In the interest of Truth, I continue the affirmation of the proposition: "The church of Christ, of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice." In my first speech, I gave scriptural proof for this proposition, demonstrating that the church of Christ is scriptural in "**name**," "**origin**," "**organization**," "**worship**," "**work**," and concerning what is required for a person "**to become a child of God**." Although my opponent mentioned several things that I said, he made very little effort to actually present any **scriptural** objection to what I affirmed.

Before I comment upon Mr. Barr's speech, let me answer his questions. (1) The local church or congregation of which I am a member meets for worship in the meetinghouse on the Old Moulton Road in Decatur, Alabama, (2) The Scriptures teach that those who are saved are added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47). The apostle Paul refers to the church and says that Jesus is the "savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). He also stated that the church was purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). Obviously, one who is saved or purchased by the blood of Christ is a member of the Lord's church, Faithful Christians will then work together with other Christians in local churches such as those mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:16. The local church of which I am a member is one such congregation. (3) I am a member of the one church of which Jesus is Head and Savior (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18). This church consists of all saved individuals throughout the world. However, individual Christians in various localities work together in congregations such as those at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:2), Thessalonica (1

Thessalonians 1:1), Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7), and elsewhere (Romans 16:16). (4) As I emphasized in my first affirmative, various terms such as “church,” “church of God,” “bride of Christ,” etc. are scriptural to use in reference to the church of the New Testament. Each of these designations shows relationship between Christ and His church, However, such terms as “Baptist Church,” “Baptist churches,” “Missionary Baptist Church,” and “Missionary Baptist churches” are not found in God’s Book, as Mr. Barr has already admitted. Therefore, one cannot “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11) and use such terms, (5) The Scriptures speak of local churches as being “churches of Christ” in Romans 16:16. Jesus also spoke of His church (Matthew 16:18). Since the church belongs to Christ (He purchased it, Acts 20:28), one may scripturally refer to it as the “church of Christ.” I have not said and I do not teach that the phrase “church of Christ” is the only scriptural designation for the church, In fact, as I have pointed out previously, the church of Christ **is** the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, etc.

In his feeble attempts to nullify my chart # 1 on the “**name**,” my opponent simply mentions the different scriptural terms that are used on the chart and argues that it doesn’t say “church of Christ” in those verses. However, Mr. Barr misses my whole argument in his reply.

I have not contended that the term ‘church of Christ’ **must** be used **exclusively**. Nor have I affirmed that the phrase “church of Christ” is a proper name for the church. **I have contended exactly the opposite of what he implies that I teach.** Any of these scriptural terms may be used when referring to the church, and each of them indicates a particular relationship that the Lord has to his people. In my preaching and teaching I employ **all** of the terms on the chart, as well as others given in the inspired writings.

Relative to the “**origin**” of the church, I showed in my first affirmative that many statements of Scripture point to the day of Pentecost as the time when the church began. Of course, the Lord did much teaching concerning the church while He was on the earth; however, this was in order to prepare the disciples for its establishment. Among the verses that point forward to Acts 2 as the time of origin are Matthew 4:17; 10:7; Mark 9:1; 15:43; Acts 1:6. In Acts 2:47 the inspired writer Luke records that “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Thus the church definitely existed at that time. Furthermore, many other passages tell of the church or kingdom existing after Pentecost (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9).

One of my friend’s major troubles in understanding this matter is that he claims the "church" and "kingdom" are two entirely different things. However, his fallacy is shown by several scriptural references.

In Matthew 16:18-19 Jesus stated, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom...” This passage makes it quite clear that Jesus would build the church and that Peter would “open the doors,” which he did when he preached the gospel of Christ on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). It was not until that time that the Bible speaks of anyone being “added” to the church (Acts 2:47). Thus, the “kingdom” and “church” are identical in this passage. Also, Acts 20:25, 28 points out this fact: “And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.... Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Furthermore, notice 1 Corinthians 4:17, 20—“For this cause have I sent unto you

Timotheus...who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church... For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.” Read Colossians 1:13, 18—"[God] hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son ... And he is the head of the body, the church,” These verses of Scripture emphasize the identity of the church and kingdom, which Mr. Barr denies.

With this in mind, I mention again that the church or kingdom was “at hand” before the day of Pentecost (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9; Matthew 16:18; Mark 9:1; 15:43; Acts 1:6), and in existence after Pentecost (Acts 2:47; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9). My opponent cannot dispute this without denying what divine revelation clearly states.

My friend introduces several quotations in an attempt to show that the church of Christ, of which I am a member, originated about the year 1827 with Alexander Campbell. Although I could give enough historical quotations to fill my entire speech in refutation of this false claim, I will cite a few. “In faith and practice they date back to the founding of the church of the New Testament on the first Pentecost after Jesus’ resurrection” (“Churches of Christ,” *Encyclopedia Americana*, volume six, page 661). “The very nature of this fellowship of free Christians makes it impossible to trace without interruption specific groups back to the day of Pentecost, It is known that during the 17th century there were Churches of Christ in England” (same source, page 662). In his book *History of the Kentucky Baptists*, B. H. Spencer points out that there were people in North Carolina as early as 1695 who taught what “Campbellites” teach. Now it really amazes me that people call us “Campbellites” when people taught what we teach 115 years *before* Alexander Campbell preached his first sermon!!! Yet, that is the type of thing Mr. Barr is trying to get us to believe. Very strange indeed! Not only this, but there is a congregation meeting not far from where I live (the Rocky Springs church of Christ, near Bridgeport, Alabama) that began about the year 1808—one year before Alexander Campbell even came to the United States. Now, I ask: How can any honest person believe that the church of Christ was started by Alexander Campbell about 1827, in view of such facts as these? My opponent has boldly asserted it, but he cannot prove it!

I want to thank Mr. Barr for admitting that the “**organization**” outlined on my chart # 3 is scriptural, for that is exactly the type of organization that churches of Christ have. Although he continues to quibble that the elders should not “boss” the churches, I respond that the elders of the church I am defending do no more than exercise the “**oversight**” of congregations in such manner as the Bible authorizes (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:5; 1 Peter 5:1-3). I have not affirmed that elders have any more authority than what these passages teach that they have. However, please observe that Missionary Baptist churches do not have such an organization as these verses mention. I still cannot find the church that Mr. Barr represents mentioned in the Bible.

Concerning chart # 4 on the scriptural acts of “**worship**,” my opponent admits that these acts are scriptural. Very well, the church of Christ of which I am a member is scriptural in its worship. That is what I am affirming.

My friend says that he does not believe it is necessary to eat the Lord’s supper every Lord’s day; however, he does not say it would be unscriptural if it were done. Therefore, it is certainly right to commemorate Jesus’ death every first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 2:42).

My opponent admits that “it is right to sing in worship”; therefore, churches of Christ are unquestionably safe when they sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). However, Mr. Barr claims “it is also

right to play upon mechanical instruments of music, Psa. 150." Please observe that he gave no **Bible reference** to prove that **instrumental music** may be used in the **worship** by the **church today!** This discussion is not about what people did in the Old Testament in worship to God. We are studying what is authorized **in the church!** Why didn't you give us a Scripture for this, Mr. Barr??? Certainly people used mechanical instruments of music in worship in the Old Testament, just as they offered various animal sacrifices, burned incense, and did many other things Does that prove we may do those acts in worship to God in the church? Please tell us, Mr. Barr. And do not forget to give us the passage of Scripture where the **church** may worship God with mechanical instruments of music, since you have asserted it is right to do it.

With reference to the "**work**" of the church, my opponent agrees that "the church should practice evangelism, edification and benevolence." Good, the work of the church of Christ of which I am a member is scriptural even by Mr. Barr's admission, Naturally, I gave Bible verses to prove these matters, in case he had denied what I affirmed.

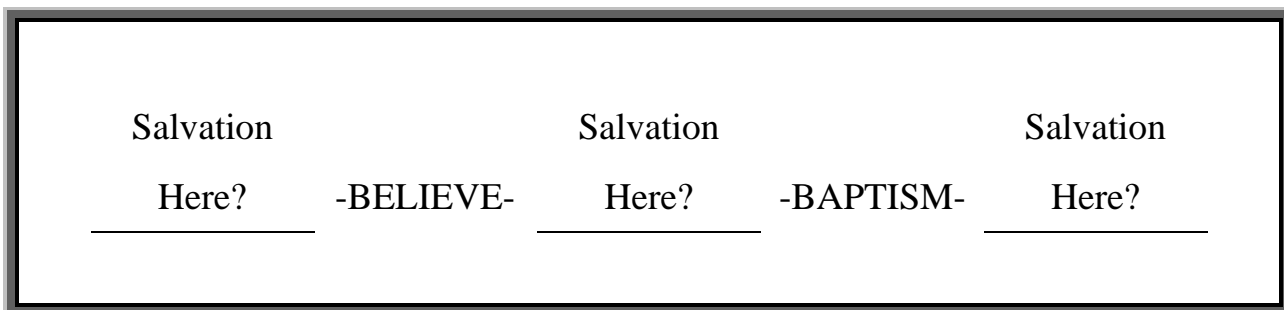
When we come to chart # 6 relating to one's becoming a child of God, Mr. Barr refuses to accept what the Bible says. He agrees that one must hear the gospel, just as I affirmed (Romans 10:17), However, he rejects what the Bible teaches about the order of "faith" and "repentance," saying that one must repent before he believes. This is ridiculous! How could one possibly have repentance toward Jesus Christ before he believes on Jesus Christ? None of the passages that my opponent uses to try to sustain his "theory" teaches that repentance precedes faith when both are toward the same object. In every case where repentance is mentioned before faith they are toward different objects. Notice, for example, Hebrews 6:1 — "repentance from **dead works**, and faith **toward God.**" In this verse "repentance" and "faith" are not towards the same object; therefore, they do not prove my opponent's position. What he needs to find is a verse that mentions both repentance and faith towards Jesus Christ, then he will have a point. Until then he cannot prove that his theory is correct.

Mr. Barr cites several texts showing the necessity of "faith"; however, not one of them says "faith without obedience" or "faith without baptism." But this is my friend's doctrine! I wholeheartedly affirm that salvation is by faith, But not by a "dead," "disobedient," "inactive," "unworking" faith!

The faith that avails is the Path that **works** through love (Galatians 5:6). It is an active faith (James 2:17), It is an **obedient** faith (Heb. 5:8-9; 2 Thess. 1:6-10). Please do not accuse me of denying the necessity of **faith**. I teach that one who does not believe will be lost (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; Mark 16:16). However, I do not stop there, but take the rest of the Bible also. Jesus says a **confession** of faith is essential. Matthew 10:32-33, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." The apostle Paul tells us: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). Such a confession was made by the eunuch in Acts 8:36-38.

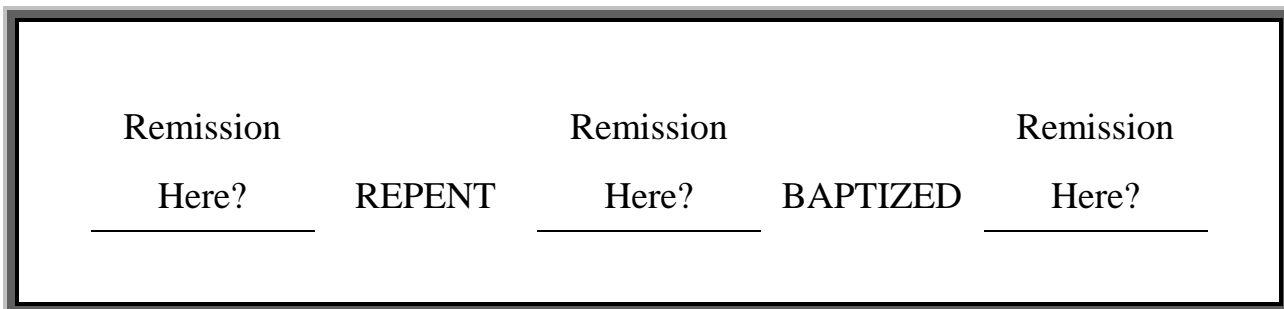
The Scriptures also teach that baptism is necessary for salvation. The Lord said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Mr. Barr would say, "Oh no! Baptism has nothing to do with salvation, Jesus. Don't you know that a person is saved as soon as he believes." Nevertheless, Jesus meant what he said. In order to clarify the exact position of Mr.

Barr with reference to this verse, I ask him to tell us where he would place salvation on the following diagram.



Please tell us exactly the point when a person is **saved**. Is it before he **believes**? Is it between **belief** and **baptism**? Is it after **baptism**? The Savior said, “He that **believeth** and is **baptized** shall be **saved**.” What do you say?

Furthermore, the inspired apostle Peter was asked by those Jews who believed his preaching on the day of Pentecost, “What shall we do?” Peter replied by saying, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:37-38). What was that, Peter? **Repent** and be **baptized** for the **remission of sins**! “Not so,” my opponent would say, “Those people had the remission of sins **before** they were baptized.” Of course, I accept the words of Peter rather than the words of my friend Mr. Barr. Again, to point out my opponent’s position further, I ask him to tell us when one actually receives the remission of sins.



Does one have the remission of sins before repentance, or between repentance and baptism, or after baptism? Will you tell us, Mr. Barr???

Then, 1 Peter 3:21 states: “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us.” This verse does not say that baptism is a figure of our salvation — it shows that baptism “corresponds” to the salvation of Noah by “water” (verse 20). *The New Testament in Modern*

Speech points out the meaning clearly: Noah and his house “were brought safely through the water. And, corresponding to that figure, baptism now saves you,” Once more I would like for my good opponent to tell us which of the following statements he accepts as the truth.

WHICH	(“Baptism doth also NOW save us”)
WILL YOU	OR
ACCEPT?	(“Baptism doth also NOT save us”)

Many other plain Bible statements could be given to show the scriptural purpose of baptism, but these are sufficient for one who will accept the truth (Acts 8:12, 36-39; 10:48; 16:14-15; 16:32-33; 18:8; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4, 17-18; Colossians 2:10-13).

Mr. Barr misrepresents me when he says, “We teach that Jesus Christ saves from sin, and they teach that baptism saves from sin.” My dear sir, I believe that the Lord Jesus saves us from sin, just as the Bible so clearly teaches (Ephesians 5:23; Matthew 26:28; Acts 20:28; etc.). However, the issue between us is **when** does Jesus save a person—before one has obeyed Him or after he has obeyed? The word of God says that it is **after obedience** (Heb. 5:8-9; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 1 Peter 1:22; Romans 6:17-18; etc.). **This is the real difference between us on the matter of salvation!**

My opponent charges, “Mr. Thrasher and his brethren teach one may take the first four steps given on his chart and he has nothing. He has no spiritual blessings until he is baptized.” Again, Mr. Barr, the Bible shows that one does not receive spiritual blessings unless he obeys God’s word. Salvation is not granted when one has done **part** of what God requires, but when **all** of God’s commands are obeyed. This includes each of the conditions given on my chart: hearing, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. I have produced Scripture to prove my affirmation. Let me give some illustrations on this point.

God’s blessings come when one has fully **obeyed** God’s commands. Take the instance of God’s telling the Israelites to march around the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). You will remember that God told them to march seven days, and he gave specific instruction concerning what they were to do, Observe that God promised that when they had **obeyed** his instructions, the walls of Jericho would fall down and they could take the city. **Question:** After the Israelites had marched around the walls the first day, did the walls fall down? No. What about after the second day? The third? The sixth? No, they still had not received the promise yet, for the simple reason that they had not completed **all** that God told them to do! It was not until they had marched the seventh day as God had directed them to do that they received the blessing of God. This did not nullify what was done the first six days, for unless they had marched the first six they could not

march the seventh day. Similarly, God has commanded people today to do several things in order to be saved. Although man may do some of what God has said, he does not receive the promised blessing until he has done **all** that God commands!

I have previously cited the case of Naaman in 2 Kings five. In order to be cleansed of his leprosy, Naaman was told to dip seven times in the river Jordan. Naaman was not made clean after he had dipped once, or twice, or even six times. Why not??? He had not done **all** that God required. However, after he had dipped the **seventh** time, his leprosy was gone. He had **obeyed** what God said. Please observe that the **water** did not cleanse him. It was God who did the healing, but God did it **when** Naaman **obeyed**, and **not before!** This principal is simple enough for anyone to understand. Now, Mr. Barr, do not quibble that these examples are not cases of conversion, because I am not arguing that they are. My point is that God does not give his blessings (whatever they are) until **after** one has done what He has commanded. If a person does only **part** of what God has said, he does not receive any benefits from God.

Mr. Barr says, “I have taken all five of the steps given on his chart # 6.” No, you have not done so, even by your own admission. You claim to have been saved before you made a “confession” with the mouth **unto salvation** (Romans 10:10), as both the Bible and the chart stated. Also, you were not “baptized Into Christ,” since you have already claimed that one is **in Christ** when he believes and before he is baptized. Of course, the inspired Book says, “For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Romans 6:3 teaches that we are “baptized **into** Jesus Christ.” This is contrary to what my opponent has said and contrary to Baptist doctrine.

My worthy opponent apparently denies my statement that “one must continue to do God’s will in order to receive the final reward or eternal salvation.” He leaves the impression that salvation is not a **reward**, and that such would contradict its being a “free gift.”

Not so, my friend! These ideas do not conflict. Notice several verses. “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall **reward** every man according to his works” (Matthew 16:27). “And every man shall receive his own **reward** according to his own labour” (1 Corinthians 3:8). “And, behold, I come quickly; and my **reward** is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:12). Mr. Barr would not make such careless statements if he were not in such a bad position with his erroneous doctrine. Of course, we need not blame Mr. Barr for not being able to defend his position—no one who holds his false theory on salvation can do any better. I say that with all due respect for Mr. Barr.

My honorable opponent mentions that there is division within the churches of Christ, I do not deny that. There was division in the church even while the apostles lived and taught, In fact, the first letter to the Corinthians was written because of this very reason. Paul sought to correct the problems among the Christians in that city, and admonished them to “all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you” (1 Cor. 1:10). There were also problems in other congregations, such as those mentioned in Revelation chapters two and three. But the fact that some Christians will not live as they should does not negate the proposition I am affirming. I am affirming that the church of Christ, of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice. The doctrines and practices of churches other than the one of which I am a member are not under consideration. Incidentally, I could mention the many

divisions among the different Baptist churches, of which there are over thirty. But I can see no need to bring in other groups (even among the Missionary Baptists), since they are not being represented in this debate.

In the latter part of his speech, Mr. Barr sought to enumerate several reasons why the church of Christ is unscriptural. I have dealt with some of these already in this speech; however, I would like to comment on a few of his statements.

I am asked “Do you baptize a child of God or a child of the Devil?” I baptize an individual who, though still in sin, hears the gospel of Christ, believes on Him, repents of his sins, confessed his faith, and desires to obey God’s command to be immersed for the remission of his sins. The Jews on Pentecost serve as examples: they were guilty of sin, yet they heard Peter’s sermon, they believed it, and asked what they should do. They were told to “repent, and be baptized” for the remission of sins. When they obeyed this instruction, they were forgiven and became children of God (Acts 2:41; Romans 6:17-18; Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 22:16).

Mr. Barr asserts that the church of Christ “is unscriptural because it did not begin in the right place. Instead of beginning in Jerusalem as they claim it had its beginning at Brush Run, Pa., U.S.A.” Although I have given evidence to refute these false assumptions of my opponent, I am challenging him to prove his statements, instead of simply making unfounded charges. Please deal with the evidence presented in this speech that there were churches of Christ existing before Alexander Campbell ever preached his first sermon. Those who are interested in these matters will expect you to do so.

I appreciate the opportunity to defend the church of Christ as being scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice. The only way to determine who is teaching the truth on this subject is to open the Book of God and investigate for yourself. Please follow closely the remarks of my opponent in his next speech.



Barr’s Second Negative

I am grateful to God for the opportunity to deny that the church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership is a true church of the living God. My opponent as most of his debating brethren, think it necessary to tell the readers how I have failed and he has succeeded. I am perfectly willing that the people who read make up their own mind after they have compared what we both say by what the Bible says.

I give the affirmative some more questions to answer, The question and answer method of debate is a good way to elicit truth, and I ask my friend to answer forthrightly without any evasion.

1. Are babies and five and six year old children in the house of God, the family of God, the kingdom of God?

2. If the answer to above question is “No,” then please tell us in whose family the babies and five and six year olds abide?

3. Since you evaded my question in my last speech concerning whom you baptize, I ask again: Do you baptize a child of God or a child of the devil? It should not be difficult for you to answer this question without evasion. You should not be ashamed to tell what you believe about the matter.

4. Did baptism save you? Please don't evade.

5. Did Jesus and the apostles receive the one baptism of Eph. 4:5?

Let me review with you Mr. Thrasher's answers to my questions I asked him in my first negative speech. When I asked him where the church of his membership was located, his reply was that it met for worship in the meeting house on the Old Moulton Road in Decatur, Alabama. Yet when I asked him in question number three if he was a member of one or two churches he replied, “I am a member of the one church of which Jesus is Head and Savior (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18). This church consists of all saved individuals throughout the world.” Mr. Thrasher, you evaded the question and you know it. Though you evaded the question, it is plain to see from your over-all answers that you are a member of two bodies or churches: the one in Decatur, Alabama and the universal one composed of all the saved. The Bible says nothing of your type “church of Christ” either by name or in fact. Please tell the readers which of the two churches you are defending in this debate: the one in Decatur, Alabama or the universal church composed of all the saved?

My friend also evaded question number two. I asked if an accountable person must be a member of the church of his membership in order to be saved. We all know that Jesus saves first, and then the Lord adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47). He does not add the unsaved to the church to save them. Jesus is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23), and this body was the church at Ephesus and not a universal church scattered all over the world. But the verse does not say He is the Savior of the body only. He saved the thief on the cross, and he was not a member of the church. Does Mr. Thrasher believe that Jesus is the Savior of the members of the body that apostatize and go to hell?

Mr. Thrasher, why are you afraid to answer questions? Is it because you know your proposition is a false one? You evaded question number four, and the readers will know it. I asked you if the name “church of God” was as good and scriptural a name as “church of Christ”? You haven't answered my question yet. Will you? My opponent gives up the proposition that the name “church of Christ” is scriptural. If the names “church,” “church of God,” “bride of Christ” are as scriptural as the name “church of Christ,” and these are names he gave in answer to question number four, then all see that he has given up his church name as being scriptural. I have yet to see a sign up in front of a church teaching the things Mr. Thrasher teaches that says

“church,” “church of God,” or “bride of Christ.” I ask my opponent to cite us to just one of the churches to whom Paul, James, Peter or others wrote that was addressed as “the church of Christ” or “church of Christ.” Face up to the facts, Mr. Thrasher, and admit that the church of your membership, neither the one in Decatur, Alabama nor the one that is universal, is found in name or in fact in the Bible.

In answer to my question number five, wherein I ask for the scripture that gives the specific name “church of Christ” as the name the church should wear, my opponent gives up his name as being scriptural when he said, “. . . the phrase ‘church of Christ’ is not the only scriptural designation for the church.” We all know that all true New Testament churches are churches of Christ in the sense that they belong to Christ just as all true churches are churches of God in that they belong to Him. Let all be reminded that Mr. Thrasher and his brethren do use exclusively the name “church of Christ.”

My friend still insists that the church originated on Pentecost, that is the church he represents. I have called for and still call for just one verse of scripture that says the church started on Pentecost. He will never find such a verse and he knows it, because there is no such scripture. The church existed before Pentecost (Matthew 18:15-17); and it was waiting in the upper room (Acts 2) on the day of Pentecost, and it was here after Pentecost (Acts 2:47). And thank God it has been here in every age since the personal ministry of Jesus and will be here until Jesus comes again.

I certainly do say that the “church” and the “kingdom” are two entirely different New Testament words. They are not even translated from the same Old Testament word. Let those who read study the kingdom parables in Matthew chapter 13 and they will see that the kingdom is not the church. If so, you would have Jesus saying you are to let the tares (children of the devil) grow up in the church with the wheat (children of God) till the end of the age. If as my friend says the kingdom and the church are one and the same, then the church was here during the personal ministry of Jesus as I have previously shown. Luke 16:16, “The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” You cannot press into something that does not exist! Mr. J. L. Hines, one of Mr. Thrasher’s brethren said in the *Norris-Hines Debate*, page 40, “Kingdom comes from the Greek ‘basileia,’ church comes from the Greek ‘ekklesia.’ ‘Church’ and ‘kingdom’ come from different Greek words, and these Greek words are not synonyms. No scholar ever claimed that they are synonymous.” Now Mr. Thrasher, I didn’t say these words but your well-known debating brother of days gone by, who was acknowledged as a scholar, said them. I will try and teach you with your own brethren.

My friend Thrasher denies the many scholars I quoted told the truth when they record that the “church of Christ” started in the 1800’s under the leadership of Alexander Campbell and others. I ask again that our readers go to any public library and look into religious histories and encyclopedias and other books and see that the people I quoted in my last speech are correct. Mr. Thrasher attempted to give a few, and out of necessity it would be a few, who he says testify that the “Church of Christ” dates back to Pentecost. His first reference from the *Encyclopedia Americana* shows the church of his membership to be unscriptural when he quotes, “. . . makes it impossible to trace without interruption specific groups back to the day of Pentecost.” True churches can be traced, Ephesians 3:21. Matthew 16:18 and many others show the church to have been here in every age. Of course there were churches of Christ in England in the 17th

century, but not the kind my friend defends that wears the name exclusively “church of Christ.” But there were churches of Christ in the sense that they belonged to Him. No one denies that Mr. Spencer was right in his history when he points out there were people in North Carolina as early as 1695 who taught what “Campbellites” teach. At least Mr. Spencer knew what a Campbellite was, and Mr. Thrasher seems not to know. The Catholics taught what Campbellites teach long before there was an organized Campbellite church. Let Mr. Thrasher give his proof that the Rocky Springs Church of Christ taught the same things in 1808 that Mr. Thrasher and his brethren teach today. Should he be able to do that they would still be over 1800 years too late to be a true church of the living God.

Mr. Thrasher goes over in his second speech his chart on worship as given in his first speech. The things he mentions in his chart would prove others than the church he represents to be scriptural, yet he believes all are unscriptural and on their road to hell.

My friend seems to want to debate on instrumental music, but he seems to be somewhat lukewarm about it. Many scriptures in the Bible prove that the worship of God with instrumental music is acceptable to God. I cited in my last speech Psalm 150. Please read it. But Mr. Thrasher and his people set up a law of their own that says, “Thou shalt not worship God with instrumental music.” Let my friend point us to such a law anywhere in the Bible, Old or New Testaments. Does Mr. Thrasher accept the Old Testament as the Word of God? Does he ever go to the Old Testament for authority for anything he practices? Did my friend read 2 Chronicles 29:25? But let me accommodate Mr. Thrasher with a New Testament scripture, Col. 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” The word “psalms” is translated from a word that is “psallo.” Robinson’s New Testament Greek Lexicon says: “Psallo—to impel, to touch, to strike, to touch or strike the cords, to play on a stringed instrument simply as an accompaniment to the voice.” You are wrong on practically everything you teach, Mr. Thrasher. If you speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent then I call on you to point us to the verse that says we are not to worship God by singing to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. If you can’t point to such a verse then please be silent on the question as the Bible is silent on saying we are not to use stringed instruments in worship.

I pointed out that the “Church of Christ” is unscriptural in that they reverse the Bible order of repentance and faith. All I ask is that the readers go back to my first negative speech and read the scriptures on the Bible order and find that it is always repentance first and then faith. One does not repent toward Christ as Mr. Thrasher accuses me of believing but Acts 20:21 says, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Note please that repentance is toward God the Father, and faith is toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

Throughout this debate I have given many scriptures that teach us one is saved when he comes to the point of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. He must hear, and repent before he will or can believe in Christ or have faith in Christ to save his soul.

My opponent would like very much to make people believe that my brethren and I believe in a faith without obedience, a faith that is dead and inactive, that does not work. But he knows better than this, and is only hoping he can get the readers to believe his falsehood.

Is it an obedient faith, an active faith, a faith that works by love when one hears, believes in Jesus Christ, repents of his sins, confesses Jesus before men? He believes in obeying one command to be saved, and that is baptism. He may obey all the rest, but he is lost if he does not have faith to believe that baptism saved him.

Mr. Thrasher surreptitiously seeks to make Jesus say that baptism is a condition of salvation in Mark 16:16, but He said no such thing. Romans 5:1 teaches that we are justified by faith and are at peace with God, and since both Mr. Thrasher and I teach that one must believe before he is a fit candidate for baptism, then one is justified and is at peace with God before his baptism. Mr. Thrasher would say, "Oh no! One is not justified and is not at peace with God until he is baptized. Don't you know that one is saved as soon as he is baptized?" I say that "every one that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (I John 5:1). What do you say, Mr. Thrasher? I say he is still a child of God after he is baptized as Mark 16:16 states.

I believe remission is where Peter (who spake the words of Acts 2:38) put it in Acts 10:43, "To Him [Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever **believeth in Him** [emphasis mine] shall receive remission of sins." Will you tell us what you believe about it, Mr. Thrasher? I accept what Peter said in 1 Peter 3:21, all of what he said and not just a part of it. He says that baptism saves in a figure, and that salvation is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Mr. Thrasher says in his last speech, "Mr. Barr misrepresents me when he says, 'We teach that Jesus Christ saves from sin, and they teach that baptism saved from sin.' My dear sir, I believe that the Lord saves from sin ..." But please read his speech and see his diagram where he cuts the middle out of a verse and types, "baptism doth also **now** [emphasis his] save us." Mr. Thrasher, you meet yourself coming back. You are so confused you don't seem to know what you believe. Now tell us plainly, did baptism save you or did Jesus save you? Please cite us to a scripture that says Jesus saved us after obedience to baptism. You can't do it and you know it. **The real difference between us on the matter of salvation** is that I teach that one must look to the Lord for salvation, and Mr. Thrasher teaches that one must look to baptism for salvation. See his charts in his last speech as proof of my statement. There is not a verse in the Bible that says God requires one to be baptized in order to be saved. Saved people gladly follow the Lord in scriptural baptism, in obedience to His command, but not in order to be saved, but because they are saved.

Should God require one to be baptized seven times in order to be saved then I would believe he would have to be baptized seven times to be saved. The walls of Jericho fell as God said they would when they marched around them seven times. Where did God command anybody to be baptized to be saved? Come on, Mr. Thrasher, and give us that command from God. God certainly commanded Naaman to dip seven times in the river Jordan to be cleansed.

But where in the Bible did God require that one be baptized to be saved? When Mr. Thrasher said in his last speech, "If a person does only **part** [emphasis his] of what God has said, he does not receive any benefits from God." In this statement my opponent shows that he puts everything in the water. There are no benefits no matter what one does until he is baptized is this dangerous, unscriptural doctrine. Where did God say be baptized to be saved? Where did God command anyone to be baptized to be saved? I will wait for an answer.

In many Scriptures we are taught that one believes *eis* Christ, John 1:12; 2:23; 3:15-16, 18, 36; 6:47; 11:25-26, and many many more. Twice in the entire New Testament one is said to be baptized into Christ, Romans 6:3 and Gal. 3:27. One believes into Christ actually, and one is

baptized into Christ figuratively. In the Wycliffe translation, the very first English translation, Gal. 3:27 and Rom. 6:3 are translated baptized in Christ and not into Christ. So for several years people who read and understood only the English language, when the only translation in existence was the Wycliffe translation, could not have known how to get into Christ according to my opponent's argument. But there are many verses as translated in the Wycliffe translation that tells that one believes *eis* Christ.

Mr. Thrasher again takes the position that one must obey all the thousands of commandments in the New Testament in order to receive the "final reward or eternal salvation." He argues that salvation is a reward given to the one who does God's will till he dies. My opponent would be getting somewhere if he would just cite us to the scripture that says salvation is a **reward** (emphasis mine). He says that salvation being a "free gift" and a reward does not conflict. Though he cannot find where salvation is said to be a reward. I would call to your attention, Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death, but the **free gift** [emphasis mine] of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord" (R.V.). We are cited to Matthew 16:27, 1 Cor. 3:8, and Rev. 22:12. Anyone who is able to read in reading these verses cited will see that they do not speak of the rewards spoken of in the verses as being the reward of salvation. Salvation and rewards are two different things entirely. I say this with all due respect to Mr. Thrasher.

The defender of the "Church of Christ" refuses to defend many many "churches of Christ," and no one can know for sure, including myself, if he is seeking to defend in this debate the "Church of Christ" in Decatur, Alabama or the universal "church of Christ" composed of all the saved. Surely he does not believe that all accountable persons not belonging to the "church of Christ" in Decatur, Alabama are lost and on their road to hell. If so, his people had better head for Decatur fast. Tell us plainly if you are a member of the "Church of Christ" in Decatur, Alabama or the universal "church of Christ" scattered all over the world. Must one be a member of both these churches in order to be saved?

When I asked in my last speech, "Do you baptize a child of God or a child of the devil?" my opponent adds to the confusing answers I have received from his debating brethren by evading the question and giving a long answer, but never saying if his candidate for baptism is a child of God or a child of the devil. Is Mr. Thrasher ashamed to tell what he believes about the matter? If not, let him tell us which it is.

How the church of my opponent's membership had its beginning at Brush Run, Pa., U.S.A., is recorded in the *Memoirs of Campbell*, Vol. 1, pp. 395, 398. The memoirs were written by Campbell's son-in-law. He said: "Having formed some acquaintance with a Matthias Luse, a Baptist preacher, who lived above Washington, he [Alexander Campbell] concluded to make application to him to perform the rite [baptism], and, on his way to visit him, called to see his father [Thomas Campbell], and family who were then living on a little farm between Washington and Mount Pleasant ... Wednesday, the 12th of June, 1812, having been selected, Elder Luse, in company with Elder Henry Speers, called at Thomas Campbell's on their way to the place chosen for the immersion, which was the deep pool in Buffalo Creek, ... Alexander Campbell and his wife, his father and mother, and his sisters—all seven persons." Almost every school boy and girl in America knows that the "Church of Christ" of Mr. Thrasher's membership had its beginning from the Campbell movement that began in Brush Run, Pa. I call on my opponent to deal with the evidence given in this speech that proves his church unscriptural. Those who are interested in these matters will expect you to do so, Mr. Thrasher.

The “Church of Christ” of Mr. Thrasher’s membership is unscriptural because it is not the martyr church. Let my friend name one man, woman, boy or girl who was a member of the church he is a member of that was martyred in the 12th, 13th, 14th, or 15th century. Come on, Mr. Thrasher, the people will expect you to do this if possible.

It is unscriptural in its teaching of salvation by grace plus works, and apostasy of a blood-washed child of God as this teaching contradicts the Word of God (Romans 11:6; John 10:28),

It is unscriptural because the boasted claim to be the New Testament Church is contrary to the Bible, history and common honesty.

It is unscriptural because its teaching deifies the church. Be a member of said church or die and go to hell is their teaching for accountable beings. The Bible says, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” One must look to the Lord and not to church membership for salvation.

It is unscriptural because it places salvation and all like blessings in literal water. This is Romish doctrine. Mr. Thrasher has already taken the position in this debate that there are no spiritual blessings for the unbaptized.

It is unscriptural in its pharasaical attitude and claims; it preaches all religionists into hell except its own members, and some of their debaters have taken the position in public debate that they believe at least fifty per cent of the members of the “Church of Christ” will go to hell. Does Mr. Thrasher believe that fifty per cent will go to hell? We will wait and see if he is ashamed to tell the truth about what he teaches about this matter.

It is unscriptural in its Romish teaching of salvation by works which is contrary to what the Bible teaches. Please read Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 4:5, and Titus 3:5.

It is unscriptural in its teaching that God has two plans of salvation in operation at the same time: one for the alien sinner and another for the lost child of God. He takes one through the water to save him and the other is saved through prayer. Usually the preacher prays him back in just like the priest of Rome prays them back in.

It is unscriptural because it teaches that one cannot have saving faith until he reaches the water. But the Bible contradicts this preachment. Please read Luke 7:50. His faith is dead, he is disobedient, and his faith is not working by love until he is baptized according to the position taken by Mr. Thrasher in this debate. God deliver us from such spiritual leaders!

It is unscriptural because it teaches that one does not reach the blood of Jesus until he gets into the water. Romans 3:25 teaches the opposite.

It is unscriptural because it teaches that one cannot have spiritual life until he gets into the water. But 1 John 5:12 says, “He that hath the Son hath life.” Did Mr. Thrasher have the Son while on his way to the baptismal waters or did he go to baptism without Jesus?

It is unscriptural because it teaches that one cannot have a pure heart until he gets into the water. But Acts 15:9 says, “And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts **by faith** [emphasis mine]. Mr. Thrasher, the readers will expect you to tell us if your heart was pure before baptism.

It is unscriptural because it teaches that one cannot be justified until he gets into the water. But Romans 5:1 and many many other scriptures teach otherwise.

It is unscriptural because they make a hypocritical cry for union. They only want union like the snake wants with the frog: the frog in the snake's belly. This in spite of the fact that they are the most divided group in professing Christendom today.

It is unscriptural because it teaches that the Lord's church is one big body composed of all the saved in the world, located nowhere. The Bible knows nothing of such a church.

I appreciate the opportunity of showing the falsity of this impostor church that seeks to pan itself off as the Lord's church. The only way to determine who is teaching the truth on this subject is to open the Bible and investigate for your self. I urge you to do it. Please read carefully what Mr. Thrasher will say in his next and last speech on this proposition.



Thrasher's Third Affirmative

As I come in further affirmation of the proposition that "The church of Christ, of which I am a member, is scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice," I encourage each sincere person to investigate what Mr. Barr and I have presented in this discussion. Those ideas that you find revealed in the inspired Book are urgently important, for with them rests the salvation of your soul and mine (Romans 1:16; John 8:32).

Let me first answer the questions that Mr. Barr asked. (1) Not in the sense that the term kingdom is used in such passages as John 3:5. Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Infants do not need to be "born again," since they are not sinners. Furthermore, Colossians 1:13 speaks of children of God as being delivered "from the power of darkness," and "translated into the kingdom." Infants do not need to be "delivered" from the power of darkness; they are not guilty of sin. In this sense they are not in the kingdom. However, they are in a "safe" relationship with God. No infant will be damned. (2) See comments on number one. (3) The person whom I baptize is a sinner who has heard the gospel of Christ, believed, repented of his sins, confessed his faith, and who is prepared to obey the command of God to be baptized into Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21). He is still in sin until he obeys God in baptism. (4) Baptism saves as Peter states in 1 Peter 3:21. This does not imply that baptism

alone saves. The scriptural idea is that God saves through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ when an alien sinner hears the gospel (Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:24), believes (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6), repents of his sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30), confesses with the mouth his faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33), and is baptized into Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-4, 17-18; Acts 2:38). If my opponent seeks to quibble on the question of whether or not baptism saves in this sense, I would like to ask him this question: Does “**faith**” save you? If yes, does this mean that Jesus Christ does **not** save you? Or does it simply mean that Jesus does not save a person unless he believes? Please tell us! (5) Jesus and the apostles were baptized in water by John; however, the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 is water baptism under the great commission in the name of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38).

In my second affirmative speech, I pointed out that the Scriptures teach that those who are saved are added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47). The inspired writer tells us that Jesus is the “savior” of the body (the church, Ephesians 5:23). My opponent attempts to reply by saying, “We all know that Jesus saves first, and then the Lord adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47) ... Jesus is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23) ... But the verse does not say He is the Savior of the body only.” Mr. Barr, why won’t you just accept the truth as stated in these verses? If a person is saved, God has said He adds him to His church. My opponent thinks that he does not! I accept what the word of God says, rather than the word of Mr. Barr on the matter.

When people are saved they become members of the Lord’s church, because they are added to it by the Lord (Acts 2:47; 20:28; Ephesians 5:23). My opponent’s position is that some of the saved are not added to the church.

In answer to a question, I stated in my previous speech that “various terms such as ‘church,’ ‘church of God,’ ‘bride of Christ,’ etc. are scriptural to use in reference to the church of the New Testament. Each of these designations shows relationship between Christ and His church.” Mr. Barr comments, “My opponent gives up the proposition that the name ‘church of Christ’ is scriptural.” By what kind of ridiculous reasoning does Mr. Barr conclude that the term “church of Christ” is unscriptural because these other terms are scriptural??? I have proved by the Scriptures that several different designations may be used to refer to the Lord’s church. Any of these terms are **scriptural**, because we find them in the Bible. I introduced a chart in my first affirmative to demonstrate the scripturalness of these different terms: “body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:27), “bride of Christ” (Rev, 21:9), “kingdom” (Col. 1:13), “temple of God” (1 Cor. 3:16), “flock of God” (1 Peter 5:2), “house of God” (1 Timothy 3:15), “church” (Matthew 16:18); “church of God” (1 Cor. 1:2); “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). It is absurd to conclude that any one of these is unscriptural. The truth is that Mr. Barr is hurting badly because he cannot find the Missionary Baptist Church in the Bible, so he tries to discredit others who call the church by scriptural names. I have proved that “such terms as ‘Baptist Church,’ ‘Baptist churches,’ ‘Missionary Baptist Church,’ and ‘Missionary Baptist churches’ are not found in God’s Book, as Mr. Barr has already admitted. Therefore, one cannot ‘speak as the oracles of God’ (1 Peter 4:11) and use such terms.” My friend, why didn’t you attempt to refute this statement? The reason is obvious— **you could not!**

Mr. Barr states, “We all know that all true New Testament churches are churches of Christ in the sense that they belong to Christ,” Notice, “**all true New Testament churches are churches of Christ**”! Therefore, it is certainly right and proper to call them what they are: “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). When my opponent asserts that “Mr. Thrasher and his

brethren do use exclusively the name ‘church of Christ,’” he misrepresents the matter. My brethren and I continuously refer to the church by using all of these terms such as “body of Christ,” “bride of Christ,” or simply “church.” I personally know of several congregations that use these terms in their bulletins and on their signs. Thus, my opponent is wrong when he claims we use the name “church of Christ” exclusively. We use all of the scriptural terms I have mentioned.

In reference to the establishment of the church, I have shown that the church could not have existed before the death of Jesus Christ. The church was to be built upon Jesus Christ as the “chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20), and we all understand that a building cannot be built until the cornerstone has been laid.

But Jesus stated that the cornerstone could not be laid until it had been rejected by the Jews (Luke 20:9-19), and this rejection would be when Jesus was crucified (Acts 4:10-11). Therefore, the church could not be built before the death of Jesus, according to the Scriptures.

My friend still tries to dodge these facts about the origin of the church by using Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:15-17. However, while Jesus was on the earth, he was preparing his disciples for the coming of the church, and he instructed them regarding the nature of the church that would be set up. But the church did not exist in actuality at this time, because Jesus had not yet been crucified. The writer of Hebrews states that the New Testament did not come into force until after His death. Therefore, since the New Testament was not then in force, the New Testament church certainly could not have existed.

Mr. Barr implies that I argued that the words “church” and “kingdom” are synonyms. I have not so stated. I do contend that the church is the kingdom of God on earth today, and I produced scriptural evidence in proof of that contention. My opponent did not attempt to refute what I affirmed. Mr. Barr, why didn’t you try to answer my arguments, instead of ignoring them as you did? I gave Matthew 16:18-19, Acts 20:25-28, 1 Cor. 4:17-20, and Colossians 1:13-18 to emphasize that the church is the kingdom. Furthermore, I gave many verses proving the kingdom or church did not exist before Pentecost (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 16:18; Mark 9:1; 15:43; Luke 10:9; Acts 1:6) and others to prove that it did exist after Pentecost (Acts 2:47; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9).

With reference to the matter of secular history, my opponent has not proved and cannot prove that churches of Christ originated with Alexander Campbell about the year 1827. Mr. Campbell was a very influential man in his time, but he is not the “head and founder” of churches of Christ, as Mr. Barr has asserted in this debate. I have cited evidence from history that churches of Christ existed before Alexander Campbell ever preached a sermon—in fact, before he was even born! My opponent was silent about the quotation from the *Encyclopedia Americana*: “In faith and practice they date back to the founding of the church of the New Testament on the first Pentecost after Jesus resurrection.” Why didn’t you tell us if you accept this scholarship, Mr. Barr? If you accept the accuracy of this statement, you admit the truthfulness of my affirmation. If you deny its accuracy, then you admit that the statements of “scholars” are often wrong, including those upon which you may depend. That is why I did not go to uninspired history in this debate until you introduced it. This debate is concerning what is scriptural! My opponent has delved into these other matters in an effort to sidetrack the real issue.

In actuality, it would not make any difference whether one could trace the church through uninspired history or not. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:22-25). When it is preached (sown) in honest hearts, it produces children of God. An example of this occurred on Pentecost when Peter preached the gospel and 3000 souls were saved (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47). If the same gospel is preached today, the same results will occur, whether or not one could “trace a chain” through history. Let me give an illustration.

Suppose that, for some reason, no watermelons were grown in this country for 100 years. At the end of that period of time, someone obtained some watermelon seeds and planted them. When the plants came up, what would they be? According to my opponent’s logic(?), they couldn’t be watermelons, because watermelons had not been grown for 100 years! He would go out and try to find a succession of watermelons during those 100 years before he would accept the fact that they were actually watermelons. Of course, the truth would be that the plants would be watermelons, because watermelon seeds produce watermelons, not oak trees or pumpkins. Similarly, when the word of God (the seed) is preached, children of God will be produced, even if history did not record anything about a succession of churches throughout every age or period of time.

I also cited the following quotation from the *Encyclopedia Americana*: “It is known that during the 17th century there were Churches of Christ in England.” My friend replies, “Of course there were churches of Christ in England in the 17th century, but not the kind my friend defends.” Mr. Barr, the quotation cited is from the article entitled “**Churches of Christ**,” referring to congregations such as I represent. You may assert that these were different from the church I am defending, but this encyclopedia indicates that they are the same. And remember that this was during the 17th century (1600’s)—**over a century before Alexander Campbell was born!** Yet my worthy opponent says I am a “Campbellite,” and that the “church of Christ” of which I am a member was started by Alexander Campbell. Very strange indeed!

My friend Barr says, “Many scriptures in the Bible prove that the worship of God with instrumental music is acceptable to God.” What are the Bible verses that teach Christians to use mechanical instruments of music in worship **in the church** today? He mentioned Psalms 150; however, I have already showed that this proves nothing whatsoever about worship **in the New Testament church**. Certainly people used instrumental music in worship in the Old Testament, just as they offered various animal sacrifices, burned incense, etc. Does that prove that we may do these things in worship today??? Why didn’t you answer, Mr. Barr? I asked you this in my previous speech, but you completely ignored what I asked.

In his futile effort to cite New Testament authority for instrumental music in the worship of the church, my opponent quotes Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Mr. Barr claims that “psalms” in this verse indicates an instrumental accompaniment. This is not so! The word “*psallo*” **in the New Testament** means “to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon*, page 675). Although the word may have meant different things at other times, in the New Testament, Thayer says the word means to **sing**. Even the translators of the King James Version and American Standard Version, as well as others, rendered the passage as meaning “**sing**” not **play**! Of course, Mr. Barr knows more about this than all of the translators did(?)! Furthermore, since Colossians 3:16 applies to **every individual** who worships, if Mr.

Barr were correct that the verse means **singing and playing**, then every person would have to play a mechanical instrument of some kind! One person could not **play** for another person any more than he could **sing** for another. Therefore, if his argument is true, then **all** would be required to “psallo” (**sing and play**). The truth is that the verse says we are to **sing** “with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Mr. Barr refuses to accept what the Lord said in Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” The Savior said to **believe and be baptized** and you will be **saved**. My opponent denies that the Lord told the truth in this verse. Mr. Barr teaches that a person **believes** and he is **saved** at that point, then he can be **baptized** sometime after that if he wants to do so. Notice the chart on this point.

THE BIBLE <i>versus</i> VERNON BARR!			
Mark 16:16	Believe	Baptized	Saved
Vernon Barr	Believe	Saved	Baptized
Acts 2:38	Repent	Baptized	Remission
Vernon Barr	Repent	Remission	Baptized
Acts 22:16	Arise	Baptized	Wash Away Sins
Vernon Barr	Arise	Wash Away Sins	Baptized
1 Peter 3:21	Baptism Now Saves Us		
Vernon Barr	It Has Nothing To Do With Salvation		
WHICH WILL YOU ACCEPT? THE BIBLE OR VERNON BARR?			

Mr. Barr asks me: “Did baptism save you or did Jesus save you?” Answer: Jesus saved me when I was scripturally baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). Question for Mr.

Barr: Did **faith** save you or did **Jesus** save you? Please do not forget to tell us!

My honorable opponent continues to ignore my point on Naaman the leper. In 2 Kings 5 we read where Naaman was told to dip in the river Jordan seven times in order to be cleansed of his leprosy. After he had dipped **once**, he was not cleansed. Nor was he cleansed after the **second**, **third**, or even the **sixth** dip. **Why not???** Simple—he had not yet done **all** that God had commanded him to do. However, when he had dipped the **seventh** time, he was cleansed just as God promised. According to Mr. Barr’s reasoning, the first six dips in Jordan were worthless, and all of the benefits were in the seventh dip. But the truth is simply that God blesses when one has done **all** that has been commanded.

We are told to believe, repent, confess, and be baptized in order to be saved. When is one actually saved? Not until he has done **all** that God has commanded! Does that make the conditions previous to baptism worthless? **No!** One could not be scripturally baptized unless he had believed, repented, and confessed, just as the Bible indicates. Anyone could understand this if he would.

The “church of Christ” consists of all saved people throughout the world, because all of the saved are added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47; 20:28; Ephesians 5:23). The saved in various localities throughout the world meet together to worship and work in the ways the Bible authorizes. These local churches follow the Bible pattern in the name they wear, their organization, worship, work, and doctrine. I would like to summarize these matters in my concluding remarks on this proposition.

The New Testament church may be scripturally called by various terms, such as the body of Christ, bride of Christ, temple of God, flock of God, house of God, church, church of God, churches of Christ, etc. There is no doubt as to the scripturalness of these designations, since I have presented Bible verses for each of them. However, for a group to call itself by a term or terms that are not found in the inspired writings is to violate the Bible principle of “speaking as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11). In the very beginning of this debate, I challenged my opponent to find the Scripture that mentions the “Missionary Baptist Church” (singular) or “Missionary Baptist churches” (plural). He has not done it and he will not do it, because such an institution is not even remotely mentioned in the Bible.

My opponent has simply ridiculed my brethren for referring to local churches as “churches of Christ”—although that designation is divinely approved (Romans 16:16). It is tragic that some men will go so far as to cast reflection upon scriptural terminology, so as to elevate humanly originated names such as “Missionary Baptist Church.” My hope is that seekers of truth will consider the seriousness of such action.

The organization of local churches in the New Testament was simple: Each congregation had a plurality of men appointed as elders to oversee the work of the flock among them (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3) and deacons to serve under the oversight of the elders (1 Timothy 3:8-13). This is set forth plainly in Philippians 1:1, “...to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”

The worship of the congregations in the New Testament was simple. They studied the Scriptures, observed the Lord’s supper on the first day of the week, contributed (gave) on the first day of the week as they had been prospered, sang praises unto God, and prayed (Acts 2:42;

20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Eph. 5:19; etc.).

The work of these local churches was also simple: evangelism, edification, and benevolence. In other words, they taught God's word, built up the members in the faith, and relieved their needy. There were no recreational, social, and entertainment activities as conducted by some today as congregational work. Every facet of the New Testament church was based upon the teachings of the word of God, as revealed by the Holy Spirit through inspired men. I appeal to each person who reads this discussion to search the Scriptures with an open mind, and accept those things that are found therein. "The truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).



Barr's Third Negative

This being the last speech in this discussion, I ask that each reader examine closely all we both have to say in every speech. We both cannot be right, and you must be the judge and the jury. Be sure that that only is right which coincides with what the Bible teaches.

Mr. Thrasher has given up his affirmative when he admits to several names for the church of his membership. His proposition reads, "The Church of Christ, of which I am a member." He says that he is a member of the "Church of Christ" on Moulton Road in Decatur, Alabama, and he also says he is a member of the Church that is composed of all the saved. He seemingly does not know which church he is defending in this debate.

I admit to there being a church in Decatur, Alabama, located on Moulton Road named "Church of Christ." But I deny that it in fact belongs to Christ, and hence it is not a Church of Christ; it only seeks to fool people by wearing the official title of Jesus. Christ is not His name, but Jesus is His name, Matt. 1:21. Christ means the Anointed One. There is no such church mentioned in the Bible that is composed of all the saved. So, the church of Mr. Thrasher's membership cannot be found by name or in fact anywhere in the Word of God.

My worthy opponent attacked Missionary Baptist Churches in his negating my affirmative proposition as he was supposed to do. But throughout his affirmative he continues to attack Missionary Baptist Churches which shows his awareness of his failure to disprove Baptist Churches to be scriptural. But the floodgates of Hell have been turned loose against Missionary Baptist Churches since Jesus started the first one during His personal ministry. They have not and they will not prevail against the Lord's blood-bought bodies.

A man does not live, and his mother has never yet been born, who can answer questions truthfully and without evading if he espouses a false cause, an unscriptural position. Mr. Thrasher throughout this debate evaded answering my questions to him in a direct and straightforward manner.

I asked in my last speech if “babies and five and six year old children are in the house of God, the family of God, the kingdom of God.” Mr. Thrasher, you evaded answering, and you know you did. You take the position that all these expressions, “family of God, house of God, kingdom of God” refer to the Church. When five and six year old children die according to your pernicious doctrine, they are not members of God’s family, house or kingdom. They would be orphans up in heaven. Babies and five and six year olds who die are saved by the blood of Christ and go to God’s heaven members of God’s house, family, and kingdom. Children can understand this, but it seems that Mr. Thrasher cannot.

You did not answer question number 2, and the people who read will know it. You should have told the readers if babies in heaven are in God’s family. According to your false teaching, they are not because you teach the family of God and the church are one and the same thing.

In answering question number 3, my friend evades, but he does say, “He is still in sin until he obeys God in baptism.” Mr. Thrasher, you could have answered my question and said, “I baptize a child of the Devil.” Deep in your heart you are ashamed of many things you teach, and I don’t blame you, as I would be ashamed to teach what you teach concerning baptism. His candidate for baptism hears the gospel, believes in Jesus Christ with all his heart, repents to God of all his sins, confesses Jesus before men, agrees to be baptized, yet “he is still in his sins,” according to this Romish doctrine. Should his candidate get run over and killed while going with the preacher to a stream to be baptized, he would go to hell, if Mr. Thrasher and his brethren are correct in their teaching. They are not correct!

In question number 4, I asked if baptism saved him. He replied that baptism alone did not save him. Should he obey all the other commandments except baptism and die before he is baptized and go to hell, then I believe baptism alone saved him if he would obey baptism and die and go to heaven. If not, why not? Mr. Thrasher asks me, “Does faith save you?” The person who is the object of my faith saved me (Luke 7:50); without faith in Christ Jesus I could not be saved, Heb. 11:6; John 3:36; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 5:2, and many others. If Mr. Thrasher could find just one verse that says, “Without **baptism** [emphasis mine] it is impossible to please God.” Or, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, he that is **baptized** [emphasis mine] hath eternal life.” Or, “For ye are all the children of God by **baptism** [emphasis mine].” Or, “By whom also we have access by **baptism** [emphasis mine] into this grace.” But there are no such scriptures in the Bible.

The church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership teaches a plan of salvation foreign to the Word of God and hence could not be and is not truly a church of Christ or The Church of Christ.

Mr. Thrasher evaded question number 5. I asked him if Jesus and the apostles received the one baptism of Eph. 4:5. He knows he evaded the question. God knows he evaded it, and the readers will know he evaded it. He answered that Jesus and the apostles were baptized in water by John, and that the one baptism of Eph. 4:5 is water baptism! Jesus and the apostles were baptized by the God-sent Missionary Baptist preacher named John. Baptists administer the same kind of baptism today, and it is the one baptism of Eph. 4:5. Mr. Thrasher and his brethren do not have the scriptural baptism of Eph. 4:5.

The saved spoken of in Acts 2:47 were added to the Lord's local church at Jerusalem and not to some imaginary church composed of all the saved. There had to be a church present for the Lord to add the saved to; but my opponent thinks that because the word church is mentioned in Acts 2:47, the church mentioned in Matt. 18:17 ("tell it unto the church") did not actually exist and that Jesus was instructing them to tell it to a church of the future. But he is mistaken, as he is in many of the things he teaches. Mr. Thrasher, why won't you just accept the truth as stated in Matt. 18:17?

Mr. Barr is not hurting as Mr. Thrasher says I am. He says I am hurting badly because I cannot find "the Missionary Baptist Church" in the Bible. I find that every church mentioned in the New Testament is a Missionary Baptist Church in origin, doctrine, and practice. I believe I have proven this from the Bible.

Poor Mr. Thrasher is trying to gain heaven on the name he wears, and yet he cannot find the church of his membership mentioned in the Bible by name or in fact. Why could he not find one letter in the entire New Testament addressed to "Church of Christ" or "The Church of Christ"? And he could not find one verse that says, "Thy baptism hath saved thee, go in peace" (see Luke 7:50). Yet, he puts it all in baptism, because he teaches one may obey all the other commands and fail to be baptized, and he will go to Hell. This is why I oppose so strenuously this impostor church of Mr. Thrasher's membership that all who know the facts know wears the name exclusively in front of their meeting houses, "Church of Christ." They are not true churches of Christ, as this is only the name they have taken unto themselves thereby hoping to deceive people into believing they are the Lord's Church. One may use every descriptive term found in the Bible that refers to the church of the New Testament as the name or names of the church of his membership, and it will not make it scriptural. A church to be a New Testament Church must be scriptural in origin, doctrine, and practice. I believe all who read will see that the church of Mr. Thrasher's membership is unscriptural. One may name a gypsum weed arose, or a skunk a house kitty; but it will not make the gypsum weed a rose, nor the skunk a house kitty. Don't be deceived by these people Mr. Thrasher represents, as the church he defends is less than two hundred years old, and cannot possibly be the Lord's church. The church he represents cannot be found in the Bible. This is why I have gone to history to show you the origin of this impostor church.

My friend thinks that the church was to be built upon Jesus after He died. But I showed in my affirmative the church, as Jesus called the first members at the Sea of Galilee, and that He gave a rule of discipline for the church in Matt. 18. Jesus was the Chief Cornerstone of the church while on earth in bodily presence.

The Jews rejected Jesus long before the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus and even before Jesus was crucified. My opponent believes the Jews rejected Jesus when he was crucified. But Mr. Thrasher is mistaken in this, as he is in most of the things he teaches; especially is he mistaken in teaching that the church of his membership is scriptural.

Mr. Thrasher did not reply to the fact that I pointed out that according to Luke 16:16 men were pressing into the kingdom during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ. Mr. Thrasher, why didn't you try to answer the arguments I made instead of ignoring them as you did? Should one be able to prove the Lord's church had its beginning on Pentecost, it would only prove that a Missionary Baptist Church had its beginning then instead of during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ.

The late Henry Clay, great American statesman, wrote a letter of introduction for Mr. Alexander Campbell, which Campbell took to Europe with him. In the letter, Mr. Clay said Mr. Campbell was “the **head and founder**” (emphasis mine) of the church known as the Church of Christ. The vast majority of encyclopedias and books of general information state that Alexander Campbell started the church of Mr. Thrasher’s membership.

In Webster’s *New American Dictionary* (1963) under the word “Campbellite” this definition is given: “A member of the Disciples of Christ **founded** [emphasis mine] by Alexander Campbell...”

It does make a difference whether one is able to trace the church through history, as the Word of God (the seed) would be destroyed should the church ever cease to exist. Paul said in 1 Tim. 3:15, “But if I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The truth, the seed, the Word of God would be destroyed should the church cease to exist in any age since her beginning since the church is the support of the truth, the pillar and ground of the truth. Destroy the church and you destroy the seed.

Eph. 3:21 says, “Unto Him [Jesus] be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout **all ages** [emphasis mine] world without end. Amen.”

The Lord has had Missionary Baptist Churches on this earth since He started the first one, else Jesus Christ could not receive glory in a church that does not exist. Children understand the Bible teaching that churches are to exist in every age until Jesus comes. But Mr. Thrasher seems not to understand.

My opponent’s example about watermelons is unfortunate for him. He has no watermelons grown in this country for 100 years, and then he has someone obtaining watermelon seeds and planting them to raise watermelons after 100 years of no watermelons. In this example he seeks to explain the hundreds of years of history when the church of his membership could not be found on the earth. How were people saved during those hundreds of years when this church that teaches church-salvation had no existence on the earth? Mr. Thrasher, your example would leave the world without watermelons if someone did not preserve the seeds. The church of the living God is the preserver of the seed (the Word of God).

I did not say as Mr. Thrasher falsely charges that he is a Campbellite, or that Alexander Campbell started the church of his membership. But I cited many reputable historians that so said. Keep the record straight, Mr. Thrasher!

My opponent again objects to praising God to the accompaniment of musical instruments in worship. He thinks Col. 3:16 teaches that each member must play an instrument, but this is only his far-fetched interpretation.

In Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16, the churches are instructed to praise God in psalms and hymns.

Young’s Analytical Concordance defines psalms: “a song of praise on an instrument.”

Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon: “psallo—to play a stringed instrument...”

Webster’s International Dictionary defines psalm: “from psallo ... to sing to the harp.”

Many more lexicons give the same meaning as the above.

A number of years ago I was in a debate with one of Mr. Thrasher's brethren at Bolivar, Tennessee. A man who attended the debate was visiting in a barbershop with a barber elder of the church I was debating. The barber was seeking to show the elderly gentleman that it was wrong to use instrumental music in worship. This elderly man, who had attended the debate, said to the barber, "I am from Kentucky, and my father told me many years ago to beware of any man who does not love pretty women, pretty horses, and pretty music." I thought he handled the 'Church of Christ' elder quite well.

Why does Mr. Thrasher continuously misrepresent me? He says, "Mr. Barr refuses to accept what the Lord said in Mark 16:16." I accept what Jesus said in Mark 16:16, but my friend Thrasher does not accept what Jesus said in Mark 16:16. He believes the one who has believed and is baptized is in constant danger of being lost and going to Hell.

Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "... **shall be saved**" (emphasis mine), but my opponent teaches he may be lost. Also Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "... but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mr. Thrasher believes and teaches that if the unbaptized should die before baptism he will be damned. But Mr. Thrasher disagrees with Jesus on many things Mr. Thrasher teaches. Mr. Barr believes Jesus told the truth in Mark 16:16, but Mr. Thrasher denies that the Lord told the truth in this verse.

Mr. Barr believes, as the Bible teaches, that one is saved at the point of faith in Jesus Christ, that he is still saved when he is baptized, and that he is still saved at the end of his life: Acts 16:30-31; Mark 16:16; Matt. 10:22; Romans 5:1; 8:1; Gal. 3:26; John 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:47, and many, many more. Notice the chart on this point.

Thrasher versus God

Child of the Devil	Child of God, Gal. 3:26
Impure heart	Pure heart, Acts 15:9
Filthy soul	Clean soul, Acts 15:9
Condemned	Not condemned, John 3:18
No peace with God	Peace with God, Rom. 5:1
Not born of God	Born of God, 1 John 5:4
Baptism saves	Jesus saves, Acts 16:31

Saved by works	Not by works, Rom. 4:4,5
Without Christ	Hath Christ, 1 John 5:12
Faith working by love	God and Thrasher say such faith saves
Born of corruptible seed (water)	Born of incorruptible seed, 1 Peter 1:23
Begotten of God, but a child of the Devil	Begotten and born of God, 1 John 5:1
Which Will You Baptize?	How Were You Baptized?

Mr. Thrasher and his people baptize the one described on the left of the chart. Barr and Baptists baptize the one described on the right side of the chart.

Jesus Christ saved Vernon Barr at the point of faith. See Luke 7:50. Jesus saved, and faith is the channel through which I received Christ as Saviour.

I do not “ignore Mr. Thrasher’s point on Naaman the leper” (2 Kings 5), because he has yet to make a point. Naaman was cleansed after he had dipped the seventh time. My opponent argues that a lost sinner is saved when he is baptized, after he has obeyed four other steps; and though he has heard the Word, believed in Jesus with all his heart, confessed Jesus before men, he is lost and has nothing until he is baptized. But this is the teaching of Mr. Thrasher and his brethren, and is not the Bible. Where does the Bible say that after one is baptized he has “obeyed **all** [emphasis mine] that Jesus commanded”? Where does the Bible say that Jesus cleanses one’s soul after he is baptized? Should Mr. Thrasher’s candidate for baptism “believe, repent, and confess” and die before he is baptized, and go to Hell, were the previous conditions worthless? What good were they to him if he goes to Hell without baptism? Anyone could understand this if they would.

Mr. Thrasher says, “The Church of Christ consists of all saved people throughout the world.” Neither of his proof texts so states or teaches. No such Church is found or spoken of in the Bible. Such a universal church is a figment of the imagination. My opponent has babies going to heaven (and they will go to heaven) who are not in the family of God, the house of God, or the kingdom of God, What a terrible predicament his false doctrine puts babies in who die in infancy and go to heaven. They would be orphans in heaven and not in the family of God. I suppose my friend would have all babies over in one corner of heaven separated from the family

of God.

I have pointed out in this debate that the church of Mr. Thrasher's membership cannot be found in the Bible either in name or in fact. And one must go to secular history to find out about the church of his membership. Any school boy or girl may go to a public library and find that such a church did not exist until the 1800's.

I have also proved that many of the doctrines taught by the church of Mr. Thrasher's membership are Un-scriptural. They teach ecclesiastical salvation; that is, that none are saved (accountable beings) who are not members of the "Church of Christ." All who died not members of said church, no matter how much they loved Jesus, went to Hell, according to their teachings. All members of all other churches, no matter how much they love the Lord, will go to Hell when they die should they die members of any other church than the "Church of Christ." I would rather belong to the Kiwanis Club than to be a member of Mr. Thrasher's church.

I have pointed out that Mr. Thrasher and his brethren teach a false plan of salvation. They teach a water-plan of salvation. One may obey all the thousands of commands in the Bible, but the unpardonable sin, according to them, is to fail to be baptized. There are no spiritual blessings, according to Mr. Thrasher, until one is baptized, and no matter how much one loves the Lord, he is Hell bound until he is baptized. Baptists believe in baptism and practice it, but we do not make a god out of the ordinance.

It is beautiful and important, but was never given as a Saviour.

Let the readers of this debate read all carefully, and you will see that Mr. Thrasher failed to reply to many arguments I made. But he was so busy attacking Baptists even in his affirmative speeches that he thought seemingly to keep your mind off the truth I have presented concerning the scripturalness of Missionary Baptist Churches and the unscripturalness of the "Church of Christ."

I also appeal to each person who reads this discussion to search the Bible with an open mind and to accept all you find in the Bible. "The truth shall make you free."

John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, **the truth** [emphasis mine], and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

John 8:36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 5:39-40, "Search the scriptures, for In them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. **And ye will not come to me** [emphasis mine], that ye might have life."

I call upon the unsaved to come to Jesus Christ by faith for salvation and not to seek salvation by coming to baptism to be saved.

End of the Debate

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