

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

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The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith

July 2015

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

The first church was organized by Jesus. (Matthew 16:18; Matthew 4:17-23) This church was organized by His authority. (Matthew 18:20) "In His name" means by His authority.

The word "church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia", which means a called out assembly. To have a legal assembly, you must have one in authority to call the assembly out for a purpose. An example of an illegal assembly is in Acts 19:34-44. No one with authority had called this assembly out for a purpose, therefore it was not a legal assembly.

In the case of one of the Lord's churches, Christ is the authority. So, the question before us is where does Christ's authority come from today? The answer to this question is the Lord's, local, Scriptural, New Testament churches. (Matthew 16:18-19; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Matthew 18:18-20) When rightly divided, the Scriptures make it clear that the authority of Christ comes through His local church that He built, Matthew 16:18, and then successively, the churches that were organized out of her by Christ's authority.

We have clear cut examples of this in the book of Acts chapter 8. Philip, the evangelist, was sent to Samaria by the authority of Christ through the Jerusalem Church. (Acts 8:1,5; Acts 21:8) When the Jerusalem Church heard about the success he had at Samaria, they sent Peter and John by authority of Christ, through the church at Jerusalem, to organize a church in Samaria. (Acts 8:14-17)

The Antioch Church was started in the same manner as Samaria, by the authority of Christ through the Jerusalem Church. (Acts 11:19-23) Paul organized churches by the authority of Christ through the Antioch Church. (Acts 13:1-4) For example, Acts 19:1-7 shows Paul organizing the Ephesus Church by the authority of Christ through the Antioch Church. This group of people was the disciples of Apollos who was saved and then baptized by John the Baptist. He had never joined one of the Lord's churches. The work he was doing had no authority because he was by-passing Christ's authority through one of His local churches. Those he baptized were without authority, and it appears they were having "church"

without authority. (Acts 18:24-28; Acts 19:1-7) Paul then baptized them Scripturally and organized them into a church by the authority of Christ which came through the church at Antioch. Apollos, by the admonition of Aquila and Priscilla, went and joined the Corinth Church.

It's clear by the examples and commands in Scripture, that a group of people assembling or organizing a "church" without authority through a local, New Testament church is not a Scriptural church, nor can it be. Jesus left His authority to be carried out by His church. He did not leave this authority to a man, a board, or even the Bible. Jesus entrusted His authority to be carried out by His local, New Testament churches. Anything done outside of His commands or His authority, is not a work done "in His name" or by "His authority". (Matthew 28:18-20)

Historical accounts written by men are not where we receive our examples for carrying out the Lord's work as New Testament churches. Historical accounts only give us small glimpses of what really took place so long ago. For example, the West Union Baptist Church in the Tualatin Plains of Oregon was the first church organized west of the Rockies in 1844. Accusations have been made for years that this church was organized without authority coming from another church. If you study the original minutes of the church and also look into the history of the individuals who went into the organization, you will find the truth.

Bro. David Lenox and his family traveled to Oregon on the first wagon train in 1843. This man insisted that the wagon train stop every Sunday for prayer and Bible study. You can imagine the upheaval that came, but the wagon master agreed because Bro. Lenox's testimony was such an influence that the wagon master said they would need God to be on their side for this trip.

Bro. Lenox was very involved in the Lord's work after he was saved, Scripturally baptized, and added the Lord's church in Illinois. He fulfilled offices in the church as secretary, worked

in associational work as clerk, and was often found being a "stickler" for details. He was known to be such a stickler that he was often used in a secular position as a judge, school teacher, and other matters. Bro. Lenox believed in the authority of Christ coming through a local, New Testament church. His daughter was saved during the first year they were settled in Oregon. However, Bro. Lenox's daughter did not get baptized and join the church until they had their first pastor in 1845, Bro. Vincent Snelling. Again, this speaks to his strict adherence to the Scriptures and Biblical order of Christ's way to do His work.

Bro. Lenox joined the Todd's Creek Baptist Church in Todd's Creek, Missouri. He and his family left Missouri to come to Oregon. They lived here a year or more before organizing the church. Remember, this truly was a "wilderness" when they moved to Oregon. If he didn't believe in the authority of Christ coming through a local church, why wait to organize a church? Shortly after the church was organized, Bro. Lenox and his wife, Mary, received their letters from the Todd's Creek Church in Missouri. It is clear by his character and the order he insisted upon because of the Scriptures that the Todd's Creek Church gave him the authority of Christ through the church there to start a church once they found others to do so. The Beagles and Henry Sewell were charter members also. They received letters the same time that the Lenox's did. If he didn't believe in the authority of Christ coming through a local church, then why write for letters from churches?

As we look to settle Scriptural matters, we do not need history to prove truth. We only need Scripture. However, when using history along with Scripture, let's make sure we know the history. Pursue actual documents instead of "hear-say" and even people trying to remember what they heard or thought happened. Original church minutes and proven, accurate documentation should be used instead of relying on what someone said these documents say. It has been proven over and over again, to let God be true and every man a liar. Sometimes we jump to conclusions without having all the facts.

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LINEAGE, DOCTRINE, AND PRACTICE

New Testament churches can be identified both historically and presently using three criteria. Sometimes we use other indicators which are far less reliable. At other times we seemingly would accept anything that even remotely resembles a church. When we use other, more modern and personally motivated, criteria to determine the status of those we would invest our trust and confidence in, pretty soon the standards are as unstable as the individuals using them. I don't mean to point out or condemn anyone in particular, but we should be consistent and sure that our perspectives are Biblical and not just based on what the latest trends are. The Scriptures need to be the basis for our conclusions and used for authority, not what some man or even group of men may say.

Just what is a New Testament Church, and how do we identify and fellowship with churches today? My definition for "church" is larger than some that others may use, but I have found it distinguishes many modern "churches" from the real article. I would like to be as exacting as I can in trying to discern age-old, spiritual truths. Sometimes we seem to forget, or at best not consider it such, but the churches in the Bible were spiritual institutions, and we should consider them as such today.

Let's define "church": a local, visible, called-out assembly of Scripturally baptized believers covenanted together under New Testament Law for the purpose of carrying out the great commission, with the Holy Spirit dwelling in their midst as Comforter, with an unbroken lineage from the time of Christ down to today. This may seem extensive to some and maybe incomplete to others. However, I am confident that this describes New Testament Churches in the Bible, in history, and in modern times. Those that claim to be churches and do not identify with this definition, we would do well not to recognize as churches.

Let us break down the above stated definition and consider briefly the sum of the terms used, and their importance:

-a local, visible, called-out assembly

We hold that to be a church; it is to be congregational in nature, and in a regular and consistent location. Each separate church is to be an autonomous body, under the Headship of Christ, I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4-5, 11-16; 5:23-30. From the examples given in Scripture, we see that each church at different locations were separate, functioning bodies. Although there was fellowship, interaction, and participation between churches, each church was responsible for its own doctrine, practices, and discipline.

-of scripturally baptized believers

The two requisites for church membership are here spoken of, belief unto salvation and followed by Scriptural baptism. Baptism is an immersion in water, following the example of Jesus, Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22. Baptism testifies of our faith in and obedience to Jesus as Savior and Lord, and of our commitment to live faithful lives of service to Him through one of His churches, Romans 6:3-10. It was to His churches that He gave the commandment and authority to baptize, Matthew 28:19.

-covenanted together

The New Testament church covenant has a right place in New Testament churches just as the Old Testament covenant belonged to the nation of Israel. He is a God of covenants and we partake in a very noble endeavor when we strive to serve and worship Him in New Testament church capacity. The disciplines, doctrines, and ordinances which have been left to us in church capacity are worthy of our covenanting together to fulfill His praise and glory, Matthew 26:26-29; Ephesians 4:1-6; Hebrews 10:19-29.

-under N.T. law

Legalism isn't something that is very popular in "Christianity", and I don't wish to promote it as it may be regularly thought of in modern times. Yet, I do recognize that God has an orderly structure that we are told to uphold in our service to Him, I Corinthians 14:33, 40; II Thessalonians 3:11. We therefore covenant together to uphold this New Testament Law, Romans 8:2-7; 13:8-10; I Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:1-2; James 1:25; 2:8-13; I John 3:4. New Testament Law is bound in the harmony of truth called the Bible. This has been committed unto New Testament churches for execution, propagation, and preservation, Matthew 16:19; 28:18-20; I Timothy 3:15. We are told that our receiving rewards from Him comes by striving lawfully, II Timothy 2:5.

-for the purpose of carrying out the great commission

The work and purpose of New Testament churches is to carry out the commission: to evangelize, to baptize, and to teach. Jesus' purpose was to seek and to save that

which was lost, Luke 19:10. Ours, as members of each local, body of Christ, is the same. We're to occupy and be faithful in His work until He returns, Luke 19:11-13; Jude 3.

-with the Holy Spirit dwelling in their midst as Comforter

The presence of the Holy Spirit as Comforter in the midst of New Testament churches is sometimes a hard truth to grasp, but the authority of New Testament churches and the propagation of the Lord's work in this age is dependent upon this truth. The Holy Spirit's ministry as Comforter is exclusive to New Testament church members. Now don't misunderstand me on this point. I don't believe that a person has to be in a church to be saved. That is, the Holy Spirit convicts to righteousness, to sin, and dwells in every individual that in repentance and faith calls out to God for salvation. I'm convinced that from that time forward they have the security of eternal life, whether they are ever baptized and serve the Lord afterward or not. However, what Jesus speaks of in John 14:15-18 is the presence of the Holy Spirit in New Testament church capacity, administering the affairs of Jesus Christ in the midst of His close disciples, who through obedience have a special fellowship with the Lord, John 14:21-23; 15:4-16; 16:7-16. The fulfillment of this promise of Jesus happened on the day of Pentecost and was evidenced by the manifestation of the wondrous gifts of the Spirit. Every evidence of these gifts and the working of them afterward, was not through people that were only saved with eternal life, but through the ministry of New Testament church members as they were used directly of the Holy Spirit before the Bible was completed and made available to the various congregations for their instruction in spiritual matters. The presence of the Holy Spirit of Truth is the most essential element in New Testament churches, John 15:26-27. Just doing good works in the "name of Jesus" doesn't constitute lawful works unto righteousness, Matthew 7:21-23. Any old baptism, without the proper authority and structure, is null and void, Acts 19:1-7. (While Paul was correcting the mistake of Apollos, Priscilla and Aquila were in the process of teaching these truths to Apollos, Acts 18:24-26.) Just because a church may seem to have everything going for it, appears to have accomplished, and may seem presently to be "pleasing" God, their actual spiritual story may be somewhat different, Revelation 2:1-7; 3:14-22.

-with an unbroken lineage from the time of Christ down to today

This is not to be understood as apostolic succession, nor a promise that any one church would ever continue throughout all time. (Jerusalem, Samaria, etc.) What it does speak of is the continual presence of New Testament churches just like the one Jesus started, starting other churches just like themselves, and extending through their missionary efforts the establishing of other churches identical in practice and doctrine, with the identical presence of the Holy Spirit as Comforter leading and guiding them into the same truths.

Paul asked at one time, "Is Christ divided?" (I Corinthians 1:13) The obvious answer in context is "no". Neither would the Spirit of Truth be partaker of the confusion that makes up the differences even in the "Christian" faith of Protestantism. God, through His Word tells us that New Testament churches have the responsibility of contending for and keeping the faith once delivered pure.

Sometimes what presently appears to be a Scriptural church, and may even have a long testimony before man of being recognized as standing amongst true churches, may be found in error. Do we overlook essential doctrines and practices because of any man, save the Man, Christ Jesus? Are even good intentions and the zeal of good men, maybe even those that we have the greatest interest in and affection for, enough to make void the established principles of God's Truth? (Romans 10:1-3) Is God a respecter of persons? Nay, but He is the Preserver of His Truth. If a church is found to have been started in error, we should rebuke such with instruction from God's Word. If there is a present error, we should strive to correct it, or let it be, lest we become a partaker of it, just as the doctrine of Balaam affected the people of Israel in the Old Testament, and as we are warned in the New Testament, Jude 3-11. It may seem harsh to speak of beloved brethren in connection with these verses, I admit, but the end time prophecies say we should be aware of subtle compromises and the errors of seemingly "little" matters, that seem not important to some, Matthew 24:10-11, 24; I Timothy 4:1-2, 6-7; II Timothy 3:1-14.

How the Scripture Was Given, and How This

Pertains to Sole Authority

In this paper we will examine how the Scriptures were delivered to man and how this pertains to the sole authority of said Scriptures. First of all, we know the words of God are "forever settled in heaven". (Psalm 119:89) They are unchangeable and unchangeable by man. Sure, man may add to and take away by his devices, however, God's Word was settled and copied in Heaven before it was ever brought to the earth. The Scriptures make it very clear as to how the Word of God came to be delivered to mankind, here on the earth. The landmark verses for this point are II Timothy 3:16-17. The Bible declares that "all scripture" has been given (to man) by the "inspiration of God". This literally means that God breathed out the Scriptures. God created the Scriptures and they came directly from His mind, His will, and His mouth. John 5:39 declares these words "proceed" from the mouth of God.

The Scriptures come from no other source. They come neither from man, other gods, or Satan, himself. The Holy Scriptures were copied and recorded by the hand of man, as that man was literally moved, dictated, and ordered by God. II Peter 1:20-21 tells us that God used men to copy his words and put them on paper, however these words were not their own. These words were His own and when copying them down, these men were in submission to and given over to the Holy Spirit. We can know by this verse, that no words of God were ever written down by a man who was in rebellion against or not following the leadership of God.

The Scripture was given verbally. By this we mean that God put His own words directly into the mouth of His holy men as they both spoke and wrote His Word. Jeremiah 1:9 clearly states this. These were God's Words in his mouth, not his own.

Believing in verbal inspiration means not believing in ideation or superintendent inspiration. The Scriptures were also given wholly, completely, and perfectly. This is referred to as plenary inspiration. (Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 4:13; I Corinthians 13:9-12; Acts 20:27) These Scriptures indicate the Bible is complete and whole. It is perfect and able to make the submissive workman of God mature and perfect as well.

Lastly, the Bible was delivered perfectly and without mistake. This is often called infallible inspiration. (Psalm 12:6; John 17:17; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 16:18; Romans 3:4) These declare that the Scriptures are not lies or falsehoods, but instead, pure, unadulterated, unblemished truths. In its deliverance to man, it was all done by God. Man had no part in the Scriptures being "given" aside from being used as nothing more than a pencil. God physically and spiritually moved each man used to copy and write His very own words. Man's "role" was nothing more and nothing less than this.

The method and means of deliverance of the Scriptures directly pertains to the doctrine of sole authority. If man would have had any more part or role in the giving of the Scriptures, then they simply could not be our sole authority. They could possibly be a final, or an ultimate authority, but never the only "recognized spiritual ruler".

Giving man a role in the deliverance of the Scriptures opens the door for other authorities or works man has been involved in, to be authorities on the Scriptures as well. The Bible declares itself, and no other, is "profitable" as a rule for our faith, practice, doctrine, and teaching in righteousness.

Matthew 4:10 and Job 23:12 identify the Scriptures as the only thing we are to "live by" and be sustained with. We are to esteem this authority above all others, simply because they are the words of God, and none else are.

Had the Scriptures not been delivered in the divine, Heavenly way they were, they would not be solely God's Scriptures. They would be partially man's ways and man's ways produce nothing but death and destruction. Proverbs 14:12 and Romans 7:18 state that man has nothing good, only death to offer. If man had a part in the deliverance of the Scriptures we would be hopeless and forever lost, without an Authority to guide and save.

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES NOT MODERN DAY CALVINISTS OR UNIVERSALISTS

While visiting with an old-time brother many years ago, this brother made the statement that he was a Calvinist. I had read many of his writings before and knew that he was not a modern-day Calvinist. Upon further questioning, the Brother was adamant that he was a Calvinist because he wasn't Arminian. By the end of the conversation, I understood that in the time he was fighting the fight of faith amongst Baptist brethren, that an Arminian believed in losing your salvation and a "Calvinist" believed in security of the believer.

This brings us to the assumptions that have been made about the churches of the Philadelphia Baptist Association of churches being modern day Calvinists. As you read and study their history and documents, you can find the truth concerning their "fight" and why they worded things the way they did in their confession of faith. As you read and study their doctrines and practices carefully you will understand what they believed.

When reading history we must first understand the terms used by our forefathers were usually in regard to the heresies they were fighting against. The brother referred to in the first paragraph used the term "Calvinist" differently than what we would use it today because of the fight against losing your salvation. In the early churches in the Scriptures, they used the term "saints" solely with the common understanding that they were faithful, New Testament church members. However, today we use the term "saints" and we must clarify what that term means because of the heresy from Catholicism.

The following are some of the heresies the churches of the Philadelphia Baptist Association were fighting against and the doctrinal stands they took. If you read and study carefully, you will find their practice of their doctrine reveals that they did not believe that only a "select" or "elect" few were predetermined to be saved, nor did they believe in universal church.

Heresies:

Universal salvation: *although all are fallen from God, all mankind would eventually be saved*

- 1) *allowances made for man to dictate to God; therefore man ultimately being responsible for his salvation*
- 2) *even though some would go to Hell, eventually they would be able to then go to Heaven (roots of purgatory)*
- 3) *man was somehow not really estranged from God and all really were saved*
- 4) *some say there is no Hell or at least none will go there*
- 5) *there was a notion that because some said the Spirit was present with all men that all were then saved*

Heresy of Arminianism:

1. *That the will of God to save those who would believe and would persevere in faith and in the obedience of faith is the whole and entire decree of election, and that nothing else concerning this decree has been revealed in God's Word.*
2. *That there are various kinds of election of God unto eternal life: the one general and indefinite, the other particular and definite; and that the latter in turn is either incomplete, revocable, non-decisive, and conditional, or complete, irrevocable, decisive, and absolute. Likewise: That there is one election unto faith and another unto salvation, so that election can be unto justifying faith, without being a decisive election unto salvation.*
3. *That the good pleasure and purpose of God, of which Scripture makes mention in the doctrine of election, does not consist in this, that God chose certain persons rather than others, but in this, that He chose out of all possible conditions (among which are also the works of the law), or out of the whole order of things, that act of faith which from its very nature is undeserving, as well as it incomplete obedience, as a condition of salvation, and that He would graciously consider this in itself as a complete obedience and count it worthy of the reward of eternal life.*
4. *That in the election unto faith this condition is beforehand demanded that man should use the light of nature aright, be pious, humble, meek, and fit for eternal life, as if on these things election were in any way dependent.*
5. *That the incomplete and non-decisive election of particular persons to salvation occurred because of a foreseen faith, conversion, holiness, godliness, which either began or continued for some time; but that the complete and decisive election occurred because of foreseen perseverance unto the end in faith, conversion, holiness, and godliness; and that this is the gracious and*

evangelical worthiness, for the sake of which he who is chosen is more worthy than he who is not chosen; and that therefore faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, godliness, and perseverance are not fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory, but are conditions which, being required beforehand, were foreseen as being met by those who will be fully elected, and are causes without which the unchangeable election to glory does not occur.

6. *That not every election unto salvation is unchangeable, but that some of the elect, any decree of God notwithstanding, can yet perish and do indeed perish.*

7. *That there is in this life no fruit and no consciousness of the unchangeable elect to glory, nor any certainty, except that which depends on a changeable and uncertain condition.*

8. *That God, simply by virtue of His righteous will, did not decide either to leave anyone in the fall of Adam and in the common state of sin and condemnation, or to pass anyone by in the communication of grace which is necessary for faith and conversion.*

9. *That the reason why God sends the gospel to one people rather than to another is not merely and solely the good pleasure of God, but rather the fact that one people is better and worthier than another to which the gospel is not communicated.*

10. *That God the Father has ordained His Son to the death of the cross without a certain and definite decree to save any, so that the necessity, profitableness, and worth of what Christ merited by His death might have existed, and might remain in all its parts complete, perfect, and intact, even if the merited redemption had never in fact been applied to any person.*

11. *That it was not the purpose of the death of Christ that He should confirm the new covenant of grace through His blood, but only that He should acquire for the Father the mere right to establish with man such a covenant as He might please, whether of grace or of works.*

12. *That Christ by His satisfaction merited neither salvation itself for any one, nor faith, whereby this satisfaction of Christ unto salvation is effectually appropriated; but that He merited for the Father only the authority or the perfect will to deal again with man, and to prescribe new conditions as He might desire, obedience to which, however, depended on the free will of man, so that it therefore might have come to pass that either none or all should fulfil these conditions.*

13. *That the new covenant of grace, which God the Father, through the mediation of the death of Christ, made with man does not herein consist that we by faith, in as much as it accepts the merits of Christ, are justified before God and saved, but in the fact that God, having revoked the demand of perfect obedience of faith, regards faith itself and the obedience of faith, although imperfect, as the perfect obedience of the law, and does esteem it worthy of the reward of eternal life though grace.*

14. *That all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and unto the grace of the covenant, so that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin.*

15. *Who use the difference between meriting and appropriating, to the end that they may instill into the minds of the imprudent and inexperienced this teaching that God, as far as He is concerned, has been minded to apply to all equally the benefits gained by the death of Christ; but that, while some obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life, and others do not, this difference depends on their own free will, which joins itself to the grace that is offered without exception, and that it is not dependent on the special gift of mercy, which powerfully works in them, that they rather than others should appropriate unto themselves this grace. For these that feign that they present this distinction in a sound sense, seek to instill into the people the destructive poison of the Pelagian errors. (Pelagian errors were that they did not believe that original sin tainted human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without special Divine aid.)*

16. *That Christ neither could die, nor needed to die, and also did not die, for those whom God loved in the highest degree and elected to eternal life, since these do not need the death of Christ.*

17. *That it cannot properly be said that original sin in itself suffic-*

es to condemn the whole human race or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment.

18. *That the spiritual gifts or the good qualities and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness, could not belong to the will of man when he was first created, and that these, therefore, cannot have been separated there from in the fall.*

19. *That in spiritual death the spiritual gifts are not separate from the will of man, since the will in itself has never been corrupted, but only hindered through the darkness of the understanding and the irregularity of the affection; and that, these hindrances having been removed, the will can then bring into operation its nature powers, that is, that the will of itself is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose, all manner of good which may be presented to it.*

20. *That the unregenerate man is not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good, but that he can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life, and offer the sacrifice of a contrite and broken spirit, which is pleasing to God.*

21. *That the corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (by which they understand the light of nature), or the gifts still left him after the fall, that he can gradually gain by their good use a greater, that is, the evangelical or saving grace, and salvation itself; and that in this way God on His part shows Himself ready to reveal Christ unto all men, since He applies to all sufficiently and efficiently the means necessary to conversion.*

22. *That in the true conversion of man no new qualities, powers, or gifts can be infused by God into the will, and that therefore faith, through which we are first converted and because of which we are called believers, is not a quality or gift infused by God but only an act of man, and that it cannot be said to be a gift, except in respect of the power to attain to this faith.*

23. *That the grace whereby we are converted to God is only a gentle advising, or (as others explain it) that this is the noblest manner of working in the conversion of man, and that this manner of working, which consists in advising, is most in harmony with man's nature; and that there is no reason why this advising grace alone should not be sufficient to make the natural man spiritual; indeed, that God does not produce the consent of the will except through this manner of advising; and that the power of the divine working, whereby it surpasses the working of Satan, consists in this that God promises eternal, while Satan promises only temporal good.*

24. *That God in the regeneration of man does not use such powers of His omnipotence as potently and infallibly bend man's will to faith and conversion; but that all the works of grace having been accomplished, which God employs to convert man, man may yet so resist God and the Holy Spirit, when God intends man's regeneration and wills to regenerate him, and indeed that man often does so resist that he prevents entirely his regeneration, and that it therefore remains in man's power to be regenerated or not.*

25. *That grace and free will are partial causes which together work the beginning of conversion, and that grace, in order of working, does not precede the working of the will; that is, that God does not efficiently help the will of man unto conversion until the will of man moves and determines to do this.*

26. *That the perseverance of the true believers is not a fruit of election, or a gift of God gained by the death of Christ, but a condition of the new covenant which (as they declare) man before his decisive election and justification must fulfil through his free will.*

27. *That God does indeed provide the believer with sufficient powers to persevere, and is ever ready to preserve these in him if he will do his duty; but that, through all though which are necessary to persevere in faith and which God will use to preserve faith are made us of, even then it ever depends on the pleasure of the will whether it will persevere or not.*

28. *That the true believers and regenerate not only can fall from justifying faith and likewise from grace and salvation wholly and to the end, but indeed often do fall from this and are lost forever.*

29. *That true believers and regenerate can sin the sin unto death or against the Holy Spirit.*

30. *That without a special revelation we can have no certainty of future perseverance in this life.*

31. *That the doctrine of certainty of perseverance and of salvation from its own character and nature is a cause of indolence*

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES NOT MODERN DAY CALVINISTS OR UNIVERSALISTS (continued from pg. 3

indolence and is injurious to godliness, good morals, prayers, and other holy exercises, but that on the contrary it is praiseworthy to doubt.

32. *That the faith of those who believe for a time does not differ from justifying and saving faith except only in duration.*

33. *That it is not absurd that one having lost his first regeneration is again and even often born anew.*

34. *That Christ has in no place prayed that believers should infallibly continue in faith.* (Synod of Dordrecht, Nov. 13, 1618-May 9, 1619)

Philadelphia Association's doctrine of the elect: (election)

***When you study carefully, you will find they use the term "elect" as those that are saved because of God's foreknowledge. Let's first consider what their confession of faith truly says.**

***Confession of Faith:** (Original was London Baptist Confession of 1644; Rewritten in 1677 but printed in 1689; Two additions added in 1742 and printed again (additions were on Singing of Psalms and Laying on of Hands) and commonly referred to as Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742)

Chapter 1 - #7 – "All things in Scripture ... are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that **not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.**"

Chapter 3 - #2 – "**Although God knoweth whatsoever may, or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath He not decreed anything, because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.**"

Chapter 3 - #5 – **Philadelphia confession does not use the words in the Westminster Confession** "without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them,". **It also leaves out** "The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extends or withholds mercy, as He pleases, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice."

Chapter 3 - #6 – "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so He hath by the eternal and most **free** purpose of His will, foreordained **all the means thereunto**, wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation; neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only."

Chapter 3 - #7 – "...abundant consolation to **all that sincerely obey the gospel**".

Chapter 5 - #2 – "yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either **necessarily, freely, or contingently.**" (second causes meaning man, God is the first cause)

Chapter 6 - #3 – "...being now conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the ordinary generation, being now conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of death, and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, **unless the Lord Jesus set them free.**"

Chapter 7 - #3 – "This covenant is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman, and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament; and it is founded in that eternal covenant transaction that was between the Father and the Son about the redemption of the elect; and it is alone by the grace of this covenant that **all the posterity of fallen Adam that ever were saved did obtain life and blessed immortality, man being now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon those terms on which Adam stood in his state of innocency.**" (In the Westminster confession, they have points dealing with works under the O.T. law and other "Catholic/Protestant" terms like sacraments, etc. Our Brethren left these out.)

Chapter 10 - #2 – "This effectual call is of **God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, nor from any power or agency in the creature, co-working with His special grace; the creature being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered** and conveyed in it, and that by no less power than that which

raised up Christ from the dead."

Chapter 10 - #4 – "**Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither will nor can truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved:** much less men that receive not the Christian religion..." (Westminster reads, "common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved,...not professing the Christian religion...")

Chapter 12 - #1 – "**All those that are justified, God vouchsafed, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption,**..." (vouchsafed – give or grant to in a gracious condescending manner)

Chapter 13 - #1 – "**They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection are also farther sanctified...**" (Westminster confessions reads, "They, who are once effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them are further sanctified...")

Chapter 15 – "**This saving repentance is an evangelical grace, whereby a person, being by the Holy Spirit made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, doth, by faith in Christ, humble himself for it with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-aborrancy, praying for pardon and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavour, by supplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well-pleasing in all things.**" (Very different wording and order from Westminster.)

The practices of their doctrine will show that they did believe salvation was offered unto all, but because of the heresies of universal salvation and Arminianism, they worded things the way they did so that truth could be upheld without confusion coming from the errors.

Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association from 1707-1807:

1775 – "3. In accomplishing his purpose, no violence if offered to the will of the creature, good, or bad; nor the use of means taken away; neither is God, in anywise, the author of sin, though he decreed to permit it to be. 5. When all the human race, by the sin of the first man, were involved in guilt, and fallen under condemnation, and all become the children of wrath; it would manifestly be doing them no injustice, if they were, to every individual, left in that state, and eternally punished for their sins: this would have been their proper desert, their just reward. But God, out of his mere free grace and love, without any moving cause in the parties chosen, hath predestinated some unto life, through a Mediator, (without any wrong done to others) together with all the means subservient to this end, their redemption by the blood of Christ, and renovation by the Spirit of holiness, to the praise of this glorious grace; the other left to act in sin, to their final destruction, to the glory of divine justice. (pg. 150)

1780 – "Man, by his departure from God, is become idolatrous, turned from the only true God unto self, which is the grand idol of the whole world ever since Adam's revolt. Self was the very alluring bait, wrapped up in the first temptation, "Ye shall be as gods." Now it cannot be otherwise, but that He who will not give his glory to another, should always abhor and detest any one, and every one, that sets up another god in the room of the true God, and lives to him as man doth to self. Again, what further aggravates the evil of the first sin of man, is the capacity which Adam stood in, as the public head and representative of all his posterity, that in him, and with him, all have sinned, and fell from happiness in his first transgression, "All have sinned," Rom. 5:12; which is evident not only by divine testimony, but is also universally manifested by the aversion to good, the ignorance, stupidity, selfishness, and propensity to evil apparent in every one by nature...To suppress all pride, and high conceits of ourselves, our supposed excellency and goodness; truly to acknowledge whatever favors mankind receive, that they are every way gratuitous, and wholly undeserved; for our humiliation before God, confession of our sins, a deep distress of soul; to raise in our minds a becoming admiration of God's patience and forbearance with a sinful world, in that vindictive justice is not immediately executed on transgressors; to learn the true and proper cause of his forbearance, the interposition of the Mediator, Christ Jesus, between the execution of the penalty and man's desert; to give us enlarged views of rich mercy and grace with God, in constituting a way whereby to restore creatures so unworthy from present ruin and future misery, even by his own beloved Son; to teach us the necessity we are under of a renovation; again, an abiding sense of our case is necessary, in order to make us all anxiously inquisitive about our acquaintance with, and an interest in, Christ the Mediator; and to excite all believ-

ers in him to continued thanksgiving and praise, that they should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again. God, who is wise in counsel, and excellent in working, suffered or permitted an to fall, and thence took occasion to bring the greatest good out of the worst of evils, or overruled the fall of man, to the more abundant display of his divine perfections to the everlasting disappointment and confusion of his enemies, the security of his elect, and the endless praise of his glorious name." (pg. 171/2)

1790 – "...the benefits of Christ were not to be confined to the Jews only, but to be extended to the Gentiles also; for here the first and second Adams, and their respective offspring are put in opposition, showing that as the offspring of the one was lost by his sin, the offspring of the other shall be saved by his grace; the one offspring condemned for one offence, the other saved from many; for all here must be understood in a limited sense; for it cannot include angels in heaven, who could not be reconciled to God, since they never had been in a state of irreconciliation: all the elect of God then are meant, who are spoken of as reconciled by the blood of the cross. Nor Ephesians 1:10, which only says, that all in Christ shall be brought together, but not those who never were in him, and die in their sins..." (pg. 259)

1795 – "This revelation of the Gospel has been made known to such nations, and applications of it made to such individuals of those nations, as it seemed good to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God. Romans 9:16. The applications of the Gospel under the influence of the divine Spirit, in the work of conviction and conversion, is absolutely necessary, in order to our receiving saving benefit from it. In this precious work of grace in our hearts, the Law and Gospel, considered as means, go hand in hand, and are often found in the same verse. By the one is the knowledge of sin, by the other the discovery of deliverance. The one worketh despair, the other faith and hope. Thus, beloved brethren, you see, that the glorious Gospel, in every point of view, is the work of the rich and sovereign grace of God. It was of the sovereign grace and mercy of God, that the glorious plan of redemption was concerted, was published, and was afterwards, as it still is, applied to the elect, with all its saving benefits..." (pg. 311) "The scheme of divine truth contained in the Holy Scripture, is manifestly this: That man fell from that state of rectitude wherein he was created, and became guilty, polluted, depraved, helpless, etc; that God in his rich mercy and wisdom, devised a way for the recovery and salvation of such as to him seemed meet, which was doing no injury to others, that were left; that the way of recovery in through the atoning blood of Christ, who glorified the divine perfections in making honorable the law, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness in behalf of and for those that were given him, who in God's own time and way are renewed and sanctified, made holy here and happy hereafter. To this end means are appointed, chiefly the word and the ministration thereof; wherein the state of the sinner by nature, and the way of recovery through rich grace is unfolded; and it please God to enlighten the mind; move on the affections, and subdue the will. The sinner is awakened and convicted; he sees his danger; is filled with concern of mind; enquires what he must do to be saved; has repentance unto life given him; is led to see the fullness, freeness, suitableness, and glory of the way of life through a Redeemer; is enabled to lay held by faith of this hope; is transformed by the renewing of his mind; has the constraining love of God shed abroad in his heart; is humbled and abased in himself, yet triumphs in the mercy and power of God; and thus being filled with holy zeal, he goes on his way rejoicing..." (pg. 313)

They make it clear that they believe in (local) "particular" (churches) congregations. They reject the Catholic church and even refer to the Pope as the Anti-Christ. They always refer to churches in the plural, whereas the Westminster confession does not. They also show their understanding, practice, and belief in local, visible churches when they leave the power and authority of the "communion" or fellowship of churches in the local churches.

These and many other doctrines and practices confirm that they were not "Calvinists" as we understand Calvinism today. Neither were they Arminian. So therefore, they had to take great detail in explaining their doctrines and beliefs so as to combat the "fight" for truths they were battling during their time. They were not universalists as our enemies have accused. If you read all of their confession of faith and don't just take out a few parts, you will see they were Landmarkers just like we!