

**PROPOSED BASIS OF UNION.**

The following is the "Basis of Union" of the Baptists and Free Baptists, framed by a joint committee of the two bodies in 1887:

(1) *The Scriptures.*—The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have their authority from God alone, and are given to us by divine inspiration. They are the only perfect, supreme, infallible and sufficient standard of faith and practice.

(2) *God.*—There is one true and living God; He is an infinite Spirit; self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, good, wise, just and merciful. He is the creator, preserver and sovereign of the universe; He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all honor, confidence and love. In the Godhead there are three persons in one—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are equal in every divine perfection, and who execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

(3) *Jesus Christ.*—Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the person of the Trinity who, by virtue of His sacrificial work, is the world's Redeemer and the Saviour of all who believe. He is at present the intercessor of His people at the right hand of the Father, and is to be the Judge of all men.

(4) *The Holy Spirit.*—The Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity by whom all saving, comforting and sanctifying power is exerted upon human hearts.

(5) *State and Fall of Man.*—Man was created sinless. By his own disobedience he fell into sin. Through his fall into sin, an evil nature was transmitted to the whole race, revealing itself in actual transgression, and bringing all under the reign of condemnation and death.

(6) *Atonement.*—The perfect life, vicarious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, have removed the obstacles in the way of the Holy Spirit's regenerating power and of the Father's forgiving grace being extended to the sinner, and constitute for every believing sinner an all-prevailing plea and sufficient ground for righteousness before God.

(7) *Regeneration.*—In regeneration a new life principle is begotten in the soul of man by the Holy Spirit through the word of truth producing a disposition of joyful obedience to Christ and to holy conduct in life.

(8) *Repentance.*—In repentance, the sinner, having seen his sin, being moved by the energy of the Holy Spirit, is led to grieve for and hate it as an offence against God, and apprehending the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, he lovingly returns to God to walk in the way of His commandments.

(9) *Faith.*—Faith is a conviction of the intellect that God will perform all that He has promised, and an implicit trust of the heart in Christ as a personal Saviour. It includes a hearty concurrence of the will and affections with the whole plan of salvation as revealed in the gospel, and is a condition of justification and of cleansing from the pollution of sin and of all subsequent gospel blessings.

(10) *Justification.*—Justification is an act of God, wherein He accepts as righteous the sinner, to whom is imputed the perfect righteousness of Christ, on the condition of faith alone.

(11) *Persistence.*—We believe that persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes real Christians from superficial professors. If any who have been born of God altogether lose the grace received at regeneration, there is for them no renewal unto eternal life.

This does not mean, however, that the regenerate may not become backsliders.

(12) *Sanctification.*—The Scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, Christians are made partakers of His

holiness; that it has its beginning in regeneration, and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in the continual use of the appointed means—the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

(13) *The Christian Sabbath.*—We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day or the Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

(14) *A Gospel Church.*—We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. In a more general sense the word church is used to designate all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The only Scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

(15) *Baptism.*—This is the immersion of believers in water into the names of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in which are represented their death to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their resurrection to newness of life, the burial and resurrection of Christ, their resurrection at the last day, and their engagement to serve God.

(16) *The Lord's Supper.*—The Lord's Supper is designed to commemorate the sufferings of Christ and to represent in the use of bread and wine the communion which saints have with Him and with each other. Every baptized believer in Christ, being a member of His visible church, has not only the right to partake of the emblems of His body and of His blood in the communion, but is under obligation thus to commemorate His death.

(17) *Death.*—At death our bodies return to dust, our souls to God who gave them. The righteous being then perfected in happiness are received to dwell with God awaiting the full redemption of their bodies. The wicked are cast into hades reserved unto the judgment of the great day.

(18) *Resurrection.*—There will be a general resurrection of the bodies of the just and of the unjust; the righteous in the likeness of Christ, but the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt.

(19) *General Judgment.*—There will be a judgment of quick and dead, of the just and the unjust, on principles of righteousness, by our Lord Jesus Christ, at His second coming. The wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment, and the righteous received into the fullness of eternal life and joy.

The Baptist Convention, at its session in 1887, adopted the Basis as above.

The Free Baptist Conference, at its session in 1903, passed upon the Basis, adopting it with the following changes:

(1) Section 11 was amended to read thus: "We believe that a persevering attachment to Christ is necessary for the final saving of the soul. The responsibility, therefore, is placed upon the Christian of making his calling and election sure."

(2) Section 16 was amended by striking out the word "baptized" in the second sentence.

The Basis as amended by the Free Baptist Conference came before the Baptist Convention in August of this year, and was amended in two particulars:

(1) Section 11 was omitted.

(2) For Section 16 the following was substituted:

"The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Christ, to be observed by the churches in the manner indicated by our Lord in Matt. 26: 26-27."

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**HOW OTHERS SEE IT.**

The *Messenger and Visitor* says:

"As the *Messenger and Visitor* has from the first favored and advocated the proposal for union, it is of course very gratifying to us that the proposal met with so cordial and unanimous endorsement in the convention. It is true that as adopted by the convention, the basis of union was amended in respect to two of its articles, that is to say, omitting Article 11, and changing the form of Article 16. It can hardly be possible, we suppose, that any Free Baptists would object to these changes, and indeed it would seem to us altogether probable that the basis as amended by the convention would be generally more acceptable to Free Baptists, as well as to Baptists."

The *Wesleyan* says:

"These two bodies (the Baptists and Free Baptists) have come to recognize the fact that they hold more things in common than in what they disagree, and that while their fathers honestly separated on some questions, there is now nothing sufficient to warrant the existence of two denominations. We rejoice in the action taken and wish our brethren Godspeed in the glorious work of bringing the world to the feet of Christ. The movement toward union is growing in the churches, and we should like to see a larger union of the Baptists and Anglicans with the Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist churches. Every force is needed to stem the current of worldliness, and real spiritual aggression would result through a strong church, with the single and lofty aim of winning the dominion for Christ."

The *St. John Star* says:

"After the action at Truro, it can no longer be said that there is an agitation for Baptist union in the Eastern provinces. The project has passed that stage, and has reached the period of organization. It seems to be accepted on both sides that union is necessary and inevitable. These bodies have their educational interests, their home and foreign missionary work, their provision for aged and infirm ministers, all of which will need to be re-arranged. But men of the world settle affairs of this kind every day, and it should be possible to find in the church organizations the same capacity and the same disposition to make concessions. The

Baptist bodies are to be congratulated on the fraternal feeling, the earnest desire to increase their power for good, and the 'sanctified common sense' displayed in these negotiations."

**TO THE MINISTERS.**

We will be greatly obliged to ministers if they will make a special effort to secure renewals from subscribers in their fields prior to Conference.

In nearly every congregation there are over-due subscriptions, which we ought to have now. If our brethren will speak to their people about it, and say they will take the subscriptions to us at Conference, many will probably avail themselves of the opportunity.

To new subscribers we will send the paper from Conference to January 1st, 1906, for one year's subscription—\$1.50. Pastors may announce this to their people. And we hope they may secure a good number of new subscribers.

**NOTICE.**

Any ordained Free Baptist minister who has not received his Ordination Certificate, is requested to notify the undersigned at once. Dated at Woodstock, N. B., this 2nd day of Sept., A. D., 1904. D. McLEOD VINCE.

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