

Rebuttals to the falsehood entitled ‘Gospel and Church’ proclaimed by the Breakaways

This is written in response to the deviant beliefs perpetrated by the breakaways from the True Jesus Church (TJC). The main purpose of these rebuttals is to help the believers of the True Jesus Church to be rooted in the beliefs of the church according to the Bible and to expose the fallacies of the beliefs of the breakaways:

The breakaways have come up with a series of strange teachings to promote what they believe in. Very clearly, they have crossed the parameters of the truth that they learnt before in the goodness of the Holy Spirit. They have deserted their faith, in pursuit of falsehood.

PART SIX OF TEN

The following are what they have stated and believed in:

The Breakaways’ proposition six: Why can the one, who has received the Holy Spirit, conduct baptism?

There is a saying - only the one who is born from water and the Holy Spirit is qualified to conduct baptism. But can we recall who baptized Peter? Was the person born from the water and the Spirit before he baptised Peter? When the Holy Spirit came on Peter on the day of Pentecost, he started conducting baptism. The descending of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is the beginning of the new covenant. The Holy Spirit is the standard of the church.

Who baptized Apostle Paul Wei? No one did but Jesus Himself baptized Paul Wei. The Holy Spirit instructed him to bow his head while receiving baptism. When Paul Weil came up out of the water after baptism, the Holy Spirit descended on him. He received the Holy Spirit.

Why is it that when one has received the Holy Spirit he can conduct baptism? The reason is that it is the Spirit who performs baptism and not man. Please read scripture: For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles; slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Corinthians 12:13 NIV)

In a normal circumstance, when an unbeliever has received the Holy Spirit, he will be baptized immediately. For example, Cornelius was baptized at once after he received the Holy Spirit. Why is it that a person who has received the Holy Spirit can perform baptism? For example, someone in Turkey has accepted the way of the Lord but we fail to go there. What shall we do? We can pray in the name of Jesus for him to receive the Holy Spirit. Once he received the Holy Spirit, he can baptize another person. The baptised person who later on receives the Holy Spirit is allowed to baptise his baptist.

The Ethiopian eunuch went back to his country after receiving the gospel. Since he has received the baptism, God must have given him the Holy Spirit, which was promised by the heavenly Father. When people there came to believe the way of the Lord upon hearing the gospel from the eunuch, the eunuch could conduct the baptism, foot washing for them and also helped them pray for Holy Spirit. If anyone of them received the Holy Spirit, the person could then wash the feet of the eunuch.

In conclusion, the eunuch had the authority to baptize people even though he hadn't yet received the foot washing. While others who had received the Holy Spirit, they could later wash the feet of the eunuch.

Consequently, the one who conducts water baptism and foot washing needs only to receive the Holy Spirit since the real performer of baptism and foot washing is Jesus. It is the Holy Spirit who baptizes you and Jesus who washes your feet.

Verses they quoted

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21-23 NIV)

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Corinthians 12:13 NIV)

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." (John 13:8 NIV)

Our responses based on the Bible:

Ultior Motives of the Breakaways

1. They use unfounded and unbiblical assumptions to perpetuate their theory and concept of baptism. They assumed that the Ethiopian eunuch has never had foot-washing. They are basically proposing that their newfound belief is biblically accurate and the TJC's belief is not. They intend to destroy the newly pioneered areas that the TJC has started.
2. The proposition they put forth is intended to cause chaos in the church's community by destroying the order that God has set in the church. Chaos breeds confusion and separation. Surely, in this way, the church will be greatly divided.
3. Judging from what they have said, it is clear not only are they confused but also captured by the wicked one to change the way of salvation. The motives they have are no longer theirs but that of the wicked one, with a will to destroy the faith of the believers.

Biblical Principles

1. There is a set of biblical principles governing the order of the church. This set includes the Baptist's qualifications, to perform the sacrament of baptism. The baptist must be baptised, have received the Holy Spirit and be sent:

Jesus baptised His disciples - The Gospel of John contains a record of Jesus performing baptism (Jn. 3:22): 'after these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptised.' John did not mention that there were others with them at that point in time. Jesus was alone with the disciples. Second, He did personally perform baptism, but He only baptised His disciples (Jn 4:2).

Biblical Principles (continued)

The disciples were sent out to preach - So, right before His ascension, Jesus commanded the disciples to go into the world to preach (Mt. 28:19). In light of the charge, they were sent out by Jesus. Jesus was very clear about the work His Father wanted Him to complete while He was in this world. More importantly, Jesus could envisage that the work of saving must be extended beyond His death, resurrection and ascension. It must continue until His second coming. Therefore, He entrusted the work of baptism to His disciples. In a way, it was to train them to continue this work of saving through baptism once the church had been established. Since baptism is an integral part of the work of Christ's redemption, this work has to be passed down from one generation of workers to another, beginning with Christ.

The disciples received the Holy Spirit - However, they still had to first wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) prior to doing the work of evangelism. When the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 on the day of Pentecost, they were all empowered to carry out the entrustment of Christ, to baptise those who believe for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

2. There are 2 major parts to a correctly performed baptism according to the Bible. The first is the Holy Spirit. The second is the human baptist. The physical part of baptism must be in exact conformity to the Bible, in order to generate the spiritual effect of forgiving sin. The efficacy comes about through the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is therefore biblically accurate to say that in Baptism, it is the Holy Spirit who baptises those who believe into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).

However, it is wholly unscriptural to say that anyone who has received the Holy Spirit, be he a believer or non-believer, is eligible to perform baptism. It is erroneous to support this view on account of Paul Wei, the first seed of the True Jesus Church, not having a human baptist to baptise him, as he was baptised by the Holy Spirit.

The establishment of the True Jesus Church is a unique and marvelous work of the Lord. Since Paul Wei was the first person to be baptised into the church, it is impossible for him to be baptised by someone who had already been baptised into the church. Paul Wei's situation is similar to the disciples who were baptised by Jesus Himself. Later on, the disciples were commanded to preach and baptise those who would believe. After the church has been established, the natural sequence is baptism is to be done by a human baptist of the True Jesus Church, who fulfills the requirements of the Bible.

Biblical Principles (continued)

3. It's not exactly accurate to say that the Ethiopian eunuch did not receive Footwashing after Philip had left him. Judging from John 13, Footwashing is almost done instantaneously after water baptism (Jn. 13:10). The apostles being so faithful to what they saw and heard would not have left the eunuch's feet unwashed (1 Jn. 1:3). As far as the early church is concerned, Footwashing is taken as part of baptism. They are inseparable.

4. Based on Biblical events, there are fundamental criteria for a Baptist to fulfil:

First, a Baptist must himself have been correctly baptised in the church of God. This is based on the biblical concept of one baptism. He has no right to perform such a solemn task if he has not been redeemed by the blood of Jesus in Baptism. It would be very odd to allow an un-baptised person to perform baptism. This would be equivalent to asking someone who is still in darkness to lead others out of that darkness.

Second, a Baptist must have accepted the gospel preached by the church, and this acceptance must last throughout his ministry work. Should he no longer accept the common faith and have departed from the truth taught by the church, he forfeits his right to perform baptism. For instance, it would be a great irony to permit a person who does not believe that 'Baptism is for the forgiveness of sins' to perform baptism. Such a person belittles the saving work of Christ on the cross, which He has done for us. This is a mockery at its worst state to the plan of salvation.

Third, a Baptist must have received the Holy Spirit. This is in line with the teaching of Christ – instructing the disciples to first be imbued with power from the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is indication that they carry with them the authority of God.

5. In the church, we are taught to be humble and must inculcate ourselves to be humble before God and man. Paul teaches us that a novice must not be given the work of a presbyter. The reason is very simple: lest he would become puffed up and fall into the condemnation of the devil (1 Tim 3:6). To perform baptism is the work of a deacon or an elder, who has been ordained and sent by the church. We can imagine what would become of the church when a truth-seeker, who has just received the Holy Spirit, is asked to perform baptism. This is to promote self-exaltation, dismantling the fabric of God's principle. Surely, this is the recipe of destruction.

In a Nutshell

A Baptist must be sent; he must be ordained by the church. This is the precedent set by the apostolic church. It would be wrong for an individual who has neither been ordained by the church nor has been sent to perform baptism to claim – on the basis that he has received the Holy Spirit or has been sent by the Holy Spirit whether he is a believer or otherwise – that he is entitled to perform baptism. Self-declaration of being sent has never been the case in the early church nor is it biblical. Certainly, the Spirit of God is a Spirit of order; He does not and would not cause confusion in the church.