

## **PRINCIPLES AND CUSTOMS OF THE BAPTISTS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE WITH FOCUS ON BRAZIL**

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### **Introduction**

One of my early recollections is playing on the sand with other neighborhood kids, and being called a protestant. I lifted up my head and vehemently rehearsed what I had learned at church: "I'm not a Protestant, I'm a Baptist." The implied message was that the Protestants began with Luther and Baptist history started in the first century.<sup>[1]</sup> This way to explain our past was "my truth" about the Baptists, and I was proud of it. Another experience took place years later, and it illustrates some of the arguments presented here. My father was a pious pastor working as a missionary for the Brazilian Home Mission Board. He worked in the interior and had a profound knowledge of the Scriptures. I was still a young pastor, when my dear father visited me and made the following observation: "This dangerous Pentecostal plague of clapping hands while singing at church, is already reaching my missionary field." Later he went to the church I pastored in the Amazon valley, where joyful Christians sang and gladly clapped their hands. I mention these two examples to show how, when it comes to faith and practice, our teaching often differs from historical accuracy and biblical truth. That takes place in churches, denominational meetings, and even seminaries. We strongly defend liberty, but in reality oppose it when we are intolerant of people who think differently or have different practices from ours. Frequently our attitude reflects the Positivism of August Comte, where everything can be explained and understood as if it were a mathematical formula. In one occasion, I argued with God because the turn of events did not seem to match "my math"—in fact I tried to understand God's will in my own limited mind. It was then that I concluded that my logic contained only four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division); however, God is eternal and infinite, so we have to agree that divine mathematics is more like "infinity plus infinity is infinity," rather than "two plus two is four."—We shall never understand the eternal and the infinite, so we are free to explain things in different ways, without adversely affecting the principles which identify us.

We may teach and understand theology, but we shall never be able to teach or pass on our faith. Faith is the product of experience, and though we try to explain it, words cannot express the essence of our experience. No one can truly understand who I am; my innermost identity cannot be known, even by those who are closest to me. Anyone may be surprised, at times, with my words or actions. By the same token, there is a Baptist identity which we try to explain, but as with other experiential realities, we are limited in what we can actually teach and convey. We cannot define who we are simply based on customs that always existed in Christian churches, and throughout Baptist history, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The first Baptist lay pastor, Thomas Helwys was still in Holland, when he decided return to England to announce to his fellow countrymen the truth he had found. He knew he would be persecuted, since his unique group, which was not Episcopalian, neither Presbyterian, neither Anabaptist-Mennonite, adopted the principle of liberty of conscience, which he boldly declared in his book, **A Short Declaration of the Mistery of Iniquity**.<sup>[2]</sup> Exclusiveness that hinders dialog and understanding with those who think differently must be renounced and avoided, and that will not deny the fact that we have our own distinctions that identify us as Baptists, though these characteristics are still not easily understood or taught. However, our own distinctive traits should not be confused with the essence of the biblical doctrine, nor with customs that prevent detraction from primitive Christianity ecclesiology, nor with

“worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). Many “formulas” that we have learned about ourselves must be rethought, without removing the remaining essence of who we are, which distinguishes us from Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Pentecostals or Mennonites.

For a proper understanding of this discussion about Baptist principles and customs, some preliminary remarks are in order: (1) we do not discuss Baptist Doctrines, because we understand that doctrines are biblical (not Baptist),<sup>[3]</sup> and it is our interpretation of the Bible that leads us to take different approaches or positions regarding these doctrines. If we characterize doctrines of the Word of God as exclusive to our denomination, we would devalue all that we have learned from Christ and the apostles. (2) What really distinguishes us as a group is a set of universal principles; that is, for it to be a distinctive principle, all Baptists, all over the world, must follow a given principle. Some Baptists actually add other principles to this set, but these additional principles are only characteristic of particular groups of Baptists, in different localities, countries, or geographic regions. For instance, Brazilian Baptists from the Brazilian Baptist Convention accept some principles that are not universal, so we would not think of those rejecting these principles as being from the Brazilian Baptist Convention, but rejecting those particular principles does not preclude them from being Baptists. So we cannot affirm that every Baptist ought to be Calvinist or Arminian, nor that they ought to accept open or restricted communion, because from the beginning of our history there were both Arminian and Calvinist Baptists, as well as defenders of both open and restricted communion. (3) It is important to note that there is no principle which is exclusive of the Baptists. Different denominations have included in their principles one, two, or more so called Baptist principles. (4) The Baptists are not identified through customs, but principles. From the beginning some different groups of Baptists practiced several customs, including some which are now perceived as being exclusive of the Pentecostal churches.

With these introductory remarks in mind, we divide this paper in four sections, in addition to the conclusion: (1) Baptist principles; (2) theological and ecclesiological positions of Baptists; (3) other Baptist practices; (4) Evaluation of the Brazilian Baptists. In the Conclusion section, we make fourteen assertions that we need to think through and reconsider.

## **I. Baptist Principles**

As we mentioned above, Baptists are identified by universal principles, not by those which are accepted only by specific groups, in a given region or country. So we do not include theological positions as Baptist principles, since some of them are tied to scatology or divers doctrinal emphases which characterize specific groups, but not all the Baptists. Some examples of positions mistaken for Baptist principles by many Baptist leaders include the following: the restrict communion (not open), the universal atonement of Christ (not predestination), and the perseverance of the saints (the saints do not fall away from the grace of God). We must not take customs as principles, including those which are often believed to be common in the Pentecostal churches. Some of them were practiced by Baptists in the past, and are still practiced by some Baptists today. Among them are the use of words like “hallelujah” and “amen” during public worship, and the custom of raising hands while singing or praying.

### **1.1 Evangelical or Reformation Principles**

We cannot talk about Baptist principles without mention those which are defended by all the Protestants, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. We do not recognize as Evangelical those groups who call themselves Evangelical, but they do not accept some of the Reformation principles. Like all the denominations which came from the Reform movement, the Baptists defend these three principles.

**1.1.1 Justification by faith** – The first of these principles was identified by Luther through the study of the Scriptures, when he lectured on Paul’s Letters to the Romans and to the Galatians at the University of Wittenberg, between 1515 and 1517.<sup>[4]</sup> He saw the failure of the Roman Church, which put the Church at the center, and good works at the same level as faith. We are saved by faith, and works are not the cause but the effect of faith, practiced by the new creature in Christ. It is the *sola fide*, that is, justification

by faith alone.<sup>[5]</sup> Some question the usage of the label “evangelical” for groups such as the Seventh Day Adventists, who emphasize good works.

**1.1.2 Authority of the Scriptures** – The second evangelical principle is the authority of the Scriptures. Some people add that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice for all Christians. The foundation for this principle is in the Bible itself, which shows in texts such as Acts 17:11, II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:21, the importance of reading and searching God’s direction in the Scriptures. The Roman Catholic position, however, is that the Bible can be interpreted only by the clergy; while laymen are warned against reading the Bible. Nonetheless, the fathers of the Church writings, which the Roman Church, in the Council of Trent, put on equal footing as Scriptures as a source of truth,<sup>[6]</sup> admonish both clergy and laymen to read the Bible. So Irenaeus leads the people to feed themselves from the Scriptures; Clement and Tertullian say that the couple should read the Bible together; Origen teaches that the Christian must read the Bible at least one or two hours daily, adding that sometimes the laymen are better interpreters than the clergymen. Eusebius asserts that laymen and clergymen ought to read and to follow the Bible, because it is a book of discipline. We turn our attention to Luther again, who criticizes the Roman Church for putting the authority of the Bible at the same level as tradition. Many of the traditional writings may be valuable, but we cannot compare them with the books from the Christian canon, written in the first century. The Reformation churches discard the apocryphal books as well, which were officially included as deuterocanonic by the Council of Trent, but received the same value of the protocanonic books. We as Evangelicals and Baptists, on the other hand, use the characteristic term from the Protestant Reformation, *sola scriptura*.

**1.1.3 Priesthood of all believers** – This principle was a backlash to the development of a hierarchy, starting in the second century, when the Presbyters’ Counsel took the place of the apostles. Little by little the local bishop became the administrator of the churches in the region, and later some of them claimed universal jurisdiction over them. In strife against heresy, mainly the Gnosticism, Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus overemphasized the authority of the bishops. Then Irenaeus’ idea of apostolic succession emerged, being reinforced in the third century by Cyprian. Clericalism and sacerdotalism took form, and Christians lost the right to be the people of God and to go directly to God, because only the clergy represented the believers before God. This “separation of clergy and laity and the tyranny of the former over the latter”<sup>[7]</sup> hindered fellowship with God and with the brethren. The authority of bishops in big cities like Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome increased, and the bishop of Rome eventually claimed catholic jurisdiction over the church, and was seen in the Occidental world as the successor of Peter, representing Christ on earth. This was the tradition developed since Irenaeus in the second century. The priesthood of all believers was defended by the dissident groups in the Middle Age, including the Petrobrusians, Waldensees and the followers of Arnold of Brescia. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the principle was defended by Anabaptists, and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Baptists.

In summary, we believe that the Christians can go directly to God, without a mediator from the church. So the Baptists reject the sacerdotal idea that grants privilege to a special class which is seen as if it were an elite. This principle is connected to the Protestant Reformation principle of free research and free interpretation of the Scriptures. Luther tried to give the Bible to the people when he translated it to the German language. Later, other versions of the Bible were provided in different languages. When the Bible was in the hands and in the mind of the people, the Roman Church felt threatened, and pope Pius IX issued the famous document, Syllabus of Errors, in 1864, in which Biblical Societies are deemed to be an evil or a “pest” to be condemned.<sup>[8]</sup> According to the Baptists, every Christian is competent to read and to interpret the Bible, without having to delegate this privilege to any institution or to a priest.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 1.2 Universal Baptist principles

In this section, we discuss principles that have been common to Baptists, since the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Even today, Baptists all over the world accept these principles. Here we exclude principles that are specific to certain groups or countries, such as Baptists from the Brazilian Baptist Convention.

**1.2.1 Baptism of believers (regenerate)** – The baptism of believers was the reason which led John Smyth and Thomas Helwys to begin their church, which had become Separatist in England and emigrated to Holland. Like the Anabaptists in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the Mennonites in Amsterdam, Smyth, in 1609, was convinced through his study of Scriptures that the baptism should only be ministered to those who believe. So he immediately put in practice that view, as he intended to restore the New Testament model for the church. In 1638, that very same position was taken by John Spilsbury in a Separatist church in England, namely the Church of Jacob, also known as JLJ Church.<sup>[10]</sup> He was convinced that baptism should be ministered only to those who believe, and infant baptism should be rejected, so he led a friendly separation from JLJ Church and formed a new group. The difference between this group and Smyth's is that the former adopted Calvinism, while the latter adopted Arminianism. The acceptance of the general or the particular atonement of Christ differentiated them, and kept them separate up to 1891, when they combined to form the Baptist Union of Britain and Ireland.<sup>[11]</sup> This principle has been enunciated when it was said that the church was constituted of baptized believers. Scriptural basis is found in texts such as John 3:5, Acts 2:38, Acts 2:41-42 and Romans 6:1-6. Some of the fathers of the Church, including Justin, Tertulian and Athanasius, defended baptism only after instruction or teaching, and confession of faith. The Council of Laodicea, in 267, ordered that all those admitted for the baptism should be able to repeat the creed. The validity of the infant baptism was denied by Donatists, Petrobrusians, Waldensees, Lollards and the Bohemian Brethren. Several groups, before and after the beginning of our history, have also adopted baptism of believers.

**1.2.2 Congregational church (local and autonomous)** – The principle of local and autonomous church is what many call “congregational church.” We believe that since New Testament times this principle was practiced in the churches, but the new moment for the congregationalism came in the 1580's, when a man from England, Robert Browne, published three treatises about congregationalism,<sup>[12]</sup> which were adopted by the English Separatists. Both the General and the Particular Baptists maintained this principle as fundamental, defending that no church, even the biggest ones, and no pastor or leader can meddle in the affairs of another local church, which works as a democratic group. It is true that centralization of denominational work has hurt this principle in some ways, particularly when conventions, associations of churches, associations of pastors, or other institutions act as if they were above the churches. The church is composed of baptized believers, so it is a voluntary association of persons who were regenerated through the Holy Spirit, and it is ruled by the membership through democratic principles, rather than by a pastor or a priest.

**1.2.3 Baptism by immersion** – It is possible that some people reject the baptism by immersion as being an universal principle of the Baptists, because at the beginning they were baptized by pouring. However, early in the 1640's, the Particular Baptists became convinced that “baptism ought to be by dipping the body into the water, resembling burial and rising again.”<sup>[13]</sup> So they sent Richard Blunt to be instructed by the Collegiants Mennonites in Holland, where he was baptized by immersion. On his return to England, Blunt baptized the teacher of the church and they baptized fifty-one others. Since then, immersion became practiced by all the Particular Baptists and soon after by all the General Baptists.<sup>[14]</sup> Today one cannot think about Baptists using sprinkling or pouring. We do not accept other modes of baptism due to the etymology of the word, the practice in the New Testament (Jn 3:23, Mt 3:16, Acts 8:38), and the symbolism of the ordinance (Rom 6:3-6, Gal 3:27, Col 2:12).

**1.2.4 Religious freedom** – This principle has been one of the most costly to the Baptists throughout their history. Scriptural basis is found in texts such as John 8:32, Galatians 5:1, 13, James 1:25 and I Peter 2:16. From the beginning, the idea was shun coercion in matters of faith; individuals should keep religion according to their conscience. In modern times the first document presenting the idea of religious freedom was written by the first Baptist leader, John Smyth, in his **Propositions and Conclusions**, which was sent by his followers to the Mennonites in 1612. Since 1610 Smyth had requested affiliation to the Mennonites, but Thomas Helwys with about 10 or 12 other Christians did not agree and remained Baptists. Also in 1612, Helwys wrote the book **A Short Declaration of the Mistery of Iniquity**,

considered to be the first publication to defend the principle of religious freedom in modern times. In fact, the initial struggle was against the religious persecution, and the principle only matured and was further developed through the influence of other Baptists, such as Leonard Busher, John Murton, Edward Barber, Thomas Collier, William Dell and mainly Samuel Richardson, and Roger Williams.<sup>[15]</sup> In spite of this principle, we do recognize that we are often intolerant of others, who think differently from us, whether they be from within or from without our own ranks. That is not surprising though, considering that we are heirs of Thomas Helwys, who was against the use of sword for matters of conscience and extended freedom of conscience to tyrants and Catholic idolaters,<sup>[16]</sup> but was intolerant when he declared that the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Puritans, and English Separatists would be punished with “a spiritual sword” for their mistakes.<sup>[17]</sup> On the one hand, his equanimity was apparent when he said that even the king is not responsible for anybody’s conscience, and he ought to let transgressors act as heretics, without punishment by earthly power.<sup>[18]</sup> On the other hand, he appeared intolerant when he accused Smyth of sin against the Holy Spirit; because he had fallen away, he deserved eternal condemnation.<sup>[19]</sup> Helwys views may seem to be inconsistent, but his intolerance reflected the times in which he lived.<sup>[20]</sup> In any case, liberty and democracy grew in England and in the United States, and one of the shaping influences that helped these principles to take root were the Baptists, who are considered champions of religious liberty, to this day.

**1.2.5 Separation of church and state** – Closely related to the principle of religious freedom is separation of church and state. Although Nicene Christianity had become the official religion only under Theodosius I (379-395), since the time of Constantine, the Emperor had adopted Christianity, and Christians were granted special privileges. The official advantages granted to Christianity, along with the Emperor’s role as *pontifex maximus* of the state-sponsored religion, point to a strong connection between Church and State.<sup>[21]</sup> Thereafter, emperors reinforced the councils’ decrees against those who should be condemned as heretics, both in the occidental and in the oriental world. Throughout the Middle Ages, there was a power struggle between Church and State, wherein the Church exerted dominance at times, but was under subjugation at other times. The traditional reformers continued to practice union of church and state, leading to the intolerance which was sadly a trait of Lutheran, Zwinglian, Calvinistic, and Anglican reforms. Even when the persecuted dissidents from England became Congregationalists and went to the New England, they persecuted the Baptists and others who disagreed with their viewpoints. In the short span of time when the Presbyterians were in power in England, there was great religious intolerance. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, only the Anabaptists defended separation of church and state, and they were harassed by both Catholics and Protestants for holding that view. Some groups, including the Mennonites, went as far as discarding the participation of Christians in the public affairs. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Baptists disagreed with this radical Mennonite position, but they still strived for separation of church and state, asserting that church and state walk different roads. Their view was that there may be cooperation between them, but never intervention or interference of one on the other. Roger Williams, who is considered in the United States the father of religious freedom, criticized the union between church and state as incompatible with the regenerate church.<sup>[22]</sup> The Baptist John Leland, was the one who most influenced Thomas Jefferson in the contention for religious freedom and the condemnation of state religion, which resulted in an amendment to the Constitution of the United States in 1791.<sup>[23]</sup> From Helwys till today, Baptists defend that religion cannot be imposed, and that Government ought to serve as a catalyst to promote mutual respect among faiths, since it is not the State but the Holy Spirit, through the Christians, who attracts sinners to Christ.

**1.2.6 Symbolism of the ordinances** – the symbolism of scriptural ordinances was gradually replaced by the idea of sacraments, which is a natural result the sacerdotalism derived from pagan influence. To fight against the Gnostic heresy, the authority of the Church concentrated in the hands of the bishops, who were divinely authorized to administer baptism, which was considered necessary for salvation. Justin wrote about baptismal regeneration and Irenaeus attributes to the water, in the baptism, a saving divine power. In the third century, Tertulian says that baptism is regeneration. However, it was Cyprian who more developed the sacerdotal idea in the Church. The term “sacrament” resembles Latin loyalty of the

military oath, and it implies that physical elements provide salvation and spiritual grace.<sup>[24]</sup> This idea was largely developed in the Middle Ages. Some writers mentioned 12 sacraments, but in 1550, Peter Lombard talked about seven; in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, this number was confirmed by Thomas of Aquinas, with emphasis on baptism and the Lord's Supper. This became the official position of the Church of Rome. The reformers limited the number of sacraments to two or three. Ulrich Zwingli was the first reformer to mention the symbolic character of the elements in the Lord's Supper, and that led to a controversy with Luther in the Marburg Conference, in 1529.<sup>[25]</sup> In general, the Anabaptists assimilated the Zwinglian position, and the Separatists in England stayed with the Calvinistic position, adopting the sacramental idea, though in a different way from Luther.

The Baptists used the term "sacrament" at the beginning, but truly rejected the sacramental idea, defending the symbolism of the ordinances. In fact, the Baptists avoided the use of the term "initiation" for baptism, although this is the way new Christians are received in the churches as members. Baptism serves as a public testimony of one's new life in Christ; the moment of immersion reminds us that the old man is dead and buried, while the ensuing emersion points to the resurrection or new life in Christ, according to Romans 6.3-16. Similarly, the Lord's Supper is a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, who gave his body and shed his blood for the remission of sins. One of the purposes for the Lord's Supper, as described in I Corinthians 10.16, is to bring Christians together in fellowship, or "communion," and yet differences of interpretation have led Christians to be divided over this matter. Baptists agree that the celebration of the Lord's Supper does not involve eating the literal body nor drinking the literal blood of Christ – it is a memorial of Jesus' sacrifice, and an announcement of the Lord's death until he comes (1Co 11.26). So baptism and the Lord's Supper are not sacraments, but ordinances in which Christians must participate, to remind them of their new life and the sacrifice of Christ for their salvation.

**1.2.7 Cooperative work** – The independence or autonomy of each local church does not preclude cooperative work, which is indispensable to the fulfillment of the "great commission." From the beginning Baptist churches did not act isolated, but they sought fellowship with other churches which accepted the same principles. The inceptive case took place as early as 1624, when five churches of the General Baptists took some public positions in concert, regarding oaths, magistrates, and military work.<sup>[26]</sup> Afterwards associations were organized by the General Baptists and by the Particular Baptists, the former being more centralized. The name "association" was used since 1655. Their aim was to use confessions of faith to oppose some Government or other evangelical groups' positions that they considered wrong. In the United States it was not different: in 1707, five churches organized the Philadelphia Association, which was followed by several others during the 18th century. In 1800, there were 48 associations in the United States.<sup>[27]</sup> It did not take long for assemblies and conventions (or unions) to be formed in the United States and England. Fortunately, Baptists understood from the beginning, that challenges of distance and limited resources can be met by cooperative work.<sup>[28]</sup>

In Brazil, the Baptists from the Brazilian Baptist Convention<sup>[29]</sup> followed the organizational model of the Southern Baptist Convention, but today they are looking to a new structure, trying to adapt to Brazilian realities and needs. We understand that some form of cooperation exists in all the Baptist churches in the world. Models range from limited cooperation among Independent Baptists (independence is relative), who may have fellowships or may work together through independent mission boards, to the other groups which have associations, State conventions, and national conventions. Conventions and associations are used in Brazil, enabling small churches to be actively engaged in missionary, social and educational activities.

### **1.3 Principles of the Brazilian Baptist Convention**

In this section we refer to the principles that are accepted by the totality of the churches of the Brazilian Baptist Convention, knowing that these also subscribe to all the principles previously enunciated. Certainly, there must be others that could be included, however, we shall maintain those that,

in some fashion, are contained in the **Doctrinal Statement of the Brazilian Baptist Convention**,<sup>[30]</sup> or are implicit in the Statutes or in the intentions, or yet, in the Statement of Purpose.

**1.3.1 Security of the saved** – There is a general view in Brazil that Baptists are Arminians. The truth is that security of the saved, or an “irresistible grace” is a strongly Calvinistic principle of Agostinian origin,<sup>[31]</sup> negating the idea of “falling from grace” which, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century has been accepted by many Baptists, including by Thomas Helwys. The certainty of salvation is expressed vehemently not only by leaders, but also by the simplest believer in Brazil. The **Doctrinal Statement of the Brazilian Baptist Convention** which officially defines its doctrinal interpretation since 1986, clearly states that “God, in the exercise of his sovereign divinity and in the light of His foreknowledge of all things, elected, called, predestinated, justified and glorified those who over the ages would freely accept the gift of salvation.”<sup>[32]</sup> The text continues by affirming that this election is perfectly consonant with the free will of each person and all men, and that salvation of the believer is eternal. “No force or circumstance has the power to separate the believer from the love of God in Christ Jesus.” The Scriptural basis for this statement is John 3:36, 10:28-29, Romans 8:29-30, Ephesians 1:4-14, II Thessalonians 2:13-14.

**1.3.2 Universal atonement of Christ** – The second principle of Brazilian Baptist Convention differs from the previous one, because it is characteristic of Arminianism. Contrary to the position of the Particular Baptists who hold that Christ died only for the elect, emphasis is placed in Christ’s redemptive work for all men, stemming from the universal love of God, even though the redeemed will be only those who believe on Christ, according to John 3:16 and John 3:36. This principle is fundamental to the missionary ardor of Brazilian Baptists, propelling believers to obey Jesus’ great commission, to go and make disciples in all nations (Mat 28:19-20).

**1.3.3 Dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer** – The principle that the believer receives the Holy Spirit at the moment he believes, or at the moment of his new birth, is contrary to the position generally accepted by the Pentecostals, which states the need for a second blessing, or that the baptism of the Holy Spirit should be an experience after conversion of the believer. Landers wrote: “For the Pentecostals, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a second work of grace, distinct from conversion, and which takes a believer to a superior spiritual level.”<sup>[33]</sup> In fact, this item, and not certain practices to be mentioned further on, is today the wedge dividing the Brazilian Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, better known as the “Spiritual Renewal” movement.<sup>[34]</sup> The **Doctrinal Statement** explains the official position of the Brazilian Baptist Convention on this subject: “The baptism in the Holy Spirit always occurs when sinners convert to Christ Jesus, who integrates them to the Church, being regenerated by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>[35]</sup> Thus, the Christian, at conversion, has become the Holy Spirit’s dwelling place. The **Statement** affirms specifically that the Holy Spirit indwells the believer. Biblical basis is found in Acts 2:38, I Corinthians 12:12-13 and, mainly, Romans 8:9-11.

**1.3.4 Coherent Christian life (Christian testimony)** – The security of the saved does not lead them to a licentious life, but to a productive one, with a Christian testimony which draws a line between them and persons who do not have Christ in their hearts. However, it remains clear: the simple fact that a Christian has the Holy Spirit does not exempt him from sin. A Christian sins, but does not remain in sin, as his nature is different. Sanctification is a process that lasts a lifetime, during which the Christian seeks the moral and spiritual perfection of Jesus Christ. The ideal is to reach the fullness of the Holy Spirit, but any new experience the Christian may have, that leads him to produce more fruit for God, does not place him on a pedestal above his brethren, nor guarantees that he will always be at the summit in his spiritual life. There will be highs and lows, although the ideal process would be progressive sanctification. Those regenerated through Christ do not find pleasure in sin, confirming the Biblical expression: “*And by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments*” (1 Jn 2:3).

**1.3.5 Evangelization and missions** – Brazilian Baptists have a passion for missions and affirm that the Christian’s main task is to evangelize the world. Therefore, it is the obligation of the churches and, specifically of Christ’s disciples, to proclaim the gospel. Since the responsibility of evangelization is to

the ends of the world, the churches need to promote missionary endeavors. Innumerable texts refer to the fulfillment of this mission, such as Mathew 29:19-20, Luke 24:46-48, Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16, 10:13-15 and I Peter 2:9-10.

## II. Theological and Ecclesiological Positions of Baptists

Here we present some items connected with doctrinal interpretation or the customs adopted by Baptists in some of the most famous statements of faith.<sup>[36]</sup> Of course, we have chosen those items that are not included in the universal principles and that today are questioned by many churches, particularly in Brazil, with the false idea that some of the controversial topics have always had a definite position for Baptist throughout their history, and that to think differently is to renounce one's Baptist identity.

### 2.1 Perseverance of the Saints

As this subject has been dealt with in previous sections, we shall not consider here all affirmations – Arminian nor Calvinistic – of the first confessions of faith. We shall only mention expressions of some of these documents, demonstrating the opposite position expressed by those who defend the point of view that a believer can fall from grace, and those who defend the perseverance of believers.

Helwys, in his **Declaration of Faith**,<sup>[37]</sup> published in 1611, leads us to understand in Article 4 that a man can fall from grace, and affirms in Article 7 that a just man can abandon his justice and perish:

That men may fall from the grace off GOD, Heb. 12.15, and from the truth, which they have received & acknowledged. [...] And therefore let no man to thinke that because he hath, or had once grace, therefore he shall alwaies have Grace: But [...] iff they continew vnto the ende, they shalbee saved.<sup>[38]</sup>

On their side, the Particular Baptists, in their so-called **First London Confession**,<sup>[39]</sup> in 1644, speak in Article 21 of “salvation and reconciliation onely for the elect,”<sup>[40]</sup> and, in article 23 affirm that “Those that have this pretious faith [...] can never finally nor totally fall away; and though many stormes and floods do arise and beat against them, yet [...] shall be kept by the power of God to salvation.”<sup>[41]</sup> In Article 11, the Particular Baptist document known as **The Somerset Confession**,<sup>[42]</sup> dating 1656, expresses: “That those that are chosen of God, called and justified, shall never finally fall from him, but being born from above are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”<sup>[43]</sup> The document known as the **Second London Confession**,<sup>[44]</sup> of 1677, offers a more objective expression in stating that those “sanctified by his Spirit, [...] can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of Grace.”<sup>[45]</sup>

In the United States, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, article 11 of **The New Hampshire Confession**<sup>[46]</sup> of 1833, presents a very Calvinistic position as to the perseverance of the saints through the following statement: “That such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere professors.”<sup>[47]</sup> On the other hand, the **Treatise on the Faith of the Free Will Baptists**<sup>[48]</sup> (originally written in 1834, and revised in 1954), presents an Arminian position in Article 13, when it speaks of the hope of the truly regenerate who persevere to the end, but final salvation is uncertain, as there is the danger of falling, for which reason they are “to watch and pray lest they make shipwreck of their faith and be lost.”<sup>[49]</sup>

### 2.2 The Visible Universal (Catholic) Church

Due to the emphasis on the local church, some think that Baptists do not accept the existence of the visible universal church. Concerning this, the Particular Baptists, in their **Second London Confession**, dating 1677, speak in chapter 26 of “the Catholick, or universal Church, which [...] consists of the whole number of the Elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof.”<sup>[50]</sup> It also speaks of the local churches (congregations), the members of which are saints, who should maintain communion among themselves, exercising gifts and graces, growing in love and mutual edification. The churches are constituted of officials and members, who are united in continual prayer for the well-being



and prosperity of the churches of Christ in every place. There is no institution for the totality of local congregations, but they form the visible church of Christ on earth. Also the General Baptists, in Articles 29 and 30 of the **Orthodox Creed**<sup>[51]</sup> (1679), after mentioning the invisible universal church and the local congregations, they affirm: “We believe the visible church of Christ on earth is made up of several distinct congregations, which make up that one catholic church, or mystical body of Christ.”<sup>[52]</sup> Other Baptist documents make statements concerning this visible universal church on earth.

### 2.3 Bishop or Messenger

According to Baptist principles, church officials are pastors, also called bishops or presbyters, and deacons. Actually, John Smyth, in one of his writing,<sup>[53]</sup> affirmed this in saying: “the officers of a true visible Church are of two kinds: (i) Bishops, who in the New Testament are also called Elders or Presbyters, and (ii) Deacons.”<sup>[54]</sup> In the beginning, Particular Baptists, in Article 36 of the **London Confession**, of 1644, similar to the position of Calvin, mention the officials of the churches as being four officials, namely, pastors, professors, presbyters and deacons.<sup>[55]</sup> In the **Second Confession**, dating 1677, the number of officials already defined in Article 26, as being bishops, or elders, are also called pastors, and deacons.<sup>[56]</sup> However, history shows that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the General Baptists had officials known as messengers, who acted as administrators or bishops, similar to the apostles in the New Testament, taking on the responsibility of several churches in a determined region. As a matter of fact, the messengers were officials of the Church (with a capital “C”), being their responsibility the government of the churches which had elected them, while the elders and deacons were officials of the local churches and congregations.<sup>[57]</sup> Thus, the elders were the pastors of local churches and the deacons took care of the charity funds for these churches. The confession that deals clearly with this subject is the **Orthodox Creed**, dating 1679. Article 31 it lists three officers appointed by Christ, namely: “Bishops, or Messengers; and Elders, or Pastors; and Deacons, or Overseers of the poor.”<sup>[58]</sup> In Brazil, for over 100 years, North-American missionaries acted as executives in various fields in each state, with a position that was no different from that attributed to the messengers of the General Baptists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### 2.4 Ministerial Remuneration

The subject of pastoral salary has been the motive of many discussions in assemblies, having been defined in some confessions. The Particular Baptists, different from the General Baptists, favored just remuneration for ministers. The first **London Confession**, of 1644, of the Particular Baptists, in Article 38, based on texts such as I Timothy 5:17-18 and Philippians 4:15-16, mention the Biblical expression that those who preach the Gospel should draw their sustenance from their work ministering and teaching the Gospel and that without consternation.<sup>[59]</sup> In 1656, the **Somerset Confession**, also Particular Baptist, says “that such a ministry labouring in the Word and doctrine, have a power to receive a livelihood of their brethren, whose duty is to provide a comfortable subsistence for them.”<sup>[60]</sup> In the **Second London Confession**, dating 1677, they confirm this position saying that the ministers “may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves entangled in Secular Affairs.”<sup>[61]</sup> The confession of the General Baptists, called **The Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations**,<sup>[62]</sup> of 1651, regarding the ministers of Christ, affirms in Article 60 that their maintenance “ought to be the free and Charitable Benevolence, of the cheerful contribution of those that acknowledge themselves members of the same fellowship.”<sup>[63]</sup> In the following article, based on I Corinthians 4:12, the statement is that “the Ministers of the Gospel, ought to be content with the necessary food and rayment, and to labour with their hands, that they may not be overchargeable.” In **The Standard Confession**,<sup>[64]</sup> dating 1660, the General Baptists affirm “that the Ministers of Christ, that have freely received from God, ought freely to Minister to others.”<sup>[65]</sup> On the other hand, the **Orthodox Creed**, of 1679, also of the General Baptists, in Article 31, deals with an honorable maintenance for bishops and elders, and that “this maintenance is to be given out of the labours, profits, and estates of the people...”<sup>[66]</sup>

### 2.5 Deaconesses

The activity of women as deaconesses among Brazilian Baptists generated much discussion in the 1950's and 1960's. Today, however, most every church has deaconesses among its officers. At this time the discussion is entwined around the subject of women's pastoral activities, although there are already women pastors in the Brazilian Baptist Convention, in at least five states of Brazil.<sup>[67]</sup> It is interesting to notice how open the first Baptist pastor, John Smyth was; In his **Short Confession of Faith in XX Articles**<sup>[68]</sup> (the first to be written before his effective separation from Helwys, and probably drawn up in 1609), he mentions "deacons, men and widows, who attend to the affairs of the poor and sick brethren."<sup>[69]</sup> Opposing this view, Thomas Helwys, in his **Declaration of Faith**, dated 1611, stated in Article 20: "That the Officers off everie Church or congregation are either Elders, [...] or Deacons Men, and Women who by their office releave the necessities off the poore and impotent brethren concerning their bodies."<sup>[70]</sup>

## 2.6 Sacrament or Ordinance

In the beginning, the term "sacrament," today totally rejected by the Baptists, was used in some of the first faith confessions presented by General Baptist leaders of the past. John Smyth, in his **Short Confession of Faith in XX Articles**, of 1609, affirms in Article 16: "That the ministers of the church are, not only bishops (*Episcopos*), to whom the power is given of dispensing both the Word and the sacraments, but also deacons."<sup>[71]</sup> It is interesting to observe that those who went along with Smyth, in 1612, in the 100 article document which came to be known as **Propositions and Conclusions**<sup>[72]</sup> also used the term sacrament in Article 75, but before, in Article 73, affirms "that the outward baptism and supper do not confer, and convey grace and regeneration to the participants or communicants."<sup>[73]</sup> Thomas Helwys also takes the same position of his ex-companion when, in 1610, he wrote his **Short Confession of Faith**.<sup>[74]</sup> In Article 28 he says "there are two sacraments appointed by Christ, in his holy church, the administration whereof he [Christ] hath assigned to the ministry of teaching, namely Holy Baptism and Holy Supper."<sup>[75]</sup> After his separation from John Smyth, in his **Declaration of Faith**, dated 1611, the expression "sacrament" is not mentioned. He defines in very clear terms his position as to baptism of believers in Article 14, when he also wrote: "That Baptisme or washing with Water, is the outward manifestacion off dieing vnto sinn, and walkeing in newness off life."<sup>[76]</sup> As for communion, in Article 15 he says that "the outward manifestation off the Spiritual communion betweene CHRIST and the faith mutuallie [...], to declare his death vntil he come."<sup>[77]</sup>

Later on, another General Baptist document uses the term "sacrament" although it also mentions the term "ordinances" for the water baptism and holy communion, demonstrating that there still was a certain confusion as to this matter. Referring to the **Orthodox Creed** of 1678, Article 27 says: "these two sacraments, viz. Baptism, and the Lord's-supper, are ordinances of positive, sovereign, and holy institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church, to the end of the world."<sup>[78]</sup> It is interesting to observe that, in spite of being an Arminian confession, the affirmation referring to the two ordinances is a repetition of what the Particular Baptists (Calvinists) affirmed one year earlier. Actually, the theological preoccupation of confirming the divinity and the humanity of Christ made it easy to forget theological divergences with the Particular Baptists, and the document demonstrates an aligning of the two groups of Baptists by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Even before the General Baptists presented their **Orthodox Creed**, Particular Baptists started using the term "ordinance" for baptism. This occurred in the **First London Confession** in the expression: "That Baptisme is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed onely upon persons professing faith, or that are Disciples, or taught, who upon a profession of faith, ought to be baptized."<sup>[79]</sup> In 1677, in the so-called **Second Confession of Faith**, Article 28, the term ordinance is repeated, giving the idea that it was already used normally by Particular Baptists: "Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of a positive, and sovereign institution: appointed by the Lord Jesus the only Law-giver, to be continued in his Church to the end of the world."<sup>[80]</sup> In Article 30 of the same document, the term ordinance is repeated for the Holy Communion, condemning transubstantiation and affirming that it is only a memorial.

## 2.7 The Lord's Supper Open or Restricted

The first faith confessions are restricted to affirm that the Lord's Supper should be ministered to baptized Christians, members of a local church, although some of them affirm that it can be administered only by presbyters who have received laying on of hands for such ministry. The **Orthodox Creed** of the General Baptists, condemns transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and affirms that the bread and the wine should not be offered to anyone not baptized, an unbeliever, profane or heretic.<sup>[81]</sup> In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, general practice was free participation of the Lord's Supper among Particular Baptists, the subject being discussed in assembly in 1689, with the almost unanimous position on the subject, that restriction should be contained only to free-membership, once John Bunyan defended both practices. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was still controversy among Particular Baptists. The great Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) was one of the leaders who favored free-communion, such that in 1861, the trustees of the Metropolitan Tabernacle<sup>[82]</sup> determined:

Shall be legal for the members of the church or society to admit to the communion of the Lord's Supper (but not to church-membership) any persons professing repentance towards God, and faith and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, although such person may not have been baptized by immersion.<sup>[83]</sup>

Well-known leaders also favored the free-communion, including those who most contributed to the organization and continuity of the World Baptist Alliance, Alexander MacLaren (1826-1910) and John Clifford (1836-1923). On the other hand, the **Sandemanian Baptists**,<sup>[84]</sup> from Scotland, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, held as their principles the restricted Lord's Supper. The **Southern Baptists** in the United States, in their Committee Report on the Baptist Faith and Message, dated 1925, do not speak of free or restricted supper, but do present a quite restricted idea upon affirming that during the Lord's Supper "the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, commemorate the dying love of Christ."<sup>[85]</sup>

## 2.8 Laying on of Hands on the Baptized Christian

This practice was used by the General Baptists in England, being practically of universal usage among them. It was also used by Particular Baptists and is also registered among the first Baptists in the United States. They declared that the new Christians received the promise of the Holy Spirit through laying on of hands. Thus, in 1660, the **Standard Confession** of the General Baptists, speaking of baptized Christians, states that they should submit to prayer and laying on of hands, "that they may receive the promise of the Holy Spirit." The **Orthodox Creed**,<sup>[86]</sup> of 1678, affirms:

Prayer, with imposition of hands by the bishop, or Elder, on baptized believers, as such, for the reception of the holy promised spirit of Christ, we believe is a principle of Christ's doctrine, and ought to be practiced and submitted to by every baptized believer in order to receive the promised spirit of the father and son.<sup>[87]</sup>

The practice of laying on of hands on a new Christian, although defended by important Baptist leaders, including Benjamin Keach, was controversial, in both the 17<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but was officially accepted by the Philadelphia Association according to **The Philadelphia Confession**<sup>[88]</sup> of 1742, that states:

We believe that (Heb. 5:12 and 6:1-2; Acts 8:17-18 and 19:6) laying on of hands (with prayer) upon baptized believers, as such, is an ordinance of Christ, and ought to be submitted by all such persons that are admitted to partake of The Lord's Supper, and that the end of this ordinance is [...] a farther reception of the Holy Spirit of promise, or for the addition of the graces of the Spirit, and the influences thereof.<sup>[89]</sup>

## 2.9 Congregational Singing

The question at hand was not what kind of songs should be used in the churches, but the simple decision of singing or not during a service to God. In the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this dilemma penetrated into the churches, Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) being a pioneer in favor of singing hymns during services. He received imposing of hands to be pastor of the Baptist Church in Southwark, England, in 1668. Later he organized the Particular Baptist church in Horsley Down, where he introduced the practice of singing hymns in the church. At a time of much controversy on this subject, he published a hymnal, in 1691, with approximately 300 hymns, provoking great debate at the Particular Baptist assembly in 1692; this group recommended moderation in the dispute. This first hymnal was followed by another, written by Joseph Stennett Sr., with baptismal and sacramental hymns. In the following century, in 1787, John Rippon published a book of hymns and another of songs.<sup>[90]</sup> As soon as the New Connection General Baptists<sup>[91]</sup> came into existence, they also provided a hymnal.<sup>[92]</sup> Among them, the Conference of Midland churches, in 1783, although permitted congregational singing, considered illegal the use of musical instruments.<sup>[93]</sup>

In the **Second London Confession**, in Article 22, mentioned as part of the service, besides the prayer, is “the reading of the Scriptures, Preaching, and hearing the Word of God teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual songs, singing with Grace in our Hearts to the Lord.”<sup>[94]</sup> In the **Orthodox Creed**, Articles 40 and 41 speak of adoration, and never mention singing of hymns, but limit activities to public or private services which should consist of “hearing, meditating, and conferring and reading in, or of the holy scriptures, together with payer, publick or private, and in the duties of necessity, charity, and mercy and not in any vain or worldly discourse, or idle recreations whatsoever.”<sup>[95]</sup> Later this controversy brought about hot discussions, both among General and Particular Baptists, in England and in the United States. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, General Baptists went as far as to take position against this practice, as being a carnal formality, allowing songs by one person, but not the whole congregation.<sup>[96]</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century there was some tolerance among them, including that expressed in the assembly of 1733, although the attitude was that care should be taken as “all novelties were dangerous.”<sup>[97]</sup> As for the Particular Baptists, the controversy was of greater amplitude, but the aftermath of Benjamin Keach’s leadership reverberated as late as the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the end result was that there was greater acceptance of singing among the Particular than the General Baptists. The issue also came to the surface in the United States, but in the **Philadelphia Confession**, of 1742, Article 33, we find a very clear statement: “We believe that [...] singing the praises of God, is a holy Ordinance of Christ, [...] and that the whole church in their public assemblies, as well as private Christians, ought to [...] sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.”<sup>[98]</sup>

The long controversy in England and the United States concerning congregational singing was not, as some might imagine, about the choice between spiritual songs or contemporary/informal music, such as choruses so much in style today in the Brazilian Baptist churches; the issue centered around hymns per se. Later on, when congregational singing was universally accepted, the controversy was transferred to musical instruments. Even the organ, years ago viewed as the only instrument to be used in the churches, was rejected in many Baptist churches of the past, for the sheer fact that it was also used in nightclubs. Then the piano, the guitar, and, more recently, the drum set were questioned. It is interesting to note that in the past, as in our days, these matters concerning adoration, order of service and format have always been the order of the day. Today all over Brazil, there are heated debates about the use of percussion instruments, clapping hands, and other options connected with the church service, although we know that in other parts of the world these are perfectly acceptable.

### III. Other Baptist Practices

Herein we mention some basic Baptist practices of the past and, even at the present, that in Brazil have been rejected by eminent Brazilian Baptist Convention leaders, as belonging exclusively to Pentecostal churches of various ramifications and present day charismatic churches. In fact, many churches postulate Baptist identity based on the main point that they reject these practices. In the first two

centuries of our history, besides other practices as mentioned above, Baptist churches adopted some customs that may seem strange to many present day Baptists. Following are some of them.

### 3.1 Fasting

The practice of fasting is recommended from the beginning of Baptist history and is mentioned in the first confessions of faith. Thomas Helwys, in his **Short Confession** dated 1610, Article 25, speaks of the vocation and election of the church officials with fasting and prayer. In 1611, in Article 21 of his **Declaration of Faith**, upon referring to the church officials, he says that their election should be “with Fasting, Prayer, and Laying on of Hands.”<sup>[99]</sup> The first confession of faith of General Baptists, representing more than one church, was called **Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations**, in 1651. In its Article 73, the practice of fasting is mentioned once more, with prayer and the laying on of hands “for the Ordaining of servants or Officers to attend about the service of God.”<sup>[100]</sup> Soon after, the Particular Baptists, in their **Somerset Confession**, in 1656, refers to the ministers who ought to be approved and ordained “by fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands.”<sup>[101]</sup> In 1660, the General Baptists, through the **Standard Confession**, talk about deacons as supervisors of the poor, who should be chosen by the church “and ordained by Prayer and Laying on of Hands.”<sup>[102]</sup> In this case there is no mention of fasting. However, other later confessions repeat the practice of prayer, fasting and laying on of hands as part of the process for choice of church officials, such as in the **Second London Confession**<sup>[103]</sup> of the Particular Baptists and the **Orthodox Creed**<sup>[104]</sup> of the General Baptists. This last document has a special chapter (Article 42) on public humiliation, with fasting and prayer, as being an ordination from God. It continues by indicating confession of sins both publicly and privately, “abstaining from our pleasures, as also our common food, in a sensible and real afflicting of our souls before the Lord; or to seek to God by prayer and fasting...”<sup>[105]</sup>

### 3.2 Holy Kiss

Although this practice was common among some groups, including Mennonites and, at the beginning, the General Baptists, there is no reference to it in most of the confessions of faith. We mention the expression of the followers of John Smyth, in **Propositions and Conclusions**, dating 1612, that, after speaking of faithful penitent Christians, and before lamenting that there were so many sects and schisms among Christians, in Article 69, there is the expression: “We salute them all with a holy Kiss.”<sup>[106]</sup> Later on, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the **Sandemanian Baptists**, in Scotland, who defended literal interpretation of the New Testament, also adopted the practice, calling it the “kiss of charity”, based on I Thessalonians 5:26.<sup>[107]</sup>

### 3.3 Feet Washing of Saints

John Smyth says that it is the function of the deacons to serve the tables and wash the feet of the saints.<sup>[108]</sup> All indications are that Thomas Helwys did not think differently, so much that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this habit continued among General Baptists, who must certainly have caught the idea from the Mennonites. The General Baptists went as far as to declare that it had been ordered by Jesus, adding that when proceeded with decency and order, helped “to produce affection among the brethren.”<sup>[109]</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the **Sandemanian Baptists** considered the practice of “feet-washing as an act of hospitality.”<sup>[110]</sup> The **Free Will Baptists**, in their revised confession of faith dating 1948, upon mentioning the ordinances, added to baptism and the Lord’s Supper the practice of washing the feet of the saints, affirming that it had been instituted by Jesus, being “a sacred ordinance, which teaches humility, and reminds the believer of the necessity of a daily cleansing from all sins.”<sup>[111]</sup>

### 3.4 Anointing the Sick with Oil

This practice has its scriptural basis found in James 5:14-15 and has been practiced for a long time among the General Baptists. Some leaders support this practice based on the testimony of several people, including instant healing as a result of their anointing. Some leaders affirmed its importance and testified

about the subject, as the case of Grantham Killingworth, who said: “I myself have known several persons, to whom it has been administered with the most surprising success; yea even with instantaneous cure.”<sup>[112]</sup>

### **3.5 Never Eat Blood**

The custom was practiced among the General Baptists, with the understanding that no Christian should eat blood. It was based on the literal interpretation of Acts 15:20 although there is no mention of it in the minutes of general assemblies; it was not demanded for one to be considered in communion with the local church.<sup>[113]</sup> The Sandemanians, in the 18th century, also adopted this practice as part of their principles.

### **3.6 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages**

Marriage to an unbeliever was considered by many as sin, based on I Corinthians 6:14; in fact, the offender was excluded from the church. Later on, some leaders became more tolerant, although they continued to affirm that a mixed marriage is dangerous.<sup>[114]</sup> The New Connexion of General Baptists, in 1829, discouraged marriage to an unbeliever, but did not consider it an offence worthy of exclusion.<sup>[115]</sup>

### **3.7 Leisure and Styles**

Several subjects that today seem unusual were dealt with by the Baptists of old in special meetings. The assembly dating 1689, of the Particular Baptists, condemned certain customs of the times such as, for example, excessive luxury, or lust, in dress. They went as far as to affirm that “it is a shame for men to wear long hair or long periwigs, and especially ministers.”<sup>[116]</sup> Some kinds of leisure were also addressed in the Baptist assemblies. Perhaps the most impressive example is that of the New Connection General Baptists, who, in 1790, declared that a Christian should never hunt foxes as “it was a waste of precious time and expense ill-applied, and a gratification of carnal nature, and cannot be done without injuring the property of others.”<sup>[117]</sup>

### **3.8 Expressions of Emotion**

We here refer to a lively service with greater participation of the congregation, even during the sermon, using expressions such as “hallelujah,” “amen” and others. During the Great Wesleyan Revival there occurred several denominational divisions, at which time the movement of the Separated Baptists was organized. In these Baptist churches emphasis was on emotions, with strange expressions of ecstasy of joy that lead Christians to cry, roll on the floor, practice the so-called “holy laugh,” dance, barking like a dog, uncontrolled jerking or muscular spasms of the body, falling to the ground, and fainting.<sup>[118]</sup>

The African-American Baptist churches always had services with much liberty, including accompaniment of sermons with expressions of “amen,” “that’s the truth,” and “hallelujah.” The Baptists in the African continent have a much more lively service than those in other parts of the world, where music and expressions are spontaneous, with particularities according to their culture. In Brazil, after the schism in the 1960’s,<sup>[119]</sup> the Baptists called “Renewed” organized the National Baptist Convention, where their services offer more freedom than the Brazilian Baptist Convention churches, thus being called Pentecostal by the “traditional” churches of the Brazilian Baptist Convention. In the last years, however, there has been much more leeway in the church services, permitting a more Latin American flavor not only in expressions, but also of music, even in the CBB churches. This has led to a better relationship among churches of both conventions.

## **IV. Evaluation of Brazilian Baptists**

In this section we shall try to briefly evaluate Brazilian Baptists, mainly of the Brazilian Baptist Convention. The main points to be touched on are: (1) Brief history, remembering the first Baptists, moving towards the present day controversy about the initial Baptist cornerstone in Brazil. (2) Old-time practices in our churches that today would be considered even ridiculous. (3) Customs practiced in many

churches, considered charismatic, that are not principles, and smudge the image not only of Baptists, but of evangelicals in Brazil. (4) Controversial points that are not Baptist principles in themselves, but that some consider to be marks that identify a church as being Baptist or not.

#### 4.1 Beginning of the Baptists in Brazil

Just as there are mistakes concerning the beginning of Baptists in the world, according to known history, there are also serious misgivings as to the early history of Baptists in Brazil, beginning with the name of the first missionary and the year he came to Brazil, to the establishment of the first Baptist church in Brazil.

The Southern Baptists in the United States dreamed of sending missionaries to Brazil since 1850, but this was only implemented in 1860, when the first Baptist missionary to Brazil, Thomas Jefferson Bowen,<sup>[120]</sup> was sent. He had been a missionary to Yoruba, Africa, but for health reasons could not return. The great mistake was to judge that a missionary could work in one field while having his heart in another, as he himself declared. His attempt to preach to African slaves in Brazil, at a time when the press widely discussed slavery, was frustrated, for which reason he returned to the United States a year later with a tragic report about possibilities of maintaining a mission in Brazil, affirming “that it is inexpedient to make any further attempt, at the present time, to carry on a Mission in that country.”<sup>[121]</sup> This delayed the coming of other missionaries. Ten years later, a first Baptist church was organized in Brazil, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, 1871, in the City of Santa Barbara, State of São Paulo. This was a church founded by North-American colonists who, after the Secession War (1861-1865) established several colonies in Brazil. In Santa Barbara the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Baptists organized churches. When the Baptist church was organized, the desire was mentioned to evangelize Brazilians and, in October 1872, voted favorably to request from the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond the sending of missionaries to Brazil. In his **Baptists in Brazil**, A.R. Crabtree wrote: “This request, repeated several times with urgency, awakened anew the interest of Southern Baptists.”<sup>[122]</sup> The first pastor of the Santa Barbara Church, Richard Ratcliff, wrote a letter in 1878, published in the journal of the Richmond Board dated February 1879, dealing with the importance of Brazil as a missionary field.<sup>[123]</sup> In 1879, another church was organized for North-American colonists, called Station Baptist Church, also in Santa Barbara, and in this same year Elijah Hoton Quillin, pastor of the first church in Santa Barbara, wrote to Richmond, affirming his desire to be recognized as a self-sustaining missionary, “for the purpose of carrying on missionary work in the surrounding country, both among emigrants from the United States and native Brazilians.”<sup>[124]</sup> The request was honored. The next year, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, 1880, the first Brazilian Baptist, the ex-priest Antonio Teixeira de Albuquerque, was baptized in Santa Barbara, at the Station Baptist Church.<sup>[125]</sup> That same year, General A. T. Hawthorne, great friend of Brazil, was appointed agent of the Foreign Mission Board in Texas, and exerted strong influence to change for the better the idea about the Brazilian field and sent new missionaries. That is how, in 1881, William Buck Bagby and Anne Luther Bagby were appointed. Upon arrival, they went to Santa Barbara, where W. B. Bagby became pastor of the first church in that city and began to learn the Brazilian language with Albuquerque. In 1882, Zachary C. Taylor and Kate Crawford Taylor came, and along with the Bagbys and Teixeira de Albuquerque went to Bahia, in order to organize, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, 1882, the first church in Northeast Brazil, today known as the First Baptist Church in Brazil, which was, in fact, the third church organized in this country. However, this was a new beginning with extraordinary results, thanks to the aggressive evangelism and long-lasting effects of the leaders who drove in their stakes.

There were other Evangelicals in Brazil before the Baptists, but the Baptists had their own characteristics with outstanding identity and conviction that the Gospel should be preached fearlessly and founded on the Word of God. In 1907, the Brazilian Baptist Convention was organized, following the organization model of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, which proved correct and useful. Today, however, the need for structural changes is perceived, to the point that a new organizational model is sought. A group assigned to this task has presented reports and brought information to the denominational assemblies over the last three years, leading in a new direction, and

trying to adapt the Convention and institutions to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and to the Brazilian culture. That is how the new Statement of Purpose of the Brazilian Baptist Convention, voted in January 2002, in Recife, Pernambuco, is “to be a useful institution to Baptist churches, in fulfilling their mission to make disciples of Christ in Brazil and in the world, always working with agility and efficiency.”<sup>[126]</sup> If today we were to characterize Brazilian Baptists and justify their great growth and their emphasis on missions, we might say that from the beginning they have adopted the Baptist principles considered universal, but have also added other items. They have always accepted the Arminian principle on the universal expiation of Christ, but also have defended the Calvinistic principle of the security of the saved. Besides, Brazilian Baptists give puritan emphasis to a holy life and have an aggressive, almost Pentecostal, stance in the fulfillment of missionary responsibility and local evangelism, both national and worldwide.

#### **4.2 Practices of the Past**

Some customs come about in reaction to the time and culture of the churches in their own locations. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a list of members that belonged to Smyth’s church who, along with him, asked to be affiliated to the Mennonites, is on a sheet of paper in two columns, there being a column of the 15 men on the left side, and a column of the 17 women on the right side.<sup>[127]</sup> This type of division seems strange today in our culture. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was the custom in evangelical churches in Brazil, including the Baptists, for men to sit on one side of the church and women on the other. The same happened until very recently in the Sunday School classes, with separate classes for men and women, at most all age levels. Also, at this same time, the only musical instrument allowed in the churches was the organ. Even the piano was considered an inadequate instrument for the service which “lost its solemnity” due to the sound coming from the piano; not until later was the piano used in a majority of churches, and after that the accordion became popular and some churches permitted the guitar. But at that time, no one could even imagine the use of the electric guitar or a drum set, among other instruments.

One item that raised much discussion in the churches up to the 1950’s was what many call style. Women could not wear any clothing that could be considered provoking, neither in the church nor out. Also they could not wear short hair, this being reason for exclusion from the church. There was a case in Pernambuco State, when a pastor’s wife, to not be eliminated, requested to be transferred to another church where she remained for 30 years. Added to this, she was a well-known speaker and leader of the Women Missionary Union in the State of Pernambuco. Other reasons for exclusion would be: to go to the football stadium to watch a soccer match, or watch a movie in a cinema.

Finally, we shall mention the symbols found in the temples, such as steeples and crosses. It is true that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Roman Catholic Church was the State religion, evangelical churches were permitted to have temples only in residential building format. This meant that the churches could not have steeples nor any other symbol that would attract the people, as this was exclusive to Catholic temples, easily identified by the steeple and cross. After proclamation of the Republic, with the separation of church and state, the prohibition was lifted. But for many decades, even the largest evangelical churches avoided building steeples so as to not be identified as a Catholic church. On the other hand, Christians were not allowed to wear necklaces or medals in the shape of a cross, even without the figure of Christ on the cross. This lack of tolerance led to controversy, bringing on divisions in some Baptist churches. Due to limited space, we shall only mention other examples such as participation in folklore festivities : “bumba-meu-boi” (gives importance to the bull as a livelihood for man, portrayed in a pantomime where the bull figure dies, then lives again), “quadrilha” (square-dancing), horse racing, and even special things to eat on certain festive dates (often involving activities in honor of a Catholic saint).

#### **4.3 Dangerous Customs**

In the title above we refer to some practices that have been common in churches considered charismatic in Brazil, having already reached the circles of many Baptist churches, both of the National Baptist Convention and the Brazilian Baptist Convention. We do well to remember that we do not have



the right to doubt of anyone's experience, be it by divine power, be it by satanic power, however, we do know that some charismatic leaders display authority and personal power rather than God's, not to mention abuse of Christians' good faith. It is sad that Baptist churches have been swept along by some of the dangerous winds of doctrine (Eph 4:14) that are stated below.

**4.3.1 Golden-tooth** – At the beginning of the 1990's there was the wave of "golden-tooth", which consisted of certain people being presented, all of a sudden, with a golden tooth or a tooth brace made of gold. Some professional odontologists examined some of these "gift receptors" and testified of the poor quality of the service and confirmed that nothing they found was made of gold.<sup>[128]</sup> They also noted that some of these golden-tooth receptors had irregular lives, not following the moral and spiritual precepts that are characteristic of a Christian life.

**4.3.2 Cure or Miracle** – Some preachers in certain neo-Pentecostal movements have stood out for "cure-all" activities, attracting multitudes and naming themselves as miracle-workers, for the fact that they operate "miraculous cures." What in fact happens is they call attention to themselves as possessing divine power, although there is no proof of the authenticity of these healings. Unfortunately, many Baptists have been attracted to these groups and despised their position as Baptists.

**4.3.3 The Christian Does Not Become Ill** – Due to the influence of international charismatic writers, Brazilians have been affected by the false preaching that the Christian is blessed by God, and for this reason does not become ill, because sickness is the fruit of sin and lack of faith. These persons forget that the Apostle Paul suffered with an ailment, including in his eyes (Gal 4:15) and in spite of being used by God to heal many and even resurrect, he mentions Timothy as having stomach problems and frequent infirmities (1 Tim 17) and talks about the ailments of Epaphroditus (Phil 2:27) and Trophimus (2 Tim 4:20).

**4.3.4 Exotic Symbols** – Similar to the pagan influence in the first centuries, the evangelical churches in Brazil have been invaded by the customs of using exotic symbols, with mystic powers being attributed to objects, and things, such as water from the River Jordan, that can cure illnesses or operate a special grace; or the practice of placing a glass of water on top of the television set to receive the positive fluids of the minister or preacher speaking on the television station; or the purchase of an anointed rose that blesses its owner. It is actually a return to the relics of the Middle Ages, that were combated by the reformers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which were collected by the mighty authorities to put on display and explore the unaware.

**4.3.5 Blessing or consecration** – Consists of the power of the Christian to bless others and consecrate properties and objects such as rings or wedding rings so that the owners will be free of ill wishes and be blessed. Connected with this point is the liberation of the Christian as if he were the property of Satan and not of God. This is where the expression "tie up the devil" comes from.

**4.3.6 Curse** – The belief that there is a curse on certain objects, places, houses or even people, even on Christians, has penetrated into our midst, denoting total forgetfulness of the teachings of Ezekiel in Chapter 18, and of the Biblical expression where we find that "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us*" (Gal 3:13). That is where the Portuguese expression "cai-cai", meaning "fall-fall," comes from, when the person falls to the ground, being freed from torment and experiencing the blessing of God. The fall occurs when objects are thrown, such as the preacher's coat or handkerchief, or a touch from a person or even just the words of the pastor. This became common with the popularization of the movement called G12, which was started in Colombia by Cesar Castellanos, and inundated some states in Brazil at the end of the last decade, involving Baptist churches and pastors. In his famous encounters, it is part of the schedule the breath of power propagated by Benny Hinn, accompanied with the "cai-cai." In the Bible the divine breath brought life and not fall, and when Ezekiel fell upon his face, to receive the Spirit and be habilitated for his mission, he heard the divine order: "*Stand upon your feet*" (Ezek 2:1-3).

**4.3.7 Second Blessing** – Last of all is the so called “second blessing,” as if external manifestations were evidence that the Christian received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and may be included in the spiritually elite of the church. This negates that even the carnal Christian is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:13; 6:19), and that sanctification is a process that is normal in the Christian life. New experiences with God, with emphasis or not on emotions, are personal and enriching, and may be the second, or third, or fourth, or even seventh blessing. But they are not and should not be the same for all, nor do they make anyone exempt from sin, nor make them more spiritual than the other Christians. Besides, the anointing with the Spirit helps the Christian to live humbly and practice love, which is the first fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22) and the more excellent way (1 Cor 12:31).

#### **4.4 Principles or points of view**

Here we shall mention some points of view that are important, but are not Baptist principles, although some wrongly consider them fundamental to identify whether a church is Baptist or not. In reality, one cannot reach the extreme of not considering a church or a brother due to a different position, or even for holding practices that we do not accept in our local congregations.

**4.4.1 Free Lord’s Supper** – On this point we wish only to mention that in Brazil, for a long time we were considered restricted Baptists, to the point that pastors used this term in their churches. At the present time, many Brazilian Baptist Convention churches throughout the country adopt free Lord’s Supper. A recent survey among pastors in the State of Pernambuco shows that 51% of the pastors agree with free communion in their churches.

**4.4.2 Salutations** – Certain salutations that have biblical roots are considered ways to identify certain evangelical groups. This is the case with expressions such as “peace of the Lord,” and “grace and peace,” which are identified with the Assemblies of God and Church of Grace, respectively. As a matter of fact, the first is the extension of the Jewish “*shalom*” and follows the spirit of communion and love of the New Testament, and the second expression was used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles, with addition of the term “mercy” in the epistles to Timothy, also used by Peter in his two letters and by John in his second letter and Revelation. It may even deserve to be called the apostolic salutation in place of the famous Trinitarian salutation of II Corinthians 13:13.

**4.4.3 Spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit** – Due to the fact that the Assemblies of God emphasize the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, many Baptist churches in Brazil have put aside speaking about the third person of the Trinity, as if the Holy Spirit belonged exclusively to the Pentecostals. All extremes are dangerous. How many blessings have been lost in our midst due to this omission! Next, we consider the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that many consider an appropriate subject for Pentecostal, but not Baptist churches. The idea, still accepted by many Brazilian Baptist Convention churches, is that the spiritual gifts mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 12 and other texts have nothing to do with the process of a Christian’s sanctification. In fact, some ascertain that certain gifts ceased to exist after the first century. According to this point of view, the gift of tongues refers to speaking known tongues, according to Acts 2, and not to a different experience as written in chapter 14 of I Corinthians. The gift of healing is also seen as being exclusive of the Apostolic Age. However, these are not Baptist principles and, if the Bible is the rule of faith and conduct for the Christian, why should we reject what it teaches us concerning the spiritual gifts? I understand that the gifts have not become extinct and they are part God’s enablement for the Christian to successfully accomplish his mission on earth. The problem lies in the fact that many confuse the power of God with the power of men, and focus on leaders rather than on the power of God which is able to reach not only the spirit of man, but also the mind and the body of each human being.

**4.4.4 Possession by demons** – Also related to Pentecostalism, many Baptists in Brazil do not believe in demonic action, nor that persons can be possessed by demons. Naturally this is a reaction against groups whose services center on the devil and demons instead of on God. However, it is going to the other extreme to negate that there are possessions and other forms of activity of the “spiritual hosts of

iniquity” (1 Cor 6:12). Some of these activities may even infiltrate a Christian church; Some cases have been observed by several Baptist leaders, including this author.

**4.4.5 The action of God today** – We refer to one more item of capital importance to the comprehension of the subject at hand. It deals with the action of God in present days. The points mentioned above have lead Baptist pastors in Brazil to come to the conclusion that the God of the first century is not the same God of today. They say that signs and healings were performed by the apostles and their disciples in the first century of the Christian Era, but today they are totally absent. Some Baptists who have participated in experiences that denote this divine activity are considered by others as lacking balance, or being over-emotional, or having deviated to Pentecostal doctrines. It seems that the faith the primitive Christians had is different from the faith we have today. This is inconsistent: we refer to the Bible as the foundation of our faith when we witness to others, but then we act as if the God of the Bible were different from our God. This reminds us of the “*unbelieving heart*” mentioned in the epistle of Hebrews (3:12) or the words of Jesus, when questioned: “*When the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth*” (Lk 18:8).

**4.4.6 Testimony of the Christian** - We mention here a very positive point about Brazilian Baptist Churches, which is the responsibility of Christians to live according to Christian principles, as a way to testify of their faith. Today there is no congruence concerning this matter, and some lamentably resorted to the extreme of laxity. Nevertheless, for a long time, any moral lapse with respect to established standards would be reason for exclusion. We certainly do not accept this extreme, but we believe in corrective discipline, based on Christian love. The drastic step of exclusion, which is tantamount to a major surgery in the body of Christ, should only be taken after no other recourse is left and a member remains unrepentant. After all, it is through correction that we are participants of the holiness of God (Heb 12:10), wherefore, it becomes us to be holy in our conduct (I Pet 1:15-16), as the will of God is our sanctification (I Thess 4:3), once that “*God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness*” (I Thess 4:7).

### **Conclusions to think on and rethink**

1. What characterizes us as Baptists are not the doctrines, as these are Biblical, nor practices, which are changeable, but our principles. Baptist principles are universal and not exclusive to one group. The principles are what identify us as Baptists.
2. If we adopt specific principles, according to the **Doctrinal Statement of the Brazilian Baptist Convention**, we need to understand other Baptists who diverge from ourselves but do not become unaligned from the universal principles, accepting that there is liberty to remain a Baptist, though independent or connected with other groups.
3. Practices change with time, being acceptable when they are not contrary to the Biblical teachings. We should remember that all excesses are harmful or dangerous, and therefore should be avoided.
4. In the New Testament there is flexibility in the ecclesiological model, where there are pastors at various churches and churches with various pastors. There are also multiple functions of ministers of God, according to the gifts given by the Spirit to each one. This gives us liberty to utilize different models of the many that today are known (discipleship, ministerial network, cells etc.), taking care that the principles we have adhered to and, especially, Biblical doctrines are not despised.
5. We cannot and should not insist on upholding traditions that fossilize the churches and impede activities of the people of God in communicating the Good News. Some methods that have been good in the past are no longer the best for our days. ~~But~~ Nevertheless, not all novelties and not all practices are in accordance to Bible teachings.
6. Nowadays the formats for praise and worship, including hand clapping and choice of musical instruments, have nothing to do with our principles, but it is good to remember that moderation is one

of the fruits of the Spirit and that decency and order are words used by the Apostle Paul when referring to church services. The Psalmist wrote: *“It is good to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is seemly”* (Ps 147:1)

7. We need to be consistent when defending the Bible as “the only rule of faith and conduct.” How can we speak of faith if we do not believe in the action of God in our days? How do we defend liberty when we are intolerant of those that do not fit our mold?
8. Discernment is very important in our days, as the words of Christ and of the apostles come true concerning the false prophets: *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world”* (1 Jn 4:1).
9. Demons exist the same way they existed in the time of Christ and the apostles, but not everything is demonic. Satan and his “principalities and rulers of darkness” can oppress the Christian – they tried to tempt Jesus himself (Mt 4:1-11), but the Christian, the dwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9-11; Eph 2:22, 1 Cor 3:16), cannot be possessed by demons.
10. Signs and wonders are performed by Satan and his diabolic followers (Rev 13:13), but the great defensive weapons to repel the evil spiritual hosts are faith and the Word of God: *“Stand therefore, [...] taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”* (Eph 6:14-17).
11. Miracles and healings can occur in our days, but God in his sovereignty determines when and how they take place – it is not according our will or authority. Neither Peter nor Paul nor any of the apostles healed anyone, but God did through them, in a manner and at the moment He chose.
12. The voice of God speaks even today (revelation), but let all that is contrary to the Holy Scriptures be anathema, even if announced by the president of the Brazilian Baptist Convention or of the World Baptist Alliance, proclaimed by presidents of seminaries, or delivered by an angel from heaven: *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed”*(Gal 1:8-9).
13. According to the Word of God, *“the time is near.”* Many customs and novelties have appeared in this new millennium. Happy are those who retain and follow what is taught in the Holy Scriptures: *“Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near”* (Rev 1:3).
14. When many people exchange *“the truth about God for a lie”* (Rom 1:25), it is urgent to seek divine wisdom because, *“He reveals deep and mysterious things”* (Dan 2.22a). As Baptists, surrounded by positions and practices that challenge our identity, *“let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as in the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”* (Heb 10:23-25).

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<sup>[1]</sup> The first missionaries in Brazil were strongly influenced by the Landmarkism movement, and taught the succession theory about the origin of the Baptists.

<sup>[2]</sup> HELWYS, Thomas. **A Short Declaration of the Mistery of Iniquity**. 1612. It is reproduced from the copy sent to the King James I. London. The Kingsgate Press, 1935. 212 p.

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- [4] LATOURETTE, Kenneth Scott. **A History of Christianity**. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953, p. 706.
- [5] *Ibid.*, p. 707.
- [6] WALKER, Williston. **A History of the Christian Church**. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1959, p. 378. Cf. **Concilium Tridentinum, Diarorum etc. Nova Collectio**. Friburgo: Denzinger, 1901, p. 783, apud BETTENSON, H. **Documentos da Igreja Cristã**. Translated by Helmuth Alfred Simon; Gerson Correia de Lacerda. 3. ed. São Paulo: ASTE, 1998. p. 363-364. Cf. also LATOURETTE, 1953, p. 863.
- [7] LATOURETTE, 1953, p. 714.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p. 1099-1100.
- [9] LANDERS, 1986, p. 39.
- [10] The abbreviation JLJ refers to the three first pastors of the church: Henry Jacob, John Lathrop e Henry Jessey.
- [11] UNDERWOOD, A. C. **A History of the English Baptists**. Foreword by J. H. Rushbrooke. London: The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1961, p. 201.
- [12] BAKER, Robert A. **A Summary of Christian History**. Nashville, TENN: Broadman Press, 1959, p. 238.
- [13] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 59. All the quotations’ translations in this paper are ours.
- [14] TORBET, Robert G. **A History of the Baptists**. Foreword by Kenneth Scott Latourette. Valley Forge; Chicago; Los Angeles: The Judson Press, 1963, p. 42-43.
- [15] OLIVEIRA, Zaqueu Moreira de. **Liberdade e Exclusivismo: Ensaios Sobre os Batistas Ingleses**. Rio de Janeiro: Horizontal; Recife: STBNB Edições, 1997, p. 88-118.
- [16] *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- [17] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- [18] HELWYS, 1935, p. 69.
- [19] HELWYS, Thomas. **An Advertisement or Admonition**, 1611, apud HUDSON, July, 1956, p. 308.
- [20] OLIVEIRA, Z. M., 1997, p. 65.
- [21] LATOURETTE, 1953, p. 184.
- [22] LANDERS, 1986, p. 121.
- [23] FAIRCLOTH, Samuel D. **Esboço da História dos Batistas**. Leiria: Vida Nova, 1959, p. 120-121.
- [24] OLIVEIRA, Zaqueu Moreira de. **História do Cristianismo em Esboço**. Recife: STBNB Edições, 1998, p. 27.
- [25] MUIRHEAD, H. H. **O Cristianismo Através dos Séculos**. V. 2. 3 ed. Rio de Janeiro: Casa Publicadora Batista, 1952, p. 100-101.
- [26] TORBET, 1963, p. 43.
- [27] VEDDER, Henry C. **A Short History of the Baptists**. Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1960, p. 318.
- [28] LANDERS, 1986, p. 126.
- [29] The Brazilian Baptist Convention is the first and the biggest Baptist group in Brazil, with a church membership of about one million. If we count the children and many others who are not baptized Baptists, we have in Brazil about two million of Baptists, in the Brazilian Baptist Convention alone.
- [30] The **Doctrinal Statement of the Brazilian Baptist Convention** is the official doctrinal position or interpretation of the churches from the Brazilian Baptist Convention.
- [31] LATOURETTE, 1953, p. 179.
- [32] CONVENÇÃO BATISTA BRASILEIRA. **Declaração Doutrinária da Convenção Batista Brasileira**. Rio de Janeiro: JUERP, 1986, p. 13. (Série Documentos Batistas, 2).

- [33] LANDERS, 1986, p. 69.
- [34] This movement developed from the late 1950's and the early 1960's, resulting in a split in the Brazilian Baptist Convention. The main leaders of the movement were José Rego do Nascimento e Enéas Tognini. The exaggeration in the methods used by the dissidents at the beginning does not exist any more. Today there is a new spirit and a dialog has begun. In fact, the only different point of emphasis between the two conventions is the interpretation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- [35] CONVENÇÃO BATISTA BRASILEIRA, 1986, p. 8.
- [36] In this chapter we use mainly LUMPKIN, William L. **Baptist Confessions of Faith**. Philadelphia; Chicago; Los Angeles: The Judson Press, 1959. 430 p.
- [37] HELWYS, Thomas. **A declaration of faith of English people remaining in Amsterdam in Holland**, 1611. Apud LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 114-123.
- [38] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 118-119.
- [39] **THE CONFESSION of faith of those Churches which are commonly (though falsly) called Anabaptists**, London, 1644. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 144-171.
- [40] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 162.
- [41] Ibid., p. 163.
- [42] **A CONFESSION of the faith of several churches of Christ in the County of Somerset**, London, 1656. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 200-216.
- [43] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 205.
- [44] **CONFESSION of faith put forth by the elders and brethren of many congregations of Christians**, London, 1677. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 235-295.
- [45] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 272-273.
- [46] **THE NEW Hampshire Confession**, 1833. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 360-567.
- [47] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 365.
- [48] **A TREATISE on the faith of the Free Will Baptists**, 1834 and 1948. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 367-376.
- [49] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 374.
- [50] Ibid., p. 285.
- [51] **AN ORTHODOX Creed. Or a Protestant confession of faith**, London, 1679. Apud LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 295-334.
- [52] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 318-319.
- [53] **Principles and Inferences Concerning the Visible Church**.
- [54] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 36.
- [55] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 166.
- [56] Ibid., p. 287.
- [57] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 119.
- [58] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 319.
- [59] Ibid., p. 166-167.
- [60] Ibid., p. 212.
- [61] Ibid., p. 288.
- [62] **THE FAITH and practise of thirty congregations, gathered according to the primitive pattrenn**, London, 1651. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 171-188.
- [63] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 184.
- [64] **A BRIEF confession or declaration of faith set forth by many of us, who are (falsely) called Ana-Baptists**. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 220-235.
- [65] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 230.
- [66] Ibid., p. 320.



- [67] Today exists women pastors in churches from the Brazilian Baptist Convention in the states of São Paulo, Ceará, Pernambuco, Paraná e Paraíba.
- [68] SMYTH, John. **Short Confession of Faith in XX Articles by John Smyth**, 1609. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 97-101.
- [69] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 101.
- [70] Ibid., p. 121-122.
- [71] Ibid., p. 101.
- [72] **PROPOSITIONS and conclusions concerning true Christian religion, containing a confession of faith of certain English people, living at Amsterdam**. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 123-142. The supposition is that Smyth wrote this document, which was sent to the Mennonites with modifications.
- [73] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 137.
- [74] HELWYS, Thomas. **A Short Confession of Faith**, 1610. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 102-113.
- [75] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 109.
- [76] Ibid., p. 120.
- [77] Ibid., p. 120-121.
- [78] Ibid., p. 317.
- [79] Ibid., p. 167.
- [80] Ibid., p. 290.
- [81] Ibid., p. 321.
- [82] That is the given name to the Spurgeon's church in London.
- [83] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 205.
- [84] The Sandemanian Baptists owe their principles to Archibald McLean, who defended that "both the doctrine and polity of a true church must be taken literally and in detail from the New Testament" (UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 189-190). The name comes from Sandeman, son-in-law of John Glas, a minister who founded a sect, from which came McLean (p. 189).
- [85] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 395.
- [86] Ibid., p. 229.
- [87] Ibid., p. 320-321.
- [88] **A CONFESSION of faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many congregations of Christians**. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Philadelphia: B. Franklin, 1743. In: LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 348-353.
- [89] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 351.
- [90] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 133.
- [91] The group called New Connexion of General Baptists was founded on July, 1770, as a reaction against the Unitarianism, which was in most of the General Baptists churches. Its founder was Dan Taylor, who preserved the tradition of the General Baptists in England.
- [92] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 153.
- [93] Ibid., p. 158.
- [94] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 281.
- [95] Ibid., p. 328.
- [96] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 125.
- [97] Ibid.
- [98] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 351.
- [99] Ibid., p. 122.
- [100] Ibid., p. 187.
- [101] Ibid., p. 212.
- [102] Ibid., p. 231.
- [103] Ibid., p. 287.
- [104] Ibid., p. 319.

- [105] Ibid., p. 329.
- [106] Ibid., p. 137.
- [107] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 190.
- [108] Ibid., p. 42.
- [109] Ibid., p. 123.
- [110] Ibid., p. 190.
- [111] LUMPKIN, 1959, p. 376.
- [112] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 123.
- [113] Ibid., p. 123-124.
- [114] Ibid., p. 124.
- [115] Ibid., p. 158.
- [116] Ibid., p. 130.
- [117] Ibid., p. 158.
- [118] TORBET, 1963, p. 222.
- [119] The reason for this split was the interpretation of the “baptism in the Holy Spirit” or the “second blessing”, although several churches and leaders had some emotional practices condemned by the Brazilian Baptist Convention.
- [120] Several books and documents affirm that it happened in 1859, but it was in 1860, according to the Foreign Mission Board’s magazine. Cf. TAYLOR, James B. Departure of Brother Bowen. **The Commission**, v. 4. p. 314, Apr., 1860. **The Commission**, v. 4. p. 314, Apr. 1860.
- [121] BROADUS, J. A. et al. Report on the mission to Brazil. **Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention at its Eighth Biennial Session, 1861**. Richmond: Macfarlane & Ferguson, 1861, p. 61.
- [122] CRABTREE, A. R. **Baptists in Brazil**. Rio de Janeiro: Casa Publicadora Batista, 1953, p. 36.
- [123] RATCLIFF, Richard. Mission to Brazil. **Foreign Mission Journal**, Richmond, v. 10 n.s., p. 3, Feb., 1879.
- [124] FOREIGN MISSION BOARD. Our Brazilian Mission. **The Foreign Mission Journal**, Richmond, v. 11 n.s., p. 1, Aug., 1879.
- [125] FOREIGN MISSION BOARD. Our Brazilian Mission. **The Foreign Mission Journal**, Richmond, v. 11 n.s., p. 1, Aug., 1879.
- [126] MENDONÇA, Vania. Receitando na Enfermaria: Próximos Passos para a Convenção Batista Brasileira. **O Jornal Batista**, Rio de Janeiro, ano 103, n. 25, p. 14, 22 jun. 2003.
- [127] UNDERWOOD, 1961, p. 40-41.
- [128] SOUZA, Jeiel C. Ferreira de. Dente de Ouro. **O Jornal Batista**, Rio de Janeiro, p. 3, 13 jun. 1993.