

From the “Why We ...” Series

Why We Are Baptist
(Sermon Transcript)

We’re going through this “Why We ...” series that we might have an answer to everyman of the hope that is within us. And it’s been profoundly educating, even to me as a preacher who’s gone through Bible college and seminary. It’s amazing, the boot camp basic principles to be able to defend our faith and likewise, we continue on today on “Why We Are Baptist.”

A lady went to the post office at Christmastime, and she said, “I want some Christmas stamps, sir.”

He said, “What denomination would you like?”

She said, “Aw, it’s come to that already? Give me five Methodist, ten Baptist, and three Pentecostal.”

Kinda’ funny, but how many times have we been faced with that question? “Well, if Christianity’s true, and the Bible’s true, then why are there so many denominations?” How many of you have heard that before? It’s been brought to you, or you’ve questioned that point?

Let’s look at 2 John 1:7-11:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Also in the Word of God 2 Thessalonians 3:6 says, “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

Revelation 2:15 says, “So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.”

Likewise, we read very clearly in 2 John 1:9-10, “Whosoever ... abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.”

In answer to the question of why there are so many denominations, I went through this very early in my Christian walk. As I got saved, I got saved in an Independent Fundamental Baptist church.

Now, I was not from an Independent Fundamental background. I was not really from any background, the closest that I would have come from would have been Pentecostal. What I call “Backwoods Pentecostal.”

And when I got saved, I started venturing out. Though I got saved at an Independent Fundamental Baptist church, I said, “You know, this is good, but I’d better

make sure this is right. And I started visiting all different types of churches. Because of my testimony, where I came from, being pretty well known in the rock and roll scene back in Blacksburg, Virginia, immediately I started speaking at other churches. Within just a few weeks after I was saved I was invited to give my testimony in about any kind and every kind of church that you could imagine.

And after rubbing elbows with many of those types of ministries, I started really studying the Word of God and ended up a Baptist, or an Independent Baptist. Now I say that because even at times in my early Christian walk I would catch myself, and every now and then again I'll still do it for a purpose, I'll say, "You know what, it's not about being Baptist, it's about being Christian." However, it is of great importance where we stand and the reason why we call ourselves Baptists.

Now, so many times Christians start to apologize for being Baptist. "Well, I'm Baptist, but you know what, it's more important to be Christian." There is a big importance of being Baptist. You say, "Well, what do you mean?"

John said in Luke 9:49-50, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us."

Now, it's important. I want to expound upon this because many times this is used as a litmus test or an excuse to allow any kind of false doctrine within the ranks and fellowshiping with anybody who doesn't believe the right kind of doctrine. Now what's important here is he said we saw one casting out devils in thy name. Now you remember Jesus said at the Judgment Day there will be many who will say, "Have I not cast out devils in thy name?" But He'll say, "Depart from me you workers of iniquity. I never knew you."

Now that's important, we've gotta compare scripture with scripture. As Peter says there is no scripture of any private interpretation. But what Jesus says to him as he goes on, he says we forbade him because "he followed not with us." And why did he forbade him? Because he cast out devils in Jesus' name, but there was something about their outward walk or maybe some things that they believed that they said, "Hey, he's in our name, but there's a problem with him." But He said, "Don't forbid him," but he didn't say go yoke up with them either. He didn't say go and start walking with them either.

And so what Baptist is, is a distinction on where we stand on the Word of God. It's a distinction about where we stand and where we've stood all these years. Now, as Victory Baptist Church, we're a Baptist church, but we're also classified or identified as Independent and Fundamental.

Now that word "Fundamental," I'm gonna come to this in a little bit, to many today, "Fundamental" it's almost a dirty word, to be known as "Fundamental" or "Fundamentalist." You know why? Because we've been programmed by the world, we've been programmed by "Good Morning, America," we've been programmed by all these things out there to think that there's something wrong. I'm going to prove to you that it's nothing wrong here very, very shortly.

But an Independent Baptist church is classically known as one that strictly follows the Word of God to adopt the principle of the local New Testament church and the early church. Now, before you come to me and say, "Well, that's what everyone else says too," I'll admit that it is. I have never met a cult, I have never met a non-biblical church that

doesn't back up at least some of its teaching with the Word of God. But they pick and choose which principles they want to stand on and the ones they don't want to stand on.

And so as I go through this, I'm gonna go through it systematically in that I'm gonna identify who we are and why we stand, why we're Baptist, why we're Independent and what it means to you and me and to our Christian walk.

Now, some have come and said, and I've had it said to me before, "Well, you're Baptist. I don't like all of these *labels*."

Well, we're labeled by a lot of things. We're labeled by our job, we're labeled by our socio-economic background, we're labeled by so many things, but when it comes to Christianity for some reason we do not like labels. Why?

You know, I like labels. For instance, I started to do an illustration, but I didn't want to divide the church and split the church. I was telling our Sunday school I was going to bring a can of green beans with the label ripped off of it and, likewise, a can of Alpo. And what I was going to do was find some unlucky soul, with my luck it would probably be a visitor, and I was gonna take two can openers and say, "You pick which one you want, but whichever of them you pick, you have to eat."

And you see, Baptist is a label, and Independent Baptist is a label of where we stand and how we govern as a church of Jesus Christ. That way you know what you're getting. Now a lot of churches out there, there are community churches, there are non-denominational churches, and to be honest with you, as Independent Baptists, we're the closest thing to what true Non-Denominational will be. And I'll prove that in a second also.

But you don't know whether they're charismatic, you don't know whether you can lose your salvation, you don't know where they stand or what they're doing because it's masked under some general name that has no identification where they stand on the Word of God. Particularly, and for the most part, but not always, when you saw a Baptist church you used to be able to say, "This is where they stand on the Word of God." Today it's not that. And so we, as Independent Baptists have had to add some adjectives, extra identification of where we stand on the Word of God. And so I'm going to go through that.

And the very first word is "Independent." Now "Independent," that's the first descriptive word in "Independent Fundamental Baptist." Independent means just that, we're independent. We are not a part of any denomination. That means we have no hierarchy that governs us outside of this local church.

Now many other denominations have senates, they have conventions, they have other things that dictate to them what they believe and where they stand. They get together and they have a conference and a committee and they get together and decide what the churches are gonna take a stand for or stand against. Now, we don't do that. We're not influenced by anyone or anything or any entity other than the Word of God.

If the word of God says it ... well, somebody says, "What about your constitution?" If the constitution disagrees with the Word of God, we get rid of the constitution. The Word of God is the sole source of truth for Victory Baptist Church. It doesn't matter what the populous thinks, it doesn't matter what the majority thinks, it doesn't matter what the politics say, it's what the Word of God says and that is the only thing that influences us.

One time someone came up to me and said, "It's just patterned after the preacher." No, it's not! Someone said very early in my ministry here, they said, "Pastor Beaver, you have ruined my church."

I said, "Young lady, that's where you're wrong. It's not my church, it's not your church. If it's your church, then you better pay the bills. Get your checkbook out. We have about \$6,000 or \$7,000 a month that goes out of here."

Well then, that changed the whole course and the scope of the conversation, needless to say. It's not Preacher Beaver's church, it's not the deacons' church, it's the Lord Jesus Christ's church. And that's what we center around, that's where the worship goes. That's where everything is centered around here. "Independent" means no higher authority than the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God, which is God's written communication, marching orders, His constitution, His charter for Victory Baptist Church, and all those who stand upon it.

Now, God does place a pastor, that being me, located here to lead and guide the church in His stead. The undershepherd, as the Word of God indicates. But we, as a congregation, meet together and have business meetings, we do things according to the Word of God. We pray about decisions that need to be made. We pray according to the Word of God. If a person's not a member of the church, voting rights are not extended because we want to make sure that saved believers who have spiritual communication with God make decisions for God in His local New Testament church.

And so, a little bit of choice, no hierarchy. God places a pastor to lead according to the Word of God and to lead the congregation according to the will of God and Word of God, and then we get together and make decisions cooperatively, but usually by a majority vote, (usually by unanimous vote.) I don't think we've had a time when we've not been unanimous as far as I know. God places deacons, appointed by you, the members of Victory Baptist Church, to help the preacher and execute things in the work of God here. Not by some senate, not by some outside influence, but by the New Testament church here at Victory Baptist Church.

Now, what happens, as we are Independent, we're also what's called "Fundamental." Now, "Fundamental" means this: we stand fundamentally just on the Word of God and the principles of that Word of God. You see, so many times, as I said, the word "fundamentalist" has become a dirty word. And the reason is that the news media, when they talk about terrorism, when they talk about the fundamentalist whackos, they've got a bunch of bad names when it comes to fundamentalism, they'll talk about people blowing up people and the "fundamentalists" of Islam.

Well you know, when you read the Koran, and I've got a copy up here which I quoted from not too long ago, when you read it, it talks about persecution when you don't believe what they do. It talks about killing people. It talks about conversion by the sword. Now then you think that because these fundamentalist Muslims are so steadfast on the literal Koran, then they go out and kill people.

Now you think about the fundamental teachings of the Word of God. If I'm a Fundamentalist Christian, Fundamentalist Baptist, the fundamentalist teaching of the Word of God is to go out and love my neighbor as myself. I have to get all whacko about loving people like myself. You don't see anything in the Word of God in blowing up anybody. You don't see anything about mass conversion by force or by the sword. If we get really whacko we go out and spread that Jesus can save and change hearts.

And so Fundamentalism, in and of its essence is this: that we stand upon the principles of the Word of God, such as the death, burial, and resurrection. Such as the Word of God, such as the Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Such as the local New Testament church. I'll go through a list in a minute in depth.

But "Independent," it means that we're locally governed here. We're not influenced by any other person but the Word of God. Fundamentalist means that we stick strictly upon what it says and we let it lead, guide and direct our church as well as our life. We're not looking to the "Church Fathers" for answers. We're not looking at where other churches are going for the answers. We could care less if someone else accepts homosexuality because the Word of God and what governs us says, "Hey it's wrong. It's an abomination to God." And I don't care what the Baptist church down the street does. It doesn't make any difference to me. It's what God leads and guides us through the Word of God. Independent, and Fundamental, and we are Baptist.

Now, Baptist. That's the main label. The first two are descriptive of what we really are as Baptists. As I said, there was a time when you could say "Baptist" and pretty much that was indicative of a group and body of doctrines that everybody stood for. However, the world has become more worldly, which we knew was going to happen even as the Word of God says in John, for deceivers are gonna come into the world, scoffers will come in. But as they came in and they waxed worse, the church went right along with it.

As an illustration, 50 years ago, there was a place where we stood on things, and the preacher would stand and we would say, "You know, that's wrong." The Word of God says that this separates the muck from the mire. This is black, and this is white. But as the world got worse, we just kind of went along with it. We didn't want to seem like Puritans, we didn't want to seem like we were Amish or something, so we just went along with it. And the same stuff we used to preach about 50 years ago we stamped as sacred and said "Kum By Ya Christianity," let's go with it! And the problem is that Baptist churches have changed their standards and they've changed sometimes even their doctrine, their stands on particular issues like women preachers, and I could go on down the list.

Now they may say "Baptist" on the shingle ... A lot of churches have been taking "Baptist" off the shingle and probably most of them should that do because they know where Baptists have traditionally stood throughout the years. And you go back, and I think one of the neat things about being Baptist is that we're Independent and we're Fundamental, but one of the great things about being Baptist that is unique among all other denominations ... (and we're not a denomination, because denominations comes in its essence from back in the Reformation) ... We, as Baptists, were never a part of the Reformation. Now let's think about this a little bit. This is gonna be a shock to some of you. We've covered this on Sunday nights. This is the first time we've covered this on Sunday morning.

What does "reform" mean? The Reformation means "reform." And Martin Luther came out of the Catholic church. He wanted to reform the Catholic church. "Protestant" means what? *Protester*. We never protested the Catholic church because we were never a part of it. You say, "Well, how can you prove that?" Do a little study. There's a book called *The Trail of Blood*, written by Carol in 1930, I think it was. It traces the lineages of the Baptist churches.

Now you remember Jesus said, clearly in Scripture, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. Isn't that what He said? Amen? Is that true? Amen. But the problem with the whole scenario is that when you look at the hypocrisy in the church through the years, where is God's promise being fulfilled?

When you look and you trace back history, the Catholic church traces its roots back to 300 A.D. with Constantine and other leaders who made the Christian religion the state religion. Now with that, what happened was they said in 300 A.D. (and I'm just summarizing numbers, not in particulars because I want to give this in a layman's point of view,) they said, "Now this is the state religion, all these little churches out there. And there were thousands at that time, 300 A.D., after the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so there were thousands of churches there. And before that they were killed and martyred for their faith because the state persecuted the church. And so to some, they said, "This is a good idea. This is a state church and let's come together." The only problem then is that you had the state saying to itself, "Okay, now we rule and govern the affairs of the church." So paganism started to influence the church.

Now there were those local churches, dominists, monosists, there's all types of different names, lawlerts through the centuries that said, "You know what? This is not a good idea. We will not join the state church. We will not join those who are not even saved and do not know the Lord. We will not join their ranks." And they were persecuted from the time of 300 AD until the time of the Reformation. They have estimated, and this is a big, broad estimate of 60 million Baptists.

Now, I call them Baptists for a reason, for certain things they stood against. First thing they stood against was baby baptism. Because when the church and state got together and were married ... Baptists have always taken a stand for separation of church and state. We'll talk about that in just a little bit. Because the church and the state married together, they said to be saved, you've got to be a member of the church. And many places, where you were born, you became a member of the church whether you were saved or not. It didn't matter. Because you were a member of the state, you had to be a member of the church. And so what you had was a church that was made up of people who were not converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Their hearts had never been changed, and they were making decisions concerning the church. And so, there were all these churches who said, "No, we will not have a part of that."

They did not believe in transubstantiation, the fact that when you partake of the Lord's Supper, the prominent teaching from 300 A.D. and even today among many Protestant churches, (Lutheran for another one,) teaches that the bread mystically becomes the actual body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what's taught, it's clear. You can talk to anybody who's part of one of those denominations or those churches and they will tell you that that is what happens and there's salvation merit when you partake of that actual bread and that actual blood. We don't believe that. That was another thing we don't believe. We do not believe in "the Sacraments." There's a lot of little particulars that we did not believe in that can be traced back in history. They may not have dotted their "i's" and crossed their "t's" like we do today, but the basic, core principles: death, burial and resurrection, salvation by grace and grace alone, the Word of God being the only source and rule of thumb can be traced all the way back to the time of Christ. And even secular historians have held that if any group that could identify

themselves with this group tracing back to the time of Christ, it would be that of the Baptists because they hold to the same doctrines.

And so we are not Protestants. Webster himself will identify Baptists as Protestants. We are not Protestants. We never came, as I said, from the Catholic church. And many people like John Calvin ordered the persecution of Baptists.

Now, how did we get the name “Baptist”? Because we did not believe in salvation merit through baptism. And baby baptism, if you were a part of the state church, and you came to the local New Testament church, then you would have to be rebaptized because you were baptized in the name of the church out of duty rather than out of conversion. And that’s the big key right there.

So what happened is that the state church came and said, “You know what, those are a bunch of anti-baptists.” Which meant that because we disagreed, they said we were anti-baptism. And we weren’t! As the Word of God says, baptism is a picture of what has happened on the inward heart after salvation. After you’ve been saved, then you get baptized as a picture of what God has done in your heart. So really the name “Baptist” was a slang term that was given unto us because we took a stand for what we believe about baptism. And so that’s how we got the name in and of itself, but over the years it’s become identified with those who strictly adhere to the Word of God. One of the things we stood against was baby baptism. We stood against church and its merit to salvation. We stood against “works salvation.” We stood against Mary worship and transubstantiation, as I said. And thus, as the years went by, we were persecuted.

Now, when the Reformation came, it opened up the door for us to branch out because with the law we weren’t persecuted. Now it was more popular to be a Christian and to not be a part of the state church. So we came about, and then came the Pilgrims and the Puritans, which came out of the Church of England. And I don’t have time to go through all those details, but as Baptists, we’re not Puritans either, though we like their piety, though we like where they stood, and we look and say that they put us to shame as far as godly living, but you look at the history and it wasn’t till 1776 I believe or so, or whenever the Bill of Rights was established, 1787, when the Constitution was made that real free religion for Baptists actually happened. Because if you look again, the state-church situation, if you weren’t a part of the Puritan state, and we know about the witch hunting and all that different stuff when you look through the history, we, as Baptists, were persecuted. Roger Williams was one of the first ones that was persecuted because he took a stand for the Word of God and separation of church and state.

Now, some of you may be sitting and thinking, “Separation of church and state ... Isn’t that a *bad* thing?” The separation of church and state is a good principle although it’s been redefined. Separation of church and state says that the state has no right in the affairs of the church. The church is governed by the Lord Jesus Christ and the government has no authority in the local New Testament church.

But what has happened in government is that they’ve redefined that. They’ve redefined it to mean that the church can’t affect the state. But it was never meant to be that at all! We, as Christians, have a responsibility to obey the powers that be unless they disobey the Word of God. As Peter said, I would obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). Let God be true and every man a liar. We take what the Word of God says as preeminent, but we do not marry in with the state and let the state dictate to us what we must believe.

But as I said, we're Fundamental Independent Baptists. It means that we stand as Baptists for the death, burial and resurrection as the only hope of salvation. Not through the church, not through intercession of a priest, not through the intercession of anybody; only through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We stand upon the Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and One and the same. We stand upon the Bible. We stand upon the literal return of Jesus Christ. We stand upon faith as being the sole essence of obtaining salvation, not of works. Those are the five fundamentals. But one of the things Baptists have always stood for is that the Bible, the B-I-B-L-E, is the only source of information.

You watch *National Geographic*. I watch, I'll confess my sins to you. And mostly to get me upset and get me praying or something like that. But they'll say "the Early Church Fathers ...". You see, many of the churches out there today are based on what the Early Church Fathers taught, or what precedent was set by the convention, or the precedent was set by the group of churches or a group of men who decided something about the Word of God. But we, again, as Baptists, stand solely upon its authority, and it's always been the principle, of standing upon the Word of God, and that only.

Also, the second point that we've always stood on is the fact that the church is only made up of saved, baptized individuals. Now, when you look at other churches, that's not the case. I've had people leave this church and go to other Baptist churches and they were not yet saved. I knew that they weren't. They were not saved at all, and had never been baptized, and went straight and joined other Baptist churches.

There's a big problem with that because I believe the word "church" means a group of called-out believers, in the Greek. And just come on in, let's build the group, let's build the "Kum By Ya" worship service, but there's no distinction of who they are and what they stand for in anything at all.

But when you look throughout the centuries, and that's how we got the name Anabaptist, or now just known as Baptist. It's because of the stand that the church is only made up of Bible-believers, those that have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. And thirdly, one other thing is that we believe in the strict separation of church and state. I've already covered that and gotten a little ahead of myself, that what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? (2 Corinthians 6:14). Can two walk together except they be agreed? (Amos 3:3). The Word of God is clear about it.

Fourthly, we all have always stood for the priesthood of the believer. And again, you see how this trickles back. The priesthood of the believer means that you don't need someone to intercede for you. You don't need to go to some phone booth and tell some fellow about your sins. You go directly to God.

Let me surprise you: You don't have to be a member of a church to go to heaven. And let me shock you here too: You don't have to go to church to go to heaven. Now, to be right with God, and to walk with God, you've got to attend church. I really believe that to be true. But going to church doesn't get you to heaven. You could attend here for the next 50 years and bust Hades wide open very easily. You can come and you may even go through the process of becoming a member and say the right words but truly never be regenerated in your heart.

But, believing in the priesthood of the believer, that's why we believe in the autonomy of the local New Testament church. Under the authority of the Word of God

we make decisions. That's why we don't need a council of men to make the decisions for us.

And fifthly, and I've already covered this too: we believe in the autonomy of the local church, meaning independency. And that has been the trait of the history of the Baptist church through the centuries.

So what does this mean, and how does this translate to you and me? I said we're Independent, meaning we're self-governed, and I've covered all these things a couple of times in this message. We're Independent, we're Fundamental, meaning we strictly adhere to what the Bible says, not to what popular culture says, not what the majority says or not how the times change. We don't change with the times. Now, I'll just guess at the different denominations, they say they'll probably want to bring up again the debate about homosexuals and homosexuals being a part of the clergy.

Now who would have ever thought that we'd come to that point? And who would have thought it would be a debate when the Bible speaks so very clearly about it. A person in our church here was telling me that a person had written in to the "Voice of the People" (*Kenosha News* letters section), another denomination's priest or preacher, whatever you call him, and wrote in and said that this marriage debate, and this marriage amendment that's happening in Wisconsin is "so mean-spirited." And this person wrote back to the person individually and gave him the book of Romans, chapter one and said, "God is so mean-spirited, isn't He?" Because why, why would we do that? Why would we stand like that? Because that's where the Word of God stands, and I'll never apologize for that. Now, it's always been indicative of those who others have called Anabaptists or Baptists. Independent, sole-governing within ourselves, and we stand on the Word of God and the doctrines of God.

And so now I say that to bring this to a point. Why are we Baptists? I wanted to answer that question for you. We're Baptist because of our lineage, we can trace our lineage ... Now you say, "Aren't there other churches out there that may not have "Baptist" on the shingle that can claim heritage back to the Anabaptists? Sure. Some of them maybe could be called Bible churches. They're essentially Baptist, but they take "Baptist" off the shingle. I don't know if they're ashamed of it or what. Someone once said to me, "If you weren't Baptist, what would you be?"

I said, "Ashamed." I'm not ashamed of the doctrine that I stand on. I'm not ashamed of our lineage of where we've been.

Second point is because of our doctrine.

Thirdly, because of our stand on the Scriptures and how it applies to culture. Those are three bullets for your six-shooter right there. If someone comes up to you and says, "Why are you Baptist?" Because of our lineage. "Why are you Baptist?" Because of our doctrine of where we stand upon the Word of God. We believe, and it's a great place to witness to somebody. That's the whole point of this message is and this series is that you might give an answer to all men of the hope that is within you (1 Peter 3:15).

Why are we Baptist? Because of our lineage. Through the years, we were killed for our stand on baptism. We were persecuted because our stand on the virgin birth. We were persecuted for our stand on faith and faith only as the means of salvation. What a great opportunity to witness! And our stand upon the Word of God. There's three bullets to put into your six-shooter to take out into the world with you today.

But let me just go back to where we are. We're Independent Fundamental Baptists. And you may come and say, "Well, I didn't know all that." Well, you've got something to take home in your lunchbox also.

But you know what, you may be visiting here today. As I went through this you said, "Well, that sure makes sense." But you know one of the things first of all is that you're saved. Before you can be Baptist, you have to be saved. Before you can be Baptist, you've got to know the Lord. And if you don't know the Lord as your Savior, that's the first step.

You say, "Is it all about being Baptist?" No, it's about being saved. And afterwards comes being Baptist, standing upon the Word of God. And so, if you've never trusted Christ, today should be the day when you get saved. Trust Christ. Believe that you're a sinner. The Word of God says it. Believe that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23). Romans 10:9 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." If you've never been saved, you should get saved today. Trust Christ!

But for us as Christians today, the challenge is also to you and to me. Are you ashamed of where you stand? You should never be. Are you ashamed of calling yourself a Baptist? Well, you shouldn't be. That you're Fundamental, and many times I use the word, a "Biblicist." Means the same thing. Biblicist, I stand solely upon the Word of God and strictly according to its teaching. We run our church strictly according to its teachings. Have you become ashamed of it?

Well, you say, "I'm not ashamed of it," but do you *promote* it? What you're not ashamed of, you'll *promote*. When you're proud of being a Bible-believer, you will promote it to a lost and dying world. It's evident if you're not promoting it ...

Let's say for instance, you had cancer, and they came up with a new treatment. A new treatment that within two weeks cured cancer. And it worked for you; you were in the trial. And immediately, within two weeks your cancer was gone. You know what you'd be? You'd be a sounding board, saying, "IT WORKS!! IT WORKS!! IT WORKS!! IT WORKS!! I WAS HEALED! TWO WEEKS!!! I TOOK ONE PILL. -NO SIDE EFFECTS!!"

If we believe what the Word of God says and what it says about the Word of God, and it has been real to us, then we cannot help but go out and to share it with everybody. Now do we go out and convert everyone to become Baptists?

No, that's what the cults do. Just become JW's or just become a member of this church. That's not what we're doing. But it's about teaching and discipling them according to the Word of God. Just like what happened to me. I was attending Pentecostal and charismatic Bible colleges, their chapel services during the week. I wanted to learn. And I just picked up the Word of God. I wasn't influenced by anyone but this book right here, the *King James Bible*. I started to read, as I read and started to decipher the Word of God. I'm not a Baptist because daddy led or mama told me to be one, but because of the Word of God. That's how I ended up here today. And I'm not ashamed of it! I'll *never apologize* for having "Baptist" on the shingle out there. Nor should we!