



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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“A Stone Laid by God”

Isaiah 28:14-20

Sunday A. M. 7-29-07

Pastor Bill Lee

If you would, look with me in your Bible to the Book of Isaiah – Chapter 28. The Book of Isaiah and in Chapter 28, I would like for us to read verses 14 thru verse 20. In Isaiah Chapter 28 we will begin reading in verse 14. “Wherefore hear the Word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, **“We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under**

falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell (See A Stone Laid, Cont. Next Page)

A CRITIQUE #4

By J.C. Settlemaier

**An Examination of Great Commission Credentials and Other
ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY Articles**

MISREPRESENTATION OF AUTHORS QUOTED

The next thing I will take up is Bro Fenison’s misrepresentation of other authors he has quoted in *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS*. This is a serious charge but I will set before the reader the quotes and he may judge for himself according to the evidence. T. T. Eaton in the Introduction to Christian’s book *Did they Dip?* Said this:

The most unpleasant thing in connection with replying to Dr. Whitsitt’s “Question in Baptist History” is calling attention to his unauthorized

use of documents, owing largely to his misplaced confidence in Dr. Dexter. And yet whoever replies to any book must needs call attention to its misuse of authorities where such misuse exists.....When a man enters the lists of controversy he must expect his statements to be challenged. [Christian. *Did They Dip?* P. 2].

We are not here inquiring whether the men quoted are correct in their positions or not but rather we ask, does Bro Fenison quote them correctly? My contention is that he has misrepresented these men to an astounding degree.

(SEE CRITIQUE Cont. Page 6, Right Column)

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You Are Welcome!

(A Stone aid By God Cont. From Page 1) shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it". This passage of scripture and we will be

using, Lord willing, verse 16 as our text this morning. And in verse 16 we surely have a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ here in the Book of Isaiah. To me this is a very remarkable passage of Scripture...it is a pattern of writings here in God's Word that I find over and over again. You will notice that in the midst of a sinful people, and in the midst of the revelation of the judgment of Almighty God, there is the declaration and revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice if you would, the sinful people that are spoken of in this text. A people that are in absolute rebellion against God. And they are like so many today in our generation that think they are saved from the judgment of God. They think they are saved from the wrath of God. They think they are secure from the judgment of hell itself. Notice in verse 15, ***"Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:"*** Now, it is very easy for us to read verse 15 and to note that their security is certainly a false security, and that their faith is misplaced.

They said in verse 15 ***"We have made lies our refuge."*** Now, only a fool would do that! ***"We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:"*** But yet, they feel secure there. And again I suppose this is true with every generation, but since I have only lived in this one, I'll just speak of it. There are many in this generation who have made lies their refuge and they feel secure under many falsehoods. There are many today that feel very safe and very secure in false religions, in false doctrines and in false churches, and even in false gods. And they feel very safe, and they feel very secure in that! There are many people that feel very safe and secure as they are busying themselves in all sorts of ceremonies and in rites of religion and in religious activity they have made those things their refuge. And they feel very safe in that! And I want you to notice in verse 17 you find the judgment of God. In verse 15 you find the false security of many. They said ***"We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement"***.

And when the judgment comes it won't come upon us, for we have a refuge and we have hidden ourselves. But in verse 17 is the sure judgment of God. ***"Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."*** In verse 18, ***"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."*** Now, notice something I find in the Scripture over and over again, and I love to notice this because it just reminds me constantly of God's wonderful Grace! In verse 15, the sins of the people; in verse 17, the judgment of God, and wedged right in between the two, the declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ. The only thing that stands between the sins of the people and the judgment of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. And following what is stated in verse 15, and just preceding what is stated in verse 17, God said, ***"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."*** In verse 15 the folly and the foolishness of man...and let me remind myself and all of you that by the Grace of God, we are escaped from verse 15...we are escaped from verse 17, and it is all because of verse 16, and not because of ourselves. Without God's grace we would still be in verse 15 and we would still be in verse 17. For we are no better than they. It is only by the Grace of God! But again, notice where the position of this statement is ...and I can assure you that it is not placed there by chance or by accident, but by divine purpose... that we would see, as I have already stated, that what stands between sin and judgment is the Lord Jesus Christ! Notice in verse 16, if you would, ***"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold,"*** (there is something here that we need to take notice of) we need to stop and meditate upon this...this word 'behold' is serving here as an exclamation. In verse 15, again I want to go back to that "we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves": And in verse 16, God points to the sure foundation! Certainly lies and falsehoods are not a sure

foundation! God said "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

Now, it is very clear that as you note the wording in verse 16 that this is a work of God. Notice, ***"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone."*** God said "I lay this stone". Laid in the very purpose eternal decrees of Almighty God. Before He ever created the heavens and the earth Jesus Christ, God's Son, was laid by God as the true Foundation Stone. And let me mention this...while this Stone is associated with the Lord's Church, do not limit it to the Church. He is God's Foundation. Laid by God. Go back with me to the book of Psalms. In Psalms Chapter 118 and in verse 22...and then I want to go to the book of Matthew...but first, in Psalms 118 and in verse 22 ***"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."*** And notice verse 23, ***"This is the LORD's doing;"*** In our text the Lord said ***"I lay in Zion a foundation stone"***. Here it says ***"This is the LORD'S doing"***. It is not the doings of men, it is not the doings of religion...it is the doings of God. ***"Behold I lay in Zion"***. And you will notice in verse 23, ***"it is marvelous in our eyes."*** I don't know anything any more marvelous than the doings of our God in laying this foundation! Now if you will go with me to Matthew, and in chapter 21, you will find the same wording there, but I just wanted us to notice this...that Jesus Christ, Himself, makes reference to this passage in Psalms. In Matthew, and in chapter 21, and in verse 42, ***"Jesus saith unto them, 'Did ye never read in the scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner:.'"*** And Jesus Himself quoted this.... ***"this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes"***. It is marvelous as our eyes...not necessarily our physical eyes, but our eyes of faith lay hold upon the Lord Jesus Christ...And we are reminded again that the very fact that He is the Foundation Stone is an act of God. Through God's infinite Grace! You go back to our text in Isaiah Chapter 28 and in verse 16, ***"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone". God said, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone."*** We were singing a

moment ago “Rock of Ages”. Well, this is the Rock of Ages. He is the Rock of Ages, the Stone that is laid by God Himself. Now if you will go over to Isaiah Chapter 32, and notice in verse 2 – **“And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”** That’s the Stone that God laid. That’s the Stone in verse 2...a great Rock in a weary land. Go back to the Book of Psalms with me if you would again, and in Psalms, in Chapter 40 and in verse 2... notice how David describes the matter of salvation, and what his God had done for him. **“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”** I love to sing that song, “On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand”. You know, when you hear that song, or maybe you sing that song, you need to understand that you did not place yourself there, but it is God that brought you up out of the miry clay, out of a horrible pit, and set you upon a Rock! And that Rock is the Lord Jesus Christ. On over in Psalms, in Psalms Chapter 61 and in verse 2... **“From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”** How important this Rock is ... not only as far as our salvation is concerned, but daily in the lives of the saints. When everything is against us, and we feel like we are just trodden down by the cares of this world, we can turn to God, and say “God, just lead me to that Rock ..so that I can just see Jesus..help me to see Jesus each day that we live.” And God said in our text **“Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone...”** and that word ‘foundation’ in our text means a fundamental foundation. It is a foundation that is no ordinary foundation. The Book of I Corinthians and in Chapter 3..note with me if you would, in verse 11, where the Apostle Paul said, **“For other foundation can no man lay....”**

Now, people can busy themselves in religion, false churches and false religions can arise and they can have men, doctrines and principals and morals as their foundation, but their foundation can never equal our foundation. What Paul is saying here in verse 11 – **“For**

other foundation can no man lay” no one else can lay a foundation like God lays. For He laid His only Begotten Son. He laid The Lord of Glory. Notice – **“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid.”** God has already laid the true Foundation. And Paul tells us that this Foundation is Jesus Christ. And if you go back to the Book of Acts and in Chapter 4 notice with me in verse 10, if you would beginning our reading there: **“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole.”** This is the Stonenotice that the One Whom they crucified is God’s Stone. The One that was put to death...the One that died for our sins...the One that was crucified, buried in the tomb for three days and three nights, and then resurrected by the power of God... **“This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”** Notice verse 12...**“Neither is there salvation in any other:”**

There might be others that appear to be a foundation...there might be other less foundation, no other true foundation... And the Bible says that salvation is only in this Stone. Neither is there salvation in any other. Now I mentioned there are many foundations that are laid by men, but they will not stand. If you look back to the Book of Deuteronomy and in Chapter 32 and in verse 31, “For their rock is not as our Rock”. Other foundation can no man lay. No one else can lay a foundation like this. There are other religions that are built upon men and false doctrine, but the Bible says, “Neither is there salvation in any other. **For there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved.**” The name of Buddha is excluded, Allah is excluded, Mohammed is excluded and any other man you want to name is excluded. “For their rock is not as our Rock...” For our Rock is laid by God. The Apostle said that this Stone is Christ Jesus...He is truly our Rock. Go back with me to our text in Isaiah 28, and notice what is stated here about this Rock...about this Stone. “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried Stone, (that word ‘tried’ means ‘tested’). Let me tell you, our

Stone has been tested and proven to be true... and sure, and He cannot fail. He is a tried Stone...Tried...Tested by Satan for 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness and He did not fail. He was tested in the Garden of Gethsemane (sp) and He did not fail. He was tested at Calvary itself, and He did not fail. He was tested in the tomb, but He did not fail. He is tested! He is proven to be true! He is worthy of the faith of God's elect. He is tested! Let me tell you this, God the Father trusted this Stone. Now wouldn't it have been a foolish act of God to lay a stone as a foundation that He did not trust! It would have been a very foolish act! My God does not do foolish things! God Almighty trusted His Son, Jesus Christ, to carry out every purpose, every decree, every prophecy that God had ordained. God, the Father, trusted His Son with your salvation, and your salvation not only depends upon the Stone, but first, it depended upon God the Father's trust in that Stone! If He had not trusted Jesus, He would never have given His people unto Him. Notice this in our text... A tried Stone, a tested Stone. He is tested!

Notice, also, it says "a precious cornerstone." This word for 'precious' here means that it really has two different things that are put together...beauty and strength. This Stone is precious. It is a beautiful Stone, but it is also a Stone of strength. And it says here, "A precious cornerstone". Now, understand the picture here, if you would, it is the cornerstone that holds the sides together. It is the cornerstone in which things fit! And again, as I mentioned earlier, that certainly there is a reference here to the Lord's Church, as He is both the Foundation of it, and the Head of it, but it goes beyond that! It is not limited unto that! For we are told in the Scripture that "in Jesus Christ...in this Cornerstone...both Jew and Gentile come together. And we are put together in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the picture of a cornerstone. In the Lord Jesus Christ, the Old Testament saints, and the New Testament saints come together in this Chief Precious Cornerstone. In the Lord Jesus Christ, the saints that have already gone into Heaven, and the saints that are on the earth...we are together in one...in Him! People of all nations, ages and places upon this earth are one in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The only reason that we can be joined together is the Lord Jesus Christ! You will notice in our text that it says He is not only a Foundation Stone, a tried Stone, a Precious Cornerstone, He is a Sure Foundation. That simply means He is a Foundation that cannot give away! Remember, not long ago I saw a picture of a building, and the foundation had given away and the building was just leaned over.....because the foundation had given away.

Let me tell you, Jesus is a sure foundation....A sure foundation....He will never, never give away. And, again, He is that Rock that cannot be moved and cannot be shaken. Every one and every thing that has been placed on this Rock is eternally secure! Just because of Who He is! The Apostle Paul said "The Foundation of God standeth sure". Look in our text again...it says "**He that believeth shall not make haste.**" Now those words may seem a little strange to us, but just think about them for a moment..."He that believeth shall not make haste." He that believeth will be satisfied eternally right there! Without being in a hurry to go anywhere...be satisfied right here! You know, I hear people say over and over "the Lord led me here and the Lord led me there...and the Lord led me over here"...and they never seem to be satisfied, and there's something wrong there. I have even had people tell me that the Lord led them away from one of His true churches to a false church. Let me tell you, God never leads anyone away from Jesus Christ. Those that leave may be led, but they are not led of the Lord. '**He that believeth**'...it just simply means they will be satisfied. Look in the Book of Romans, if you would. The Bible defines this for us. In Romans in Chapter 9, and in verse 33, "As it is written (where is it written? Well, it is written in our text). "**Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.**" And our text says "shall not make haste". Here the Bible gives us the definition "shall not be ashamed".

Go on over to the Book of I Peter, if you would, in Chapter 2, verse 6, "**Wherefore, also it is contained in the scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:**

and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.” Now, if you put all of this together, and understand what it means, those that trust this Stone, those that believe upon this Stone, the Lord Jesus Christ, they will never be ashamed, they will never be disappointed, and they will never be dishonored. They will be satisfied, and they will be kept secure right there! On this Stone! Now, if you will notice back in our text – in verse 15 – the people had said, **‘We made a covenant with death. We are in agreement with hell and we believe that when the overflowing scourge does come, the wrath does come, it’ll pass over us. It won’t come unto us. We made lies our refuge. Under falsehood have we hid ourselves’...**And then God reveals His Stone, The Lord Jesus Christ. What is interesting to me to notice is that after you have what you have in verse 15, the false confidence and the false peace of the people, then you have the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then you look over to verse 20, and it says **“The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.”** Let me tell you those back in verse 15 that are living with a false peace, false security, trusting themselves or someone, or something else, they have a bed that is just too short. And they have covering – in verse 20 – that can never adequately cover. A **“covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.”**

They have a covering that won’t cover. They have a bed that is too short! Every false religion is right there. Everyone involved in false religion is right there! Everyone that is trusting someone other than the Lord Jesus Christ is right there! Those that believe they can do enough good works or live a “good enough” life, in order to satisfy God, I’ll tell them their bed is too short, and their covering is insufficient. Isn’t it nice to be on the Rock, and know that our covering is the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ!!! God has robed us, clothed us with the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that covering is sufficient. I had much rather be on the Rock in verse 16 than be in a short bed in verse 20. The End.

(CRITIQUE # 4 Continued from Page 1)

J. G. Jones

Bro Fenison quotes J. G. Jones:

In this simple analysis of the commission is presented the very process by which Baptists are now made, constituted into churches, and governed. That it was the process by which the first preachers made converts, and constituted churches, is beyond question. [T. G. Jones. *The Baptists* p. 27; GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS p. 50].

This sounds as if Jones could possibly be referring to ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. Is that the case? This is Bro Fenison’s claim because he says:

In that book he [Jones] claimed that the Great Commission as given in Matthew 28:19-10 was a process that included authority to constitute churches. [*Ibid.*].

Bro Fenison is reading ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY into Jones. To be sure, Jones does not say churches must be constituted with ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY yet it is possible this was what he meant. Is this Jones position? We shall see. To verify Jones’ position we will examine statements found in the very book Bro Fenison quotes. Jones says:

So far from the Scriptures sustaining this theory of 'uninterrupted succession,' they show its utter futility. [Jones. *The Baptists*, p. 37].

Since when does ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY repudiate 'uninterrupted succession'? Uninterrupted succession is the essential heart of the system! But Jones denies it and says the Scripture does not sustain it but shows its *utter futility*. A man who does not believe in 'uninterrupted succession' cannot believe ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY, call it what you will! But there is more. Again Jones says:

We wonder not, then, that this theory of 'uninterrupted succession' finds no real support in the writings of the ablest and best of the Christian Fathers. That, though often quoted in support of it, many of them, Tertullian, Jerome, Ambrose, Gregory Nazianzen, Augustine, and others, repudiated it--all contending that

succession of doctrine and of faith, of principle and spirit, is the only true succession, and that without it, however important outward and formal succession may be, ...it is of no avail, and not worthy of regard--being often claimed by heretical teachers and apostate churches. Jones. *The Baptists*, p. 39.

Now here Jones says the only true succession is of doctrine and of faith!

Again Jones quotes Dr. Ripley with approval:

Yet more fully and with rare elegance and ability are the views of the Baptists, upon this subject of succession, expressed by another distinguished Baptist. Referring to their churches, he says "Amongst their sister churches they are related by sympathies and kind offices, but they own no subjection, and acknowledge no dependence either on contemporary churches of their own country, or upon the churches of other lands or other times, except as those churches have held the same truth, clung to the same Head, and have exhibited the same spirit. [Jones. *The Baptists*, p. 41-42].

Does this distinguished Baptist say churches must get authority from another church?

No!

How are they related to each other? *By sympathies and kind offices*. But are they not subject to the mother church? No! Do they not depend on other churches to get their start? No! They, ...**acknowledge no dependence on contemporary churches...**

But Bro Fenison claims every church depends upon the mother church for its existence! And that mother to mother, to mother and mother after mother, for as many as it takes to get back to Christ and the first church in Jerusalem! Are we to believe Bro Fenison or are we to believe Jones as to what Jones believed? Certainly, Bro Fenison has chosen quotes without knowing what the author believed, which is not good scholarship. Or if he knew what Jones believed, then his situation is worse!

But this is not all. We quote again:

They [Baptist churches] claim to hold directly of the ever-living, almighty, and omnipotent Spirit, and to lean, without interposition of chains of succession and lines of spiritual descent, immediately and for themselves on the

bosom and heart of the Savior, who pledged his presence to the end of the world, where two or three are gathered together in his name. [Jones. *The Baptists*. p. 41-42].

Note how Dr. Ripley, whom Jones is quoting with approval here, excludes *chains of succession* and *lines of spiritual descent*, but says the churches hold directly to the Lord and then he appeals to Mt. 18:20 which Bro Fenison claims has no connection to church constitution! [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 202].

Clearly Jones does not believe ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY! Nothing in this book indicates he did. Bro Fenison has merely grabbed up a few scraps taken out of context from Jones and claimed them as supporting what his words could never mean!

Is it wrong to quote a man to prove something you know he does not believe? Is it wrong to quote a man as believing some doctrine when he expressly says he does not believe it? The only time this can be done is when one is preaching to the choir! It is rejected and repudiated at all times by those who value truth and scholarship!

T. T. EATON

Another man quoted by Bro Fenison is T.T. Eaton. In fact he was so fond of quoting this author he gives the same quote two different times in GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. The italicized words are Eaton's and the regular are Fenison's:

"If Baptist succession be the bad thing some brethren say, then certainly it ought to be given up. There should be no more of it."

However, if they were to be CONSISTENT and give it up, what would that include and how would that have to occur among the Baptists of Dr. Eaton's day? What would it take to make an end of it according to Eaton? He goes on to explain:

"When a new church is organized, it should have no sort of connection with other churches, or relations to them. Let churches be organized anywhere, anyhow, by anybody. Just let people be believers, and let them baptize each other and start a church.

This does away with Baptist succession. And

if it be the bad thing that is charged, it ought to be done away with at the earliest moment. Those who oppose Baptist Succession have no logical ground to stand on in organizing a church out of material furnished by other churches, and with those baptized by regularly ordained Baptist ministers.” Dr. T. T. Eaton. (Quoted by Milburn Cockrell, Scriptural Church Organization, Second Edition, pp. 57-58).

First note that Bro Fenison does not give the source of this quote. He cites it as quoted in *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION* 2nd edition. The quote is actually from *My Church* by J.B. Moody, [189-190] but Moody does not identify the source.

The next thing to note is that this quote does not exactly say what Bro Fenison wants it to say. He prefaced this quote with these words:

Now, you have made your case [for Direct Authority], you have stated what you believed to be true have you not? Now, to be consistent, would it not be reasonable that you practice exactly what you stated you believed? Well, this is exactly what Dr. T. T. Eaton told those people who rejected organic church succession: [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 50, 97].

Organic church succession is what Bro Fenison says Eaton believed and he infers this is what Eaton was saying in this quote.

Is this true?

First, let it be noted that Eaton uses no such term as *organic succession*, nor do I believe he ever did use any such term. What Eaton was saying and what Bro Fenison are saying are two entirely different things. Of course Eaton did not mean that new churches have no connection to other churches. Bro Fenison suggests that this is what we believe also. Because of such claims I corrected this in *LANDMARKISM UNDER FIRE* [60] so why does Bro Fenison continue to misrepresent our position? But Eaton is not talking about ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY for he speaks of men baptizing themselves and starting a church by se-baptism. This is not what we believe and never has been our position and Bro Fenison knows it!

Did Eaton believe ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY? This is what Bro

Fenison strives to make his readers believe! But he gives no evidence for it except in this borrowed quote. Is this claim a fact or a fiction? It is a fiction. Professor Moore gives his understanding of Eaton's position:

Nor did Eaton believe in succession—that is an unbroken chain of Baptist churches, with each congregation giving birth to another. He simply believed that somewhere at any given time since the ascension of Jesus, there was a body of regenerate believers, practicing biblical baptism, church membership, and the Lord's Supper—and preaching the authentic gospel of grace. – Professor Russell D. Moore. Dean, School of Theology, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. *Dr. T.T. Eaton*. A speech given for Founders Day Address at Union University Jackson, Tennessee February 16, 2007. p. 3.

Professor Moore does not agree with Eaton's view of succession but he gave Eaton's position and it does not line up with ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. But both Bro Fenison and Bro Cockrell quote Eaton as if he believed ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY when there is no evidence whatsoever that he believed any such thing! Again we must take strong exception to this kind of misrepresentation. What these brethren need is to find where Eaton explicitly stated belief in ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY! This they have not been able to do but they shower us with these unfortunate misrepresentations!

Jesse Mercer

Bro Fenison also quotes Elder Jesse Mercer as believing ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. He could have saved himself from this error had he read *LANDMARKISM UNDER FIRE* [82-83] because Mercer believed in DIRECT AUTHORITY! But we must constantly go over the same ground over and over either because ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY brethren refuse to read or they forget. Bro Fenison is quoting from an electronic version of *The History of the Georgia Baptist Association*, p. 126. *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH*

ORGANIZATION gives the reference from the actual book, p. 196. I have never seen this book but have it in electronic format. I do have the *Memoirs of Mercer* and it includes the quote which Bro Fenison has used. Bro Fenison makes several quotes and capitalizes with large letters and emphasizes other words and phrases without letting the reader know these are his additions and not those of the author. I give some examples:

Our reasons therefore for rejecting baptism by immersion, when administered by Pedobaptist ministers is that they are connected with churches clearly out of the Apostolic succession, and therefore clearly out of the apostolic commission. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 107. The emphasis belongs to Bro Fenison].

Again he quotes Mercer:

That all churches and ministers, who originated since the apostles, and not successively to them, are NOT IN GOSPEL ORDER; and therefore cannot be acknowledged as such. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 108. Bro Fenison's emphasis].

Bro Fenison then goes on to say:

Here Mercer uses the old phrase 'gospel order' to define his position on church succession and church authority in regard to the great commission. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 108].

Please note that Bro Fenison does not here, nor anywhere else in his book, define *gospel order*, (nor any other term!) which is a serious flaw. What did Mercer mean by the term? What did he mean by *Apostolic succession*? We intend to come back to these terms later. For now we need only to consider Mercer's position on constitution.

Bro Fenison is trying to prove Mercer definitely held to ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY although these words do not say so! Unfortunately for Bro Fenison, Mercer left on record his understanding of what and how a church is constituted and from whence it receives its authority and his statements demonstrate that both Bro Cockrell and Bro Fenison did not know Mercer's position and have misrepresented him in an unfortunate manner! When writing on the Differences

between church authority, and that of an Association, Mercer said:

II. Differences.—1. Church authority is from Christ, as Head and King *alone*; but that of an Association is from the churches *only*. [Mallery. *Memoirs* . 455. Mercer's emphasis].

The authority is from Christ! Is that from Christ through a mother church? No! for Mercer says it is from Christ *alone*! This is DIRECT AUTHORITY! A little further on the same page Mercer says:

No church, Association, or ecclesiastical body, has any power to excommunicate, or injure, or unchurch a church of Christ; or even to dissolve one. This last act can only be done by the mutual consent of the members, by whose will alone they were constituted a church. [Mercer's emphasis].

Again Mercer's words leave no room for the ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY twist! It is perfectly transparent that he means to drive home the idea that a church is constituted by their own will alone—i.e., the will of those who constituted themselves a church! This demonstrates Jesse Mercer has been misrepresented by these brethren!

But Mercer goes even further and tells us what he believed a church to be:

What constitutes, in our judgment, any number of believers in Christ a church, is their coming together into one body, according to the rules and faith of the gospel. And wheresoever any body of professed Christians is found so walking together, they should be acknowledged and received as a true church. [Memoirs. 455].

Now these quotes prove beyond refutation that Mercer embraced DIRECT AUTHORITY for church constitution as opposed to ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. It proves conclusively that Bre Cockrell and Fenison have leaped upon on any semblance of a suggestion which might somehow support ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY without checking for the author's real position! But there is more. In an article written for the *Christian Index* in December of 1833 Mercer said:

There is not even any direct scriptural authority for such an organization as an association. The church, on the other hand, receives its power and authority directly from

Christ. [Hogue. *Antecedents of Landmarkism*, p. 231].

The church receives its power and authority from whence? Another church? An Association? A preacher? A church letter? A Presbytery? Mercer expressly states the case— **Directly from Christ!**

Bro Fenison and Bro Cockrell both quoted Mercer. They both claimed he believed ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. Yet these quotes demonstrate their misunderstanding of Mercer! These quotes were given in *LANDMARKISM UNDER FIRE* [82-83] so Bro Fenison's failure to recognize these facts indicates an anxious disposition to rush to press without examination of the sources available and this is a characteristic which he repeats *ad nauseam* throughout *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS!*

Mercer believed the authority for the constitution of a church came directly *from Christ!* This is our position! This misrepresentation of Jesse Mercer is a glaring example of what happens when men set out to find ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY in Baptist History and cast honest investigation to the bats and owls! Bro Fenison may be able to fool the choir, but for how long?

Because Bro Fenison informs us we are to read *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION* with his book, he should not object if I here insert a quote from that book which illustrates the error just referred to.

Any person who alleges that either of these two men [Roy Mason and J. R. Gilpin] did not believe in a link chain of Baptist churches has knowingly and deliberately misrepresented the views of these old brethren. To assert such denotes a degree of prove-something-at-all-costs unexcelled in the history of theological debate. [*SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION*. 71].

Just before this quote the author of *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION* on the same page said of Bro John R. Gilpin:

And I know this is a terrible misrepresentation of his views on ecclesiology.

It seems certain to me that both of these men once stood where I now stand, that is for DIRECT AUTHORITY. [*LANDMARKISM*

UNDER FIRE 171-176]. But what I wish to emphasize here is that it is wrong to misrepresent any man's position no matter what his position is! Yet this is what I believe both Brethren Cockrell and Fenison have done whether intentionally or not I leave others to judge. As I pointed out in *LANDMARKISM UNDER FIRE* I counted some thirty six authors quoted in *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION* who did not believe ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. Let me clearly state that Bro Cockrell did not say everyone of these men believed ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY. But he implied it. Look at the quotes by Ben Bogard, John Bunyan, G. H. Orchard and John T. Christian to mention a few [*SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION*. 58, 59, 78].

In *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* there has been a plain misrepresentation of the authors quoted. (The Lord willing I will review other men who were misrepresented in *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* later). Is it wrong to misrepresent men? Will ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY men approve this? Will they be silent? Most of them heretofore have been mum when they should have stood up like men to be counted even though they believe ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY! If a man deals falsely for ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY they give approval by their silence! I am disappointed! If, as Bro Cockrell contends, it denotes a *degree of prove-something-at-all-costs unexcelled in the history of theological debate*, to misrepresent Gilpin and Mason then how can it be proper to distort Graves, Jones, Eaton and Mercer? Can any man approve this pretension as to what these men believed? Is it right because *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION* did it? Is it appropriate because *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* did it? But if *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* is not censored by *SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION*, and if conscience does not convict, yet the procedure of both books is judged by a higher law, even the law of Christ! [Ex. 20:16; Mt. 19:18].

THE CONTINUED TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT

(J. C. Philpot, "The Woman at the Well of Samaria")

When once, by **the operation of the Spirit** on our conscience, we have been stripped of formality, superstition, self-righteousness, hypocrisy, presumption, and the **other delusions of the flesh that hide themselves under the mask of religion**—we have felt the difference between having a name to live while dead, and the power of vital godliness—and as a measure of divine life has flowed into the heart out of the fullness of the Son of God—we **desire no other religion but that which stands in the power of God**—by that alone can we live, and by that alone we feel that we can die.

And, at last, we are brought to this conviction and solemn conclusion—that **there is no other true religion but that which consists in the continued teachings of the Spirit, and the communications of the life of God to the soul.**

And with the Spirit's teachings are connected . . . all the actings of **faith** in the soul, all the anchorings of **hope** in the heart, all the flowings forth of **love**, every tear of genuine **contrition** that flows down the cheeks, every sigh of **godly sorrow** that heaves from the bosom, every **cry** and **groan** because of the body of sin, every breath of **spiritual prayer** that comes from the heart, every **casting** of our souls upon Christ, all **submission** to Him, all **communion** with Him, all **enjoyment** of Him, and all the inward **embracements** of Him in His suitability and preciousness.

NOTHING BUT A SLAVE!

(J. C. PHILPOT, "*OBEDIENCE FROM THE HEART*")

"Once you were slaves of sin!" Romans 6:17

What a picture does this draw of our sad state, while walking in the darkness and death of unregeneracy!

The Holy Spirit here sets forth **Sin as a harsh master, exercising tyrannical dominion over his slaves!** How this portrays our state and condition in a state of unregeneracy—slaves to sin!

Just as a master commands his slave to go here and there—imposes on him certain tasks—and has entire and despotic authority over him—so **sin** had a complete mastery over us, used us at its arbitrary will and pleasure, drove us here and there on its commands.

But in this point we differed from physical slaves—that we did not murmur under our yoke—but gladly and cheerfully obeyed all sin's commands—and never tired of doing the most servile drudgery!

Thus **some** have had sin as a **very vulgar and tyrannical master**, who drove them into open acts of drunkenness, uncleanness, and profligacy—yes, everything base, vile, and evil.

Others have been preserved through education, through the watchfulness and example of parents, or other moral restraints, from going into such open lengths of iniquity—and outward breakings forth of evil. **But still sin secretly reigned in their hearts** . . . pride, worldliness, love of the things of time and sense, hatred to God and aversion to His holy will, selfishness and stubbornness, in all their various forms, had a complete mastery over them! And though sin ruled over them more as a gentleman—he kept them in a more refined, though not less real or absolute slavery! Whatever sin bade them do, that they did, as implicitly as the most abject slave ever obeyed a tyrannical master's command.

What a picture does the Holy Spirit here draw of what a man is! **Nothing but a slave!**—and sin, as his master, first driving him upon God's sword, and then giving him eternal death as his wages!

"He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness—and He has brought us into the Kingdom of His dear Son!" Col. 1:13

THAILAND MISSION UPDATE

Bill Lee

I am thankful once again to be able to report that the Lord continues to bless His work in Thailand. The Lord, as He always does, is doing far beyond what we are able to ask or even think. We are both humbled and very thankful for all of the blessing of our great God.

I wanted to give you a brief report on some of the things that are happening in the Thailand mission work. First, as many of you already know, Bro. Wayne Camp recently had heart surgery. We are thankful to report that Bro. Camp is doing well following the surgery. He is still in the process of recovering from this procedure. Because of Bro. Camp's present condition, he will not be able to go to Thailand this year. As you know, Bro. Camp has been going each year and spending four months teaching the pastors and other students in the school. Words can never express the great benefit this has had among the churches in Thailand. Because of Bro. Camp's teaching in the school for these months each year, there has been a great spiritual growth among the pastors that has consequently resulted in a spiritual growth among the churches. Bro. Camp regrets not being able to spend this time teaching this year. His presence there will certainly be missed by Bro. Anond, the pastors and students, as well as the churches. Bro. Camp needs your continued support and prayers as he continues his recovery. Our prayer is that our God will enable him in the future to return to this very important work in the school in Thailand. We ask each of you to join with us in this prayer.

Because Bro. Camp is unable to go to Thailand, I have made plans to go. I will not be able to stay as long as he normally stays, but I will seek to fill this void in his absence. The Lord willing, I will leave for Thailand on October 14 and return to the U. S. on November 12. During this time I will devote my efforts to teaching the pastors and students who will be able to meet with me in the school. This time in Thailand will also enable me to visit many of the churches and villages.

We are currently in the process of helping the villages that do not have clean, safe drinking water. We have noticed over the last few years that there is marked difference in the health of the villagers who have a safe water supply and those who do not. Since our return from Thailand last June, we have been committed to getting safe drinking water to all of the villages where we have churches. All of these villages but eight have a safe water supply. It has been our goal to have a safe water supply for these eight villages.

Thus far we have already supplied a safe, clean water supply for two of these villages and are in the process of starting on the third. It is through the concern and generosity of individuals and churches here that we are able to do this. As the Lord supplies, we will continue in this endeavor until all eight of these villages have a safe water supply.

Please continue to pray for the mission work in Thailand. We thank our God for all who have so faithfully

supported this work over the years. The Lord uses you to continue His work there and we are thankful for each of you. My prayer is that our God will bless each of you and that your reward will be great in heaven.

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