

BAPTIST QUIBBLERS AND QUIBBLING

By

**Bill L. Rogers, Minister
Church of Christ
3792 Graggland Circle
Memphis, Tenn.**

Preface

"Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (Prov. 26:5). "For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers . . . whose mouths must be stopped, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Tit. 1:10). "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16).

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Many false teachers have gone out into the world, perverting the Scriptures, and speaking evil against the people of the Lord. The inspired John commands: "Believe not every spirit, but prove (try, put to the test) the spirits whether they are of God" (1 Jno. 4:1). Jesus commended the Church at Ephesus for having tried false apostles and finding them false (Rev. 2:2). Paul informs us that there are "vain talkers . . . whose mouths must be stopped" (Tit. 1:10). I shall now test some of those who claim to be true teachers of God—and prove them false.

I have before me a number of copies of the **Baptist Pilgrim**, a paper "owned and edited" by Wayne Cox of Memphis, Tenn. Mr. Cox is an Association Baptist. When the American Baptist Association split in Lakeland, Fla. in 1950, Mr. Cox cast his lot with the late Ben M. Bogard. The other faction was headed by D. N. Jackson. Our editor (Mr. Cox) preaches for the Woodlawn Terrace Baptist Church located in Frayser, Tenn. Mr. Cox insists that the **Baptist Pilgrim** is not "a smear sheet by any stretch of the imagination." No, one doesn't have to either **imagine** or **stretch** to know that it is a sheet given to the smearing of God's people. And for Mr. Cox to say that it isn't a smear sheet is to argue against a **demonstration**! But now that you are acquainted with one of the **quibblers**, let me introduce you to some of his quibbling.

Mr. Cox Attacks My Character

On page 2 of the July issue, 1951, Mr. Cox attacks my character. He insists that I have a

"bad spirit . . . (am) very rude . . . and overbearing in manner." He endeavors to prove this by relating some things incident to a religious discussion which I engaged in with Wayne Branson. I shall give you his statement and then refute the charges made.

Says Mr. Cox: "Sometime ago a Campbellite by the name of Rogers challenged Bro. Branson for a discussion on the Church question, and they finally agreed to preach sermon for sermon, and not call it a debate, but just sermon for sermon discussion. Rogers did not keep his word, because he spoke just as if he was in a debate, which they had agreed not to do."

I. Who Broke The Agreement?

In the first place I should like to point out just who it was that broke the agreement. Mr. Branson came into our section of the City of Memphis making slanderous statements about the church of Christ. Immediately I wrote up propositions and headed them: PROPOSITIONS FOR DEBATE. When I presented them to Mr. Branson he agreed to have a **debate**. He also agreed to have the debate **four** nights, devoting **two** hours to the debate each night, divided into **four** thirty minute speeches, each speaker having **two** thirty minute speeches each night. The **only** thing that he left open was the date, but agreed to have it the week our meeting and his closed, if possible, which was the last week in July. After thus agreeing, Mr. Branson came to me and refused to have the debate longer than **two** nights. Also, instead of giving **two** hours to the discussion each night he said he would only have **one**; thus giving each speaker only **one** thirty minute speech each night. I pressed him until finally he agreed to let each

speaker speak forty-five minutes each night. So Wayne Branson is the man guilty of breaking the agreement. One of my elders, Bro. T. Billingsley, can bear witness to the fact that Branson agreed to the above, then lost courage and tried to back completely out! Brother Billingsley was with me when I talked to Branson.

II. What We Called The Discussion

Mr. Branson suggested to me that he had rather not call the discussion a **debate** because of his missionary work. I told him I didn't care **what** he called it, just so we had it! I didn't care if they called it a **pea-thrashing**! But if Mr. Branson told Wayne Cox that I had agreed not to debate he falsified! I never have (and never shall!) agreed not to debate a man in a discussion. I note that Mr. Cox said I agreed not to **call** the discussion a **debate**. Could it be that he was being careful not to say that I promised not to debate, but wanted his readers to think that such was the case?

III. What Rule Did I Break?

Mr. Cox further states that the first night I "impersonated" Mr. Branson over seventy-five times, and on the last night over twenty-five times. In fact, he insists that I "broke every rule of honorable discussion." (1) Well, sometimes Baptist preachers get excited. And when they get excited they sometimes **stretch** things—even to the breaking point! (2) Mr. Cox, of course, desires his readers to think that I cast personal **reflections** upon Mr. Branson. Nothing could be farther from the truth! I **addressed** Mr. Branson because he was the man I was **debating** (let them call it what they will). I wasn't debating the

audience! (3) Moreover, last December we had a debate in Memphis between Brother W. Curtis Porter and Hoyt Chastain. Cox was loud in his praise of Brother Porter, and insisted that he conducted himself as a Christian gentleman. Now I submit that I never pressed Branson one bit harder than Porter pressed Chastain. So if Cox told the truth about Brother Porter (and he did), then he has borne false witness against me. I challenge Mr. Cox to produce **one** rule of honorable discussion which I broke in my discussion with Branson.

IV. Who Was A Gentleman?

Mr. Cox would have his readers to believe that I did not act a gentleman at the Rogers-Branson discussion. There were three or four hundred people present besides Mr. Cox, and they know who was a gentleman and who was not. By the way, Wayne: Why didn't you tell your readers about your making a spectacle of yourself at the debate? After the debate Mr. Cox was so **angry** that he had turned an ashen color. He arose and said in fearful tones: "I want this audience to know that they're looking at a man who is every inch a man—and you can **take than any way you want to!**" Such an attitude! and such language! and that from one **claiming** to have the spirit of Christ! Mr. Cox sounded like a back-street ruffian looking for a "fist and skull" battle. Yet he has the temerity to suggest that someone is "rude . . . discourteous . . . and overbearing in manner!"

In the discussion under consideration I did only what I signed my name to do. Mr. Branson affirmed that the Missionary Baptist Church is Scriptural in **origin, name, doctrine, and practice.** I, of course, signed the negative, and here is how

it appears on the proposition: **Bill L. Rogers DENIES.** I suggest that I am as good as my word! Mr. Cox thinks that one who does what he says he will do is not a gentleman.

Furthermore, I think that common courtesy and decency demand that if a man have something to say of another in a paper, the one spoken against should be sent a copy of that which was written. But did Cox send me the paper in which he spoke so derogatorily of me? No indeed! One of my brethren gave it to me **over a year** after it was published! Yes, some people are "rude . . . discourteous . . . and overbearing in their manner."

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Not only this, but Mr. Branson had not spoken **five** minutes in his negative speech until he cast upon us the opprobrious epithet **Campbellite**. Thus showing lack of culture and refinement expected in one of his standing. Mr. Cox continually refers to God's people by the same term. I challenge Wayne Cox and the entire Baptist Movement to point out **one thing** that we preach or practice that **originated** with Alexander Campbell.

V. Mr. Cox And Apostasy

Mr. Cox further says: "The Campbellites (meaning those who have done no more nor less than required in the Gospel of Christ) preach apostasy, and then practice it to prove their rotten doctrine. They are as corrupt in their practices as any group I know anything about." (1) Those who believe God's word certainly believe in the **possibility** of apostasy. But Mr. Cox's statement

about practice might be turned around. (Sauce for the goose is salad dressing for the gander!) "Baptist preachers preach that one may commit every sin in the catalogue of sin and still be saved—and practice it to try to prove! (2) As for his statement that those of the Church of Christ are corrupt in their practices: I should be glad to compare the morals of the members of the Church of Christ with those of any religious group. (3) But as for corrupt things and rotten doctrine: I heard Hoyt Chastain say (in Wayne's presence) that it would be good for him to "elope with a sixteen year old girl, desert his family, and live with her in an unmarried state the rest of his life, and that he would go home to heaven when he died!" He said it would be better for him not to, but be good for him if he did! He tried to prove it by Rom. 8:28: "All things work together for good to them that love God." Yes, but to love God is to keep his commandments (1 Jno. 5:3); and those who practice the above have ceased to love God! But some Baptist preachers have the monumental cheek and the colossal gall to speak of "corrupt things and rotten doctrine!"

(4) But, not only does Mr. Cox say that the doctrine of apostasy is "rotten," I have also heard him say that the words **apostasy** and **apostatize** were not even in the Bible. Well, some folk learn slowly—and some never do. I have before me **Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott**. He renders 1 Tim. 4:1: "But the Spirit expressly says, that in subsequent seasons, some will **apostatize** from the faith." The Authorized and Revised Versions read, "fall away from the faith" and "depart from the faith," respectively, which mean the same thing. The Diaglott renders 2 Thess. 2:3: "Let no one delude you by any means, because the **apostasy**

must come first.' The SPIRIT SAID IT, but Mr. Cox pronounces it "rotten doctrine!"

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VI. Mr. Cox And His Impossible Debate

But Wayne insists that he agreed to meet me or "any of my brethren" if we would have twelve men to act as a jury and one to act as judge. (1) I suggested before that sometimes Baptist preachers stretch things. Wayne did agree to meet me under the above impossible set-up, but **never** has he agreed to meet "any of my brethren." In all fairness, it would be ludicrous for **Wayne Cox** to meet one of our **debaters**. Wayne can't meet our school boys, much less one of our **men**. Upon **what** hath Wayne been feeding that he hath grown so great?

(2) I also pointed out to Cox that it would be impossible to find a group of men who had not already determined (judged in their own minds) what they believed the Bible taught on the subjects to be discussed. I have never heard before of such an arrangement for a religious discussion. I have more than fifty volumes of debates in my library, and have read many which I do not possess, but **never** have I heard of such a **set-up** before. Has Wayne?

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Wayne, you can't cover up that yellow streak hiding behind your "judge and jury" like a little boy hiding behind his mother's coat-tail to keep from getting a spanking!

(3) But more on this judging religious debates. Mr. Ben M. Bogard, the greatest debater the Baptist people ever had, said in his debate with Brother Hardeman: "Who are the judges in this debate? Each one who hears or reads what is said. Each one of you is personally responsible to God and the decision will be made in your own heart, and certainly Professor Hardeman and I will not act like schoolboys and ask for any public expression of opinion" (**Hardeman-Bogard Debate**, p. 7). So Mr. Bogard says those who would judge religious discussions act like **schoolboys**. I am like Paul. "When I became a man I put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11). Cox, quit being **childish**; cease acting like a **schoolboy**; be a man, every inch a man, and defend your doctrine! I challenge Wayne to meet me in Frayser (where he preaches) and at Graggland Circle in Memphis where I preach, and at any other place where my brethren and his will invite the discussion. I shall be glad to meet Cox, or "any of his brethren", on general propositions; or on specific propositions which accurately state our differences.

When I say Cox or "any of his brethren," I don't imply that I am a "debater", or that I am very "big." You don't have to be either a debater or big to meet "any Baptist preacher."

VII. Is The Baptist Church Scriptural In Name?

Mr. Branson affirmed in our discussion that the Baptist Church is Scriptural in name. G. S. Rayburn, the champion of the Baptist Cause in Mississippi, affirmed the same. L. S. Ballard insists that it is Scriptural in name in the **Fuqua-Ballard Debate**. Ben M. Bogard affirmed that the Missionary Baptist Church was Scriptural in name in his last debate—and suggested that the Church that isn't Scriptural in name is not the New

Testament Church! Yet when the supporters of W. C. Nevil (Cox's missionary at Logan's Lake) at Finger, Tennessee suggested that we have a debate Mr. Nevil **refused** to affirm that the Missionary Baptist Church is Scriptural in **origin, name, doctrine, and practice**. He insisted that he had **never** taught that "Missionary Baptist Church" was a Scriptural name! He also said (I have these things in Mr. Nevil's own handwriting) that he would affirm any thing that he taught from the pulpit. But he refused to affirm that the Missionary Baptist Church was Scriptural in **origin, doctrine, and practice**! Yet Mr. Cox announced Nevil, over his radio program, as being a "great defender of the faith!" Wayne, what do you think about your missionary who **denies** that the Missionary Baptist Church is Scriptural in name? If you want to, I will let you see the letter written by W. C. Nevil's own hand. Mr. Nevil just realizes that an honest confession is not only good for the soul, but it is cheaper than taking a spanking! The man does not live who can find **two** Baptists in the Bible, much less Baptist Church or Baptist Churches; Missionary Baptist Church or Missionary Baptist Churches! Would to God that all Baptist preachers would make that noble confession.

VIII. How To Organize A Baptist Church

Mr. Cox tells in the February issue how to form a Baptist Church. He says the "Jackson Heights Baptist Church was constituted Feb. 11, 1951 at 3 p. m., Gregg School auditorium." He then names the Baptist Churches represented and suggests that a council of elders and deacons was formed. He then says: "PENDELTON'S BAPTIST DECLARATION OF FAITH AND CHURCH COVENANT WAS READ AND ADOPTED." Let us note

some things about how this Baptist Church was constituted. (1) Did they read and adopt the Old Testament? No, the Old Testament is not named. (2) Did they read and adopt the New Testament? No, that book is not so much as mentioned. (3) WHAT BOOK DID THEY READ AND ADOPT? PENDELTON'S BAPTIST CHURCH MANUAL! Now I submit that if you ever want to establish a Baptist Church, forget the Old Testament, throw away the New Testament and buy you a PENDELTON'S BAPTIST CHURCH MANUAL; read and adopt it and you will have a Baptist Church. Now, if you wonder why they left the BIBLE out of this "constitution service," Just remember that the BAPTIST CHURCH, or THE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH is not mentioned in that Book from Genesis to Revelation! Yet Mr. Cox desires to call his Church a NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH! Ha! Indeed! and indeed! The Missionary Baptist Church is not a twenty-third cousin to the New Testament Church! Mr. Cox, nor any other Baptist, has a shadow of a show in trying to prove that the Church known today as the Missionary Baptist Church is the New Testament Church, so they UNgracefully leave the field of battle. And, though they pronounce themselves as MEN, ALL MEN (YOU CAN TAKE THAT ANYWAY YOU WANT TO): YET FOR ALL THAT THEY WILL NOT DEFEND THEIR DOCTRINE!

Address all communications to:

Bill L. Rogers
4009 Reenie Road
Memphis, Tenn.