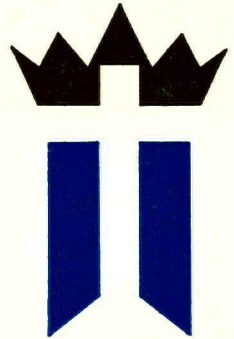
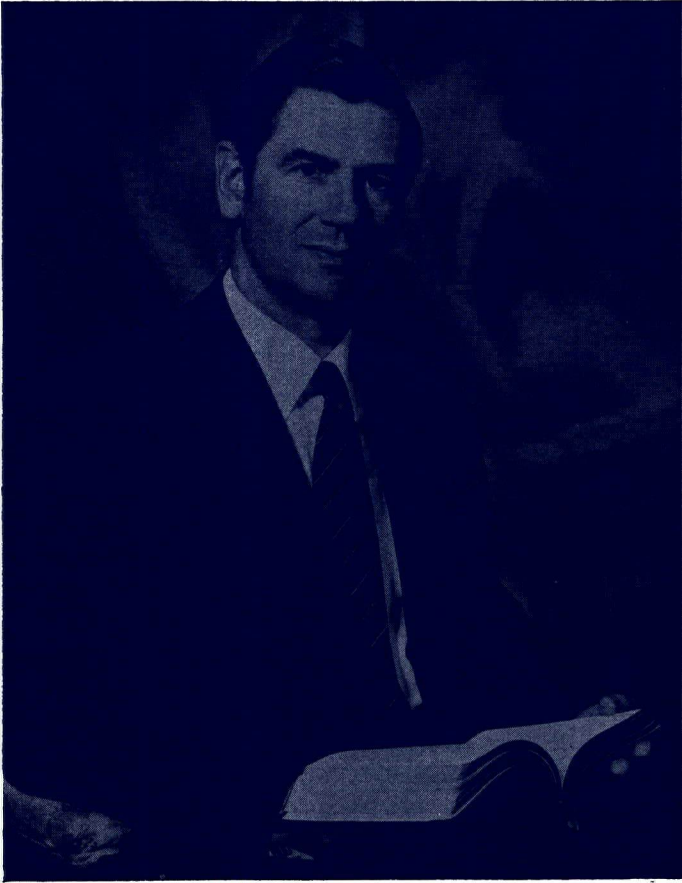


**THE
PERIL OF
TAKING A
LAWYER'S
ADVICE**



**BY
IAN L. S. BALFOUR
M.A., LL.B., B.D., S.S.C.**

**Baptist Union of Scotland
1976 Presidential Address**



IAN L. S. BALFOUR,
M.A., LL.B., B.D., S.S.C.

The Peril of Taking a Lawyer's Advice

In one of Shakespeare's plays, Dick the Butcher and Smith the Weaver are planning how to make the world a better place. "The first thing we do", says Dick, "let's kill all the lawyers".⁽¹⁾ This is taken up enthusiastically by the others, and they make a start by hanging the Town Clerk of Chatham.

Now Dick the Butcher was neither the first nor the last to be concerned about the influence of lawyers. For the Presidential Address, may I express to you my own concern about certain lawyers, who have had influence in our Churches. May I go further and try to identify them, and to warn you against taking their advice.

The first is well-known to many of you, through his involvement in a notorious case of "mugging". A lone pedestrian had been assaulted and robbed; a passing stranger not only gave first-aid, but helped the victim to safety and arranged his convalescence. Shortly afterwards, our lawyer came on the scene. He was in fact engaged on a very different case, having been sent to assess the ability of a local Teacher. As they talked, the Teacher commented on the incident, in which two other passers-by had simply ignored the wounded man. "Which of these three", He asked the lawyer, "do you think proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?"⁽²⁾

The answer is of course the Good Samaritan, and the Teacher is Jesus Christ. He told the parable in answer to a lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbour?" Now that particular lawyer is long since dead and buried, but those who follow his methods are very much alive. If I describe to you the lawyer whom Jesus met, will you ask yourself, as we go along, whether the description fits anyone whom you know, today? I do mean *anyone*—including ourselves—because this Address is not about people who practise Scots Law⁽³⁾; it's about people who carry on, in any walk of life, today, the practices which Jesus found and condemned in the lawyers of His day. Who was this first one?

(1) Henry VI., Part II., Act 4, Scene 2.

(2) Luke 10: 36. Biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

(3) Our Churches are well served by a number of practising lawyers, and no criticism whatsoever is intended of them, or any one of them.

This lawyer had access to the Scriptures—in his case to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In his own way, he tried to follow, and to apply, the Word of God. But instead of going directly to the Ten Commandments and the other great principles of Scripture, he lived by the precedents and traditions and customs which had grown up around the Word of God. So when Jesus urged him to love his neighbour, he asked in genuine perplexity, what was wrong with his present practice? He had his little list—“this” man was, and “that” man was not, his neighbour. What he had done was to turn the Biblical principles into a set of rules—and then to treat his rules as if they were the principles. The parable of the Good Samaritan was Jesus’ kindly way of showing him the consequence, in his own life, of putting tradition above the Word of God.

Many years later, another debate took place—in a television studio. On the panel was a rabbi, a priest, and a minister. The rabbi opened the discussion—“I speak according to the Law of Moses”. The priest said, “I speak according to the Church”. The minister said, “It seems to me . . .” From one, Scripture; from another, Tradition; from the third, Experience. Has the New Testament been supplemented by the traditions of later generations? Are the Scriptures inspired, or are they only inspiring? Is authority in the Church—if there is such a thing today—found in Scripture, or in Tradition, or in Experience, or in a synthesis of all three? This was much debated at Nairobi last November, but let’s come nearer home. Our own Constitution—the doctrinal part—opens with these words:

“The Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour is the sole and absolute Authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures . . .”⁽⁴⁾

Now, in our Assembly, and in our Deacons’ Courts, and in our Church Meetings, we deliberate—we discuss—we learn from tradition and we contribute from experience.

This is good; our business sessions would be immeasurably poorer if they ever ceased to be deliberative. But tradition and experience, however useful, must be modified or even abandoned if they are found to be out of harmony with the written Word of God; in all matters of belief and of conduct, we have only one authority—the authority of Jesus Christ, which is revealed in Scripture.

“We know all that”, you say, “we’ve been brought up on that since Sunday School; of course we distinguish Scripture from tradition.” But do we? What about the Church which met last month to appoint a new Sunday School Superintendent? Years ago, when last there was a vacancy, the Church studied the Scriptures, and set

(4) Printed annually in The Scottish Baptist Year Book. For ease of reference, the first four sections are reproduced inside the back cover of this booklet. As will be seen, the first principle deals also with the autonomy of the local church, but I have treated this separately, at p. 8.

out the spiritual qualities for such an appointment. They found a suitable person, who happened also to be a deacon. As the years went by, the Church came to assume that the Sunday School Superintendent had to be from the Deacons' Court. So when they met last month to make the new appointment, they never even considered one well qualified member of the Church—all they discussed was which deacon should they appoint. The principle—to look for certain qualities—had been forgotten; and the practice—membership of the diaconate—had become their principle.

Now although that's a small example, it may be a significant one. When a Church is first constituted, its members consider the Biblical principles, for:

the use of their building,
the form of their services,
the pattern of their outreach, and so on.

In the goodness of God, new members are added to the Church; they believe, with all their hearts, in the supremacy of Scripture, both for doctrine and for practice. They believe it—yet the original layout of the building, the original style of service, the original method of outreach has become not just the “done thing”—it's the thing which must be done.

Now please don't misunderstand me; “our-way-of-doing-it” may well be the best application, even today, of the Biblical principles. Our Lord Himself didn't reject human tradition out-of-hand; He didn't forbid His disciples to follow it; but He gave three criteria by which to keep tradition in its place:

- (a) Scripture is divine, tradition is never more than human;
- (b) Scripture is obligatory, tradition is never more than optional;
- (c) Scripture is supreme, tradition is subordinate and secondary⁽⁵⁾.

In other words, “our-way-of-doing-it” has no inherent authority and must never become binding on us, unless Scripture so requires. To look at any practice, in light of to-day's conditions, is no reflection at all on those who introduced it, nor on those who faithfully carry it on. If we review it, and then come back to it, so much the better—a new generation will understand why we do it that way. Never to review a practice, never to review one's own life, in light of Scripture, was the error of the lawyer whom Jesus met; and the parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates, for all time, the peril of taking that lawyer's advice.

Our second lawyer is a very different character. Some of his friends had been baptised, as adults, by immersion, but he could see

(5) Matthew 15: 1-9, Mark 7: 5-13. For the value of tradition, see booklet “Authority—a Baptist View” (Baptist Publications, London, 1976) p. 23-26.

no reason at all to join them. We can meet this man, with several other lawyers, at a group-discussion on baptism. Before we do, let's be clear who Baptists are. As a descriptive name, it was first given many centuries ago, by others, by outsiders, to denote those who follow the New Testament in baptising only believers, and that by immersion. ⁽⁶⁾ It was originally a nickname and like most nicknames, it picks out only one characteristic of the people concerned. It distracts attention, for example, from their first characteristic, which is to uphold the authority of Scripture. It distracts attention also from the many areas of the Christian faith—the vast majority—where Baptists stand four-square with their fellow Christians, common members in the Body of Christ. It ignores the fact that other Christians, equally devout, equally humble, equally Bible-believing, practise a baptism for infants, or a sprinkling or affusion for adults; you know, the more we claim (as we do) liberty for ourselves in the interpretation of Scripture, the more important it becomes to respect (and not to misunderstand) the honest conviction of other believers. ⁽⁷⁾ Finally, the name overlooks the many other Christians, not called Baptists, who believe with us that the New Testament order is repentance and faith and baptism, and who practice, with us, the acted-parable of immersion. However, with these background comments, let's join this group-discussion on baptism and ask our lawyer for his advice.

His reply, quite shortly, is that he sees no need for baptism, not in any form. Who is this man? You'll find him, like the previous lawyer, in Luke's gospel:

“When they heard this, all the people . . . justified God, having been baptised with the baptism of John; but . . . the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptised by him”. ⁽⁸⁾

Here was a man—active in religious life,
 —familiar with this form of baptism, ⁽⁹⁾
 —seeing his friends baptised,

but he had no desire to participate himself. That's what worries me about this lawyer, and his advice, and his successors in other walks of

(6) Ernest A. Payne, “The Fellowship of Believers” (London, 1952) p. 71-72;

H. Wheeler Robinson, “The Life and Faith of the Baptists” (London, 1946) p. 12, and “Baptist Principles” (4th edition, London, 1955) p. 7.

(7) Nevertheless we must say we can find no support in the Scriptures for baptismal regeneration nor for its converse, that unbaptised infants are excluded from the Kingdom of God.

See booklet, “Believers' Baptism” by Andrew D. MacRae (Baptist Union of Scotland) pps. 8 and 14.

(8) Luke 7: 29-30. The baptism of John expressed a moral decision; after Pentecost, it was into the name of the Trinity. See also note 16.

(9) When proselytes wished to enter the Jewish faith, they were baptised by total immersion; John's new and startling call was for Jews also to be baptised.

life today. Again, this is not just a scene from history. There are young people, and old, who worship with us, and work with us, and enjoy fellowship with us; they are real assets to the Church, but they "don't see any need to be baptised".

Now, the very first Object of this Union (again I quote the Constitution) is "to cultivate among its members respect and love . . . for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ". We gladly welcome all who love the Lord Jesus—we welcome them to worship with us, and to work with us, and to join us at the Communion table—none of these are in question. Without detracting from them in any way, we turn to the second Principle in our Constitution:

"Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried and rose again the third day'."

We don't baptise adults, any more than we baptise children—we baptise believers, on profession of faith, believers who wish publicly to declare:

Repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ ⁽¹⁰⁾

Obedience to the command of Christ ⁽¹¹⁾

Union with Christ ⁽¹²⁾

Dedication to new life in Christ ⁽¹³⁾

Identification with the Church of Christ ⁽¹⁴⁾
and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit ⁽¹⁵⁾.

One man attended a Baptist Church for years and commented, from time to time, that the members had "water on the brain". But one evening, at the close of a baptismal service, he came forward in full view of his friends and his family, and asked to be baptised. What happened? It revolutionised his life—and so it should; he had proved yet again the truth of what Luke says about our lawyer, that he "frustrated God's purpose for himself, because he was not baptised". ⁽¹⁶⁾ That's the peril of this lawyer's advice; by taking it, we lose out spiritually, in Christian growth. Baptism isn't an end in

(10) Acts 2: 38.

(11) Matthew 28: 19.

(12) Galatians 3: 27.

(13) Romans 6: 4.

(14) 1 Corinthians 12: 13.

(15) Acts 10: 47.

(16) Translation of Luke 7: 30 by William Barclay, in "The Daily Study Bible—The Gospel of Luke" (Edinburgh, 1975) p. 91. Just as John's baptism was not an end in itself, but was a significant token of repentance towards God by those who received it, so Christian baptism is not an end in itself. See, for example, what followed the baptisms recorded in Acts 2: 41.

itself; it should be part of the developing life of a Christian. Perhaps those of us who have been baptised are such poor advertisements for believers' baptism, that others see no reason to participate for themselves. I wonder whether this lawyer's bad advice stemmed from someone else's bad example.

Let me explain at this point how an interview, with the four lawyers⁽¹⁷⁾ whom Jesus met, can strengthen our faith, today. Within the framework of "the whole counsel of God"—as Paul termed the Christian faith⁽¹⁸⁾—we try to maintain a New Testament emphasis on:

1. The supreme authority of Jesus Christ, as revealed in Scripture, the Word of God
2. The baptism of believers by immersion
3. The priesthood of a "gathered" Church, and
4. The communication of the gospel.

Other Christians may well emphasise some or all of these points—we have no monopoly of them. But to uphold them, all four of them—
together
wholeheartedly,
at one and the same time—

is, as I understand it,⁽¹⁹⁾ our distinctive contribution to the Christian Church. These four are not in themselves our faith; our faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ. These four are not in themselves the whole counsel of God; they're only a small part of it. But the *raison d'être* of this Union—at least according to its Constitution—is to maintain these four principles as integral parts of the Christian faith.

What place then should they have, in our own Church life, in our dialogue with other Christians and in our conversation with non-Christians? One meets folk, both in the Church and outside it, who seem far from clear about this. They assume—and rightly so—that we uphold the basic beliefs and practices of the Christian faith. They themselves may attend a particular Church:

because they like the singing, or
because they are welcomed at the door, or
because it's the nearest evangelical centre.

(17) The word *nomikos* (lawyer) appears to be synonymous, in the Gospels, with the commoner word *grammateus* (scribe)—see articles in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 1950 p. 56 and 1951 p. 166. This Address (for obvious reasons) is based only on the four incidents where the word "lawyer" is used, viz. Luke 10: 25 (c.f. Matthew 22: 35), Luke 7: 30, Luke 14: 3, and Luke 11: 45/46/52. I am the first to recognise that the lessons I have drawn are not the only (and not even the primary) meaning of the passages.

(18) Acts 20: 27.

(19) The views expressed in this Address are personal and make no claim to be an authoritative statement of Baptist principles; they are not necessarily the views of any Committee or office-bearer of the Union. If they appear dogmatic, it is because a short Address, covering a large field, leaves little room for discussion.

Fair enough. These are quite sufficient reasons, for the folk concerned, and they seek no other. But is it not desirable, even if only for our own spiritual growth, to be (at least) aware of our place in the Scottish scene, today? When, in the wider fellowship of the Church, questions are asked about the future of denominations, how do we reply? Do we defend denominationalism or do we point to certain emphases in the New Testament, which we believe are reflected in our Declaration of Faith?

That's where the four lawyers come in. They turn the spotlight—if you'll pardon the anachronism—onto our Constitution. It's in four parts.⁽²⁰⁾ First, regarding the Scriptures. When our first lawyer debated with Jesus Christ, he put his own religious tradition above the Word of God. Do we constantly affirm the supremacy of Jesus Christ, as revealed in Scripture, by which our faith and our conduct and our traditions must be continuously judged? For example, my father would never place any object on top of a Bible. If there was a stack of books in the house, the Bible was on top of the stack. If papers lay around, or ornaments, pencils, spectacles, hymn books, they were kept to one side of the Bible. He didn't worship the Book, but he recognised the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the Book uniquely speaks. It was, and is, an excellent object-lesson in family life, expressing tangibly the place which Scripture should have in our lives. That's the first point in our Constitution.

Our second lawyer turns the focus onto the second principle, baptism. Most Christians practice it, in some form, but do we emphasise the need for personal faith? Can we distinguish the subjects of baptism (i.e. believers) from the method of baptism (i.e. immersion)? There is no comparison of their respective importance, but can we explain—from the Scriptures—the significance of immersion, as a symbol of the burial and resurrection of Christ and as a visual-aid (if you like) of burying our old ways and rising to new life in Christ?⁽²¹⁾ The second lawyer could see no meaning at all in baptism, and he is not without his representatives today.

What about our third lawyer? Let's start, this time, with the Constitution, and then see how he can focus attention on the relevant part of it. Our Declaration of Principle includes these words:

“ . . . each Church has liberty to interpret and administer His (Christ's) laws”.

Our sister Union in the south adds the phrase—“under the guidance of the Holy Spirit”.⁽²²⁾ While I'm sure there's no theological

(20) The Declaration of Principle appears in the Constitution under three heads, but the first is clearly severable into two distinct parts, and I have treated them separately.

(21) Romans 6: 3-4, Colossians 2: 12.

(22) i.e. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland; see “The Baptist Union Directory for 1975-6” p. 8.

significance in its omission from ours, it is extremely significant that in both constitutions this section comes after the authority of Scripture, and before believers' baptism. Our understanding of the Church as a fellowship of believers—a "gathered Church"—derives from Scripture and is the basis of our Church practice. You may recall the story of the visitor who arrived after a service, when the deacon on duty was tidying up. The visitor asked if he could look around the Church, and the deacon replied, "Oh, but you're too late—they've gone!" He was absolutely right—the Church had gone. ⁽²³⁾

"Each Church has liberty . . ." What is a Church? We should perhaps be more mindful that the New Testament word, translated Church, (*ekklesia*), includes all who belong to Jesus Christ, all who have been "called out", from every age and every country, from the day of Pentecost to the day of our Lord's return. ⁽²⁴⁾ But it's not the concept of the one holy catholic Church, to which our Constitution is referring; the New Testament also recognises local expressions of the universal Church, groups of believers, like "the *ekklesia* of God which is at Corinth". ⁽²⁵⁾ Each Church, thus defined, has liberty—says our Constitution—"liberty to interpret and administer Christ's laws".

The emphasis falls, to my mind, not on the autonomy and self-government of the local Church, but on the reason why that autonomy has been given. Why? For us to search out, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind of Christ for the local situation. We tend to look at constitutions to find our legal rights, but autonomy here means freedom to do something—freedom for the Church Meeting, that is the Church . . . meeting (i.e. gathering) to interpret and administer Christ's laws for its own particular situation. The phrase a "gathered Church" is therefore singularly apt; such a Church meets or gathers in the name of Christ, recognising not only that He is present, but that He must preside, every time they meet. ⁽²⁶⁾ Such a Church is not defined by national or parochial boundaries but is a fellowship of committed Christians, giving credible evidence to the world that they are born of the Spirit of God. Membership of a Church like this can have no real meaning, unless every member identifies with the welfare of the whole—and that's where our third lawyer comes in.

We meet him at a dinner party, glowering in silence at the principal guest, who was Jesus. ⁽²⁷⁾ Luke describes how this man sat through the meal, with sullen hatred in his heart, because Jesus had

(23) See, for example, 1 Corinthians 11: 18, 14: 23.

(24) 1 Corinthians 10: 32, 12: 28, Ephesians 1: 22, 5: 23, Philippians 3: 6, Colossians 1: 18/24.

(25) 1 Corinthians 1: 2, and 2 Corinthians 1: 1, see also Romans 16: 1; Colossians 4: 16, 1 and 2 Thessalonians 1: 1.

(26) Matthew 18: 20. A discussion on the autonomy of the local church is recorded in The Scottish Baptist Year Book for 1972, p. 75-6. The contrast between a "gathered Church" and a territorial Church is well set out by Gordon W. Martin in "The Church—a Baptist View" (Baptist Publications, London, 1976) p. 9-12.

(27) Luke 14: 1-6.

asked him to participate in a discussion. He didn't mind attending, but he was not going to get himself involved. Twice Jesus asked him merely to contribute one friendly word to a man in need, and twice he refused to reply. His aloofness, his formalism, his indifference—so carefully concealed from others—had locked and bolted his heart against any real relationship with God. The inwardness of Jesus' teaching is one of its most distinctive features, and calls for an ethical and spiritual response. Merely to attend, merely to be physically present, is not to be in "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ".⁽²⁸⁾

To many in this country, "going to Church" means attending a particular building for a formal service, almost irrespective of who else is there. What's gone wrong? Have we forgotten the priesthood of all believers? That doesn't mean everyone conducts the services, but it does mean that everyone contributes, in his or her own way, to the total ministry of the Church. Here again, we tend to concentrate on our rights. We find, in the New Testament, that every believer has the right of access to God at any time—that is, priesthood—through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ.⁽²⁹⁾ That's true, but it's not the right of access we need to stress—it's the use of that access, daily, every member participating in the spiritual welfare of the Church. In this connection, I like the notice outside one Church building, "Visitors welcomed—members expected".

Surely it's on this understanding of the Church that our Constitution speaks about liberty—liberty to interpret and administer Christ's laws. To dispense with human priestly meditation is not to abolish the priesthood, but to extend it to every member. If we "gather" with mental reservations, holding ourselves aloof from any activity that doesn't appeal to us, remember where it got the lawyer whom Jesus met—his soul became dyed the colour of his thoughts.

There's a fourth lawyer whom we ought to meet. When Jesus told some folk that their practice of religion was positively off-putting, a lawyer asked Him, rather plaintively, about his own. "Woe to you lawyers also", replied Jesus, "for you load men with burdens hard to bear".⁽³⁰⁾ Jesus opposed, with His whole soul, any practice of religion which so wearied and depressed ordinary people, that it turned them away from God. He set high standards—higher than the world has ever known—but to keep them He gave us first Himself. Because He put the gift of God before the demand of God, His yoke was easy and His burden was light.⁽³¹⁾ Because the lawyer put the demand of God before the gift of God, his religion was a burden hard to bear.

(28) 1 John 1: 3.

(29) 1 Timothy 2: 5, Hebrews 10: 19-22, 13: 15, 1 Peter 2: 5, Revelation 1: 6, See also study-booklet "The Priesthood of all Believers" by J. A. Dick, published by the Baptist Union of Scotland.

(30) Luke 11: 46, cf. Luke 11: 52.

(31) Matthew 11: 30.

The remaining section in our Declaration of Principle calls on us:

“. . . to bear personal witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.”

One man in Edinburgh, with perhaps more zeal than tact, approaches total strangers in Princes Street Gardens and asks them, “Are you a Christian?” On one occasion, when he got a rather curt “yes” in reply, he enquired, “Then why don’t you look like one?” I wonder what our religion looks like from the outside—a demand or a gift? Now the Christian life is both—both gift and demand; the order in which we present them will determine, quite simply, whether we:

bear witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ
or
impose burdens hard to bear.

If we give any impression that Church-attendance, and involvement, and outreach, and ethics are simply to meet the demands of Christ, we do no service to the Gospel.

“I cannot work my soul to save,
For that God’s grace has done;
But I will work like any slave,
For love of God’s dear Son.”

The work of the Church is no burden to those who have received God’s grace in Jesus Christ; to serve Him is both their privilege and their delight. But if others see only the activity, only the organisation, and not the Person of Jesus Christ, no wonder it all appears a burden hard to bear. Jesus didn’t call men and women to do good, or even to be good; He called them into a relationship with Himself, out of which would come good. So this lawyer’s advice is really the most perilous of them all; he gave the impression to the world that our relationship to God depends on what we do for ourselves, and not on our first receiving, as a gift, what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

The story is told—a true story—about a sailing-ship which was caught in a gale and blown miles off course. An eye-witness records that as the ship was drifting helplessly onto the craggy rocks of Malta, “they let out four anchors from the stern”.⁽³²⁾ This stabilised the ship until dawn, when everyone on board, including the apostle Paul, swam safely to the shore.⁽³³⁾

“They let out four anchors from the stern”. There’s a lot more to a ship than anchors, but these four particular anchors stabilised this particular ship, when she was drifting in a storm. There’s a lot more to the Christian faith than our Declaration of Principle, but these

(32) Acts 27: 29.

(33) Acts 27: 44.

four particular principles can stabilise our particular faith, in the winds of change and the currents of debate.

In the goodness of God, many of our congregations are live and vigorous and evangelical witnesses; but the successors of these four lawyers are among us, deprecating, or just ignoring:

- : the supremacy of the Word of God, Jesus Christ revealed in Scripture
- : the significance of believers' baptism
- : the priesthood of a gathered Church
- : the buoyant witness of the Gospel of Christ.

What shall we do with them? Dick the Butcher would have hanged them, but fortunately there is a better way.

If we will read together from the Word of God—let it speak for itself—it will reveal to us the authority of Christ, the supremacy of His Word for our situation.

If we will talk together about the Lord, about His burial and resurrection, we will see more clearly the significance and meaning of our baptism.

If we will pray together, exercising the priesthood of all believers, the presence of Christ will become very real to us.

If we will bear witness together to the Gospel, stressing first a person-to-person relationship with God in Jesus Christ, we'll be drawn together in the service of Christ, to Whom be all the glory.

Baptist Union of Scotland

CONSTITUTION

(Sections One to Four)

I.—NAME

The Baptist Union of Scotland.

II.—CONSTITUENCY

The Union shall consist of Churches, District Associations, and Personal Members.

III.—DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE

The basis of the Union is:—

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour is the sole and absolute Authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty to interpret and administer His laws.
2. That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who "died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried and rose again the third day".
3. That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.

IV.—OBJECTS

1. To cultivate among its members respect and love for one another, and for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To strengthen and extend Missionary operations at home and abroad.
3. To further the dissemination of the Gospel of Christ in Scotland.
4. To aid Churches to maintain an efficient ministry.
5. To aid Churches in providing suitable accommodation for public worship.
6. To encourage well-considered movements to originate new Churches.
7. To strengthen and extend Sunday School and kindred work.
8. To spread the Gospel by means of religious publications and magazines.
9. To aid retired and invalid Ministers and Missionaries; and the widows of all Ministers and Missionaries.
10. To afford opportunities for Conference; and for united action on questions affecting the welfare of the Churches and the extension of the Denomination both at home and abroad.
11. To obtain information respecting the state, progress, and history of the Denomination.