

## Introduction to RBC Baptism Resources...

There are a number of aims of these "RBC Baptism Resources".

**First**, to consider what the Bible teaches about baptism.

**Second**, to consider what RBC has taught and communicated about baptism in the past.

**Third**, to consider what Christians have taught about baptism throughout history.

It is our prayer that these resources might be helpful for building one another up in Christ, equipping the believers for the work of the ministry, and issuing to the glory of God alone. The aim is not to lose the forest for the trees, so please go to this website to see a summary of how we pursue to obey how the Bible would have a local church make disciples baptizing: <http://redeemersm.church/baptism/baptism-resources/>

Here is an outline of the main points from the website linked above:

Baptism...

1. Is a picture of **birth** or **conversion**
2. Is **immersion**
3. Is for **believers**
4. Is for the **local church**
5. **Doesn't save you**

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### **Benjamin Keach** (1640-1704)

Particular/Reformed Baptist Pastor of Horse-lie-down, Southwark, England - Signer of the 1689 2nd London Baptist Confession and Author of the Baptist Catechism.

Keach, Benjamin *Tropologia; A Key to Open Scripture Metaphors, Book 4* (London: William Hill Collingridge, City Press, 1855), 846-9.

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According to the grace of God which is given me, as a wise master-Builder, I have laid the foundation," &c., 1 Cor. 3:10

A Builder is a metaphor taken from carpenters and masons, &c., that build houses; the Hebrew word by which building is expressed, is derived from the root [BNH] to build or rear an house or city. God in Christ is the chief Master-Builder: "He that built all things, is God," (Heb. 3:4), and he is the great Builder of his temple: "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, &c. And yet Ministers under him are likewise master-Builders, &c.

### Metaphor

1. A wise master-Builder gives direction to others, how the house, &c., must be built; and to this purpose shows the figure or true form of it, that so other under-Builders may know how to go on with their work.
2. A master-Builder takes special care rightly to lay the foundation, upon which the whole fabric or structure is to be built, &c.
3. A Builder hath sometimes much rubbish to remove, before he can go on with his work; as the poor Jews had, who built the temple, &c.
4. A Builder oftentimes meets with hard work, in hewing and squaring his timber and stones, some being very rugged and knotty, &c.
5. A wise Builder takes care to prepare and make all his materials ready, before he rises the structure or builds his house.
6. A Builder can tell how many principal pillars or posts belong unto the house or building, and sees to fit all the materials thereof in their proper place, and will be sure to see that he wants never a principal pillar.

### Parallel

1. So St. Paul, and other great and wise master-Builders, the apostles, have given plain directions to us, and all inferior Builders, how the house of God must be built, and with what materials; and they have left in the holy Gospel a plain scheme or figure of it, that so all spiritual Builders may know how to proceed in their work.
2. So the apostles have, as instruments in God's hand, laid the foundation of the true religion, the foundation of faith and salvation, the foundation of the true Church, &c. "Another foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," (1 Cor. 3:11).
3. So have Ministers much rubbish to remove out of their own and sinner's way, before they can proceed in their blessed work. There is the rubbish of false-doctrine about justification; this was in the apostle's way, as well as it is in ours: the Jews were hardly taken off from their own righteousness, and legal ceremonies; they would need build upon a legal foundation: "They stumbled at the stumbling stone," &c. We have much Popish rubbish to remove, the rubbish of men's inventions, and superstitious ceremonies, &c., besides the rubbish of other heretics and deceivers.
4. So Ministers find some sinners are very stubborn and obstinate, like knotty timber, scragged and rugged stones, which, without much labour and pains, are not hewed and fitted for the building.
5. So should a Minister of the Gospel see that all the spiritual stones and timber be well squared, fitted, and prepared by a thorough work of repentance and faith, before they are placed and laid into the building or Church of God. "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field, and then build thy house," (Prov. 24:27). They must not lay stones into the building, as they come out of the quarry from whence they are rigged, such persons as were never converted, nor capable subjects of it; and then afterwards, when they are put into God's house, go about to hew them by the Word, *i.e.*, endeavor to convert them. Ministers are hewers, and the axe is the Word of God; "I have hewed them by the prophets;" but they must proceed orderly, *i.e.*, not baptize, and then teach; but first teach, or make disciples, and then baptize them, (Matt. 28:19, 20).
6. So Ministers can tell how many fundamental principles there are of the Christian religion, I mean, principles necessary to salvation; and also the number of the foundations of Church-constitution and fellowship; and will see that everything they do be done orderly, everything fitted according to the directions of God's Word; and that they want not any one of the

foundation-principles of the Christian religion. It is dangerous, you know, if a house be to be built upon six main pillars, if it want one. Read Heb. 4:1, 2.

7. A Builder has his rule, by which he doth all his work: he does not work by guess, nor by the sight of his own eye only, but by a certain and unerring rule.

7. So a wise Minister hath his rule, viz., the Word of God; he doth not do what he thinks is right in his own eyes, until he hath tried it by the rule, nor will he follow the humour and fancy of others, who may say, this is right, and that is right: but according as he finds things to agree or disagree with the holy Scriptures, and Spirit of God, that unerring rule, by which he receives, or rejects, takes, or leaves: he, with Moses, will do all things according to the pattern showed in the mount: "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the whole Israel of God," (Gal. 6:16). The Word of God should be our guide in all things.

8. A wise Builder takes care that all the building be fitly framed together, and well fastened to the foundation.

8. So a wise Minister, or spiritual Builder, endeavors to see that all the saints be united, fitly framed, or joined together in love, and well fastened by faith and love to Jesus Christ. See what the apostle saith, Eph. 2:20-22, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone; in whom all the building being fitly framed together, growth to an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit."

9. A Builder takes great care to give directions about the door, or way into the house he is building, and makes it plain, that all people who have a mind, or ought to enter in, may readily find the way, and not stumble at the threshold.

9. So a wise and faithful Minister takes special care to give directions about the door into God's house, that all whom Christ would have enter in, may not be at a loss about it, nor stumble as it were at the threshold. It is absolutely necessary, that they are acquainted with, and able to show to others, what are those initiating ordinances into the house or Church of God. And sad it is to see so many worthy Ministers among us at so great a loss in this respect. It is demonstrated in a small treatise, written by Mr. [William Kiffin], entitled, *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church Communion*. It has always been asserted by Christians of all persuasions, till of late, that baptism in water, that holy sacrament Christ ordained and left in his Church, is absolutely necessary to Church-fellowship and communion; though touching the subject and manner of the administration of that ordinance there hath been much controversy: but sure I am, the Word of God is very full and plain in this case.

1. The Lord Jesus hath positively enjoined repentance, faith, and baptism to be taught as the first principles of his sacred doctrine, and as fundamentals of Church-communion and fellowship. See Matt. 28:19, 20; Heb. 6:1, 2.

2. This also was the door the holy apostles, whose wise master-Builders, directed persons to, and opened for entrance in the primitive time: 'Repent, and be

baptized, every one of you," &c. "Then they that gladly received the word, were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them about three thousand souls," (Acts 2:40, 41). Compare this with Acts 8:38, and 16:33, Gal. 3:7. And hence it is said, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," or to be of one body. Moreover, as it is in the above-cited treatise proved, upon the examination of the records of the next age after the apostles, it is evident, the same order was retained and kept up, as appears by Justin Martyr, in his apology to *Antoninus Pius*, the Roman emperor. "This food, saith he, we call the Eucharist, to which no man is admitted, but only he that believeth in the truth of the doctrine, being washed in the laver of regeneration (so he called baptism,) for the remission of sins, and that so liveth as Christ hath, taught.' Tertullian and Cyprian positively affirm the same, and divers others of the ancient fathers; as Basil, Nazianzen, Optatus, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Hilarius, Ambrose, Jerome, Sozomen, Athanasius, Augustin, &c., as is largely showed by the divines of Magdeburg, in their history of the Church, printed at Basil, 1624. Also all our modern divines fully agree with the ancients in this great point, viz., that baptism is absolutely an initiating ordinance, and that no unbaptized person ought to be admitted into the Church, nor to the Lord's Supper; though it is confessed, that some do not say, that baptism alone is the door into the Church, but baptism, and imposition of hands. 'There are two doors to be passed through, as saith a learned writer, before we can come, *aditus, et intima Ecclesiae penetralia*, viz., baptism and laying on of hands; whereof the latter properly and immediately gives admittance.' Mr. Hanmors cites some ancient Christians speaking thus, *Confirmatio, sive manuum impositio, protinus dat jus communicandi in Sacramento corporis as sanguinis Christi*: That is, 'confirmation, or imposition of hands, forthwith giveth full authority and right of communion in the body and blood of Christ.' And in another place saith the same person, 'He that was not confirmed, was not admitted to the Eucharist.'"

**10.** A master-Builder goes on with his work, when the foundation is laid; the scaffolds are not taken down, till the building be finished, but rather raised higher and higher, as the fabric goes up; he resolves every day's work shall add some further beauty to it, in order to the final perfecting of it.

#### **Metaphor.**

Earthly Builders build with ordinary wood, stones, brick, &c., lifeless and dead

**10.** So a true faithful Minister, when he sees the work of God's house going on, every one laboring diligently every day to be more and more holy, and pressing on towards perfection: "Not laying again the foundation," &c., "let us go on to perfection, and so grow up unto him in all things who is the Head," (Heb. 6:1, 2). Gospel-Builders are "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man," &c., (Eph. 4:12, 13).

#### **Disparity.**

But the spiritual Builders build the house of God with precious stones, not earthly but

materials: also they build houses for men, or mortal creatures only, which may be soon destroyed by an enemy.

heavenly, not dead but living: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, and not for man, but an house or habitation for God, through the Spirit;" a house that the gates of hell shall never prevail against.

Diverse disparities are also here omitted, and left to be enlarged by the studious reader.

### INFERENCES.

1. This may inform all that look upon themselves to be spiritual Builders, to take heed they do not refuse the chief Corner-stone, as the Jewish Builders did: remember the foundation is laid, which is the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. It may caution them to take heed they build with fit materials, not with wood, hay, and stubble, but gold, silver and precious stones.
3. It may caution them to take heed they build according to the rule. Let them not mistake the rule, the Pope or church of Rome is not the rule; general councils are not the rule; the light within is not the rule; the Word of God is the only rule, by which these Builders of God's house must do all their work.
4. It may caution them to take heed they do not make any other doors into the Church, than what Jesus Christ hath made. The door that let into the natural church of the Jews, is shut up by him that hath the keys of David; birth-privileges will not give a right to Church-membership under the Gospel. "Think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our Father," &c.
5. It may caution them to take heed they do not leave out of the building any principal pillar, lest their building prove defective, and stand not long. It is a fearful thing to alter, add to, or diminish from the Word of God (Rev. 2:2).