

## **Baptist Identity: Immersed Through Worship**

Frank D Rees

Professor of Systematic Theology, and Dean  
Whitley College, the Baptist College of Victoria  
Melbourne, Australia

**Presented to BWA Heritage and Identity Commission, 10 July 2003, Rio de Janeiro**

In this paper, I want to suggest that a theology of baptism of believers by immersion is the fundamental basis of our identity as Baptist communities. It gives the essential Trinitarian and missionary character to all our worship and our lives as faith communities. In short, if we know what baptism means to us, we also know who we are and how we worship: and not only worship as gathered people, but worship God with all we do and are. We are called to be communities who are immersed in the life of God, in acts and lives of worship.

### **Story of an aboriginal ritual:**

I would like to begin with a story about a ritual practice which occurs in a number of Australian aboriginal communities. I must explain that I am not part of such a community, and have no place in any such ritual. I know only what I have been told.

First, we need to understand that every baby born into an aboriginal community belongs to a totem group. Family groups have a totem, which is often an animal. For those people, this animal is their direct link with the created order. They belong to this group and one thing they will never do is eat that animal. This totemic system thus ensures the preservation of all the species. It is also the basis for preventing inter-marriage, as you can never marry within your totem group.

When a child is born, she is given a name, and by birth she already belongs to a totem family. Soon after birth, a naming ceremony, as we might call it, occurs. A hole is dug in the earth big enough for the baby to rest in. She is ceremonially placed in this soil, signifying that the earth is our mother, as they say. We come from the earth and we go to the earth. But then the baby is bathed in oil. This oil is in fact the body fat of the totem animal: the body of the animal has been boiled down until its body fat is liquid and is then used to bath the child all over. Then the baby is lifted into the air: signifying that she may go in all directions, following the four winds, but wherever she goes she always belongs to this place, this land, this country. Then the baby is washed in water, to remove any evil spirits that may surround her: and thus she is set free to live, in her place, with her people, in her name.

As it is explained to me, this ceremony suggests a life orientation. The child from the outset belongs. Through this ceremony, the person can speak of their place, their people and their name. This is not something they can ever remove or lose, even though they may travel, or be removed from their place and their people. This identity also involves obligations and

relationships and expectations, on all sides. Belonging is a way of life: it draws the child into that life, and it gives the child that life.

I would like to suggest to you that Christian baptism is meant to function in this way: far more, far more than the highly individualistic and experiential focus that it has in contemporary practice. It is meant to be the most fundamental expression of our life, our identity, our place in the scheme of things. If there was some way our churches could recover these dimensions of Christian baptism, which I believe are inherently biblical, then the church would be transformed in the character of its life as a missionary community. I would like therefore to explore the implications of our baptism and some other worship practices, as a basis for understanding Baptist identity.

### **A crisis in baptismal identity**

It seems to me that we have, in many places, a crisis in baptism. Recently I asked a group of students (all active in local church ministry) whether they would see it as a central goal of their ministry to get people to be baptised, and most said 'No', because they found that it was not meaningful to their people. It isn't a meaningful thing to do. What has happened to us that committed Christians, young and old, need to be persuaded that baptism is a meaningful thing for them to do? To begin with, it suggests an individualistic understanding of faith, and baptism. I will be baptised if someone can convince me that it is meaningful or worthwhile for me. Second, it clearly shows that in many churches people come to faith and discipleship without baptism being a part of that: it's a kind of optional add-on. This contrasts starkly with Acts 2. 41 where we read that all who welcomed Peter's message were baptised: it was the thing to do, immediately.

So against a background of a widespread loss of the significance of baptism, I want to suggest that our baptismal heritage offers rich resources for understanding the whole of our identity as Christian communities. I want to suggest that our worship and with it our whole lives as a communal priesthood offered to God can be understood through the metaphor of baptismal worship. Baptist communities are called to be immersed, continually, in the life of God and the mission of God's Spirit. This is our reasonable worship (Rom. 12. 1). Our gatherings for worship and our practices in worship give expression to, and further stimulus to, our individual and collective lives of worship: the collective priestly offering of all the believers. It is into this life that we are baptised. Our baptism is the symbol of this life of immersion in God.

### **Three dimensions of Baptismal practice:**

As a brief articulation of this perspective, I would like to suggest three dimensions of Baptismal practice which also indicate the character of our life together as an immersed community.

First, the Christian believer is baptised into a community of God's people called the Church. The baptismal act immerses us in the life of this people of God and directs us to the life of Christ shared with, among and in this community. The London Confession of 1644 describes this group as 'called and separated from the world, by the word and the Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel, being baptised into that faith, and joyed to the

Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement, in the practical enjoyment of the Ordinances, commanded by Christ their head and King'.<sup>[1]</sup>

What we see here is that the community of faith, the Church, is the community which is made alive (regenerated) by Christ, through the Spirit. Sacramentalists, and some streams of baptistic thought, may wish to argue that it is baptism itself which effects this regeneration; others resist this view. Whichever line we take, the point at issue here is that those who have been baptised are now participants in a living body, the body of Christ, who is in this paragraph described as the head and king of this body.

So we see another of the central biblical images of the Church here, the body of Christ. Along with it the paragraph also clearly identifies the medium of Christ's reign, the Spirit. It is on this basis that from the outset Baptists (along with all orthodox Christians) have baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In this act, we are immersed into the mission of God. Christians are, through baptism, directed to the life of Christ, not only as an example in the past but, through the Spirit's enabling, a way of living in the present. This is an ontological as well as an ethical claim: the baptised are alive in Christ. The risen Christ lives in them and they live in him. The Anabaptist 'Waterland Confession' sets this out very clearly, identifying the 'internal' spiritual significance of baptism.

The whole action of external, visible baptism places before our eyes, testifies and signifies that Jesus Christ baptizes internally in a laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, the penitent and believing man: washing away, through the virtue and merits of his poured out blood, all the spots and sins of the soul and through the virtue and operation of the Holy Spirit, which is true, heavenly, spiritual and living water, [washing away] the internal wickedness of the soul and renders it heavenly, spiritual and living in true righteousness and goodness. Moreover baptism directs us to Christ and his holy office by which in glory he performs that which he places before our eyes, and testifies concerning its consummation in the hearts of believers and admonishes us that we should not cleave to external things, but by holy prayers ascend into heaven and ask from Christ the good indicated in it (baptism): a good which the Lord Jesus graciously concedes and increases in the hearts of those who by true faith become partakers of the sacraments.<sup>[2]</sup>

The confession here is that the baptised believers receive from Christ, through the Spirit, a new and spiritual life. We are immersed into the life of God in Christ, to reach out for the things Christ sets before us: true righteousness and goodness. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are presented here as the mediums through which we participate in this divine life, this new creation.

God forgive us for the times we have presented baptism (merely) as a necessary thing so that people can vote at the Church meeting! Baptism is nothing less than the effective symbol of our individual and collective, once and continual, immersion in the mission and life of God, laid out before us in Christ as a good news invitation, and made effective in and through us by God's Spirit.

So our baptismal practice, in our heritage, has these three dimensions: we are immersed into the community of God's people; we are immersed into the body of Christ; and we are immersed

into the life of the Spirit. These dimensions of baptismal practice (which *are* our ecclesiology) suggest that we need to recover a more clearly theological understanding of what is actually happening in baptism. Here I sense that our concern to avoid elements of sacramentalism has robbed us a proper focus on what God is doing in the baptismal drama. We have made it so much something *we* do; and as Western culture has become more and more individualist, people have seen their baptism as something they do, even to the point where individuals arrange their own baptismal services, choosing locations, time and place, guest lists, music and readings, and who is to perform the act. In these situations, baptism has lost its churchly character and become an optional ritual which people may or may not find meaningful. As a consequence, the church has lost this baptismal sense of its very identity.

### **A drama of three actors:**

Christian baptism needs to be seen as a drama of three actors. The main actor in the drama of baptism is God. Baptism is an act of God, who makes real the power of Christ's resurrection in the lives of women and men today.

God the Holy Spirit baptizes. We are indeed baptised by the Spirit and in the Spirit: this is not some separate or subsequent event, this is the very meaning of baptism. It may be possible to distinguish what the Pentecostals call water-baptism from spirit-baptism, but this separation is not supported by the scripture: it makes water baptism into something too human. Baptism for Jesus is with water and the spirit (John 3.5) or as we see it in Acts people are baptised *with* water and immediately receive the Spirit (Acts 2. 38, and many other instances. The story of Simon the silversmith in Acts 8. 9 - 24 is surely presented as the exception which proves the rule.)

The God who raised Jesus from the dead, by the agency of the Spirit, is also the one who raises us, through baptism, and makes the resurrection a reality in our being.

Secondly there comes an individual, who makes the response of repentance, a genuine turning to God in response to the good news of resurrection reality.

This is a response of faith, which shows itself as trust, hope and obedience. Faith is not exhausted by the idea of believing, indeed it is so much more that believing may well be a minor part of it: it is much more a response of trusting and doing. The response of faith is a life, not just an intellectual assent. In any event, though, baptism is a response to the message and reality of God's redemptive work in Christ, reaching individuals in the here and now with the reality of Christ's living presence. The response of faith is the individual's positive engagement with that reality.

And then thirdly there is the community: people are not baptised by ministers, they are baptised by the community of faith, by the church. The congregation does not witness a baptism, as a spectator event: the congregation is active in the whole drama, bringing that person to baptism, sharing the faith-commitment, itself affirming what they affirm and receiving what they receive, and celebrating their new birth, and in so doing the community receives this new member and commits itself to their care and nurture. This is a very active role.

The community involved in baptism is indeed one of the gifts of God to every new Christian, a family of faith in which to grow.<sup>[3]</sup>

All this suggests to me that baptism is a performative act. It effects orientation to the life of God. Just as Jesus in his own baptism was nourished by the Spirit as God's chosen and beloved, and directed with overtones of the Servant figure in Isaiah towards his mission of service and suffering, so too our baptism identifies us with God and gathers us into God's continuing mission in this world.<sup>[4]</sup>

One way in which Baptists have tried to express these implications of baptism, at times in our history, has been through the laying on of hands. Biblically, the laying on of hands is associated with calling and commissioning. Amongst early Baptist communities, there was an interesting dispute about this practice. It is worth considering for a few moments.

### **The laying on of hands**

In the 17th century, there was a lively debate and in fact a quite intense division amongst British Baptists about the practice of laying hands upon all those who were baptised. Barrie White's study, *The English Baptists of the 17th Century* has a detailed section about this controversy and some of the attempts to heal the divisions within and between particular congregations over this matter, and a useful discussion of some of the issues involved.<sup>[5]</sup>

It is to be remembered that John Smyth had referred to this act in association with ordination of church officers. The laying on of hands was intended to identify the officer, in a time of prayer, designating that person as a leader, but it was also done to assure that person that God gives to them the power to serve in this ministry.<sup>[6]</sup> The act was both identifying and empowering.

General Baptists became particularly interested in the implications of Hebrews 6. 1 to 8, which they saw as indicating 6 Principles of the Christian's life. These words follow on from chapter 5, where we read of the concern that the Christians receive a good foundation in faith. The writer regrets that they still need milk rather than solid food, but urges them in Chapter 6 to hold onto the sure foundation, because (it suggests) once this is lost it is impossible to restore. Here then are the six principles: repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

The General Baptists differed from the Particular Baptists only in the fourth, the laying on of hands. Some Particular Baptists did this, while almost all General Baptists did. Laying hands on the baptised is specified in the 'Orthodox Creed' of the General Baptists of 1679. In 1674, Thomas Grantham wrote about this principle arguing that in not laying on hands in this way the churches were neglecting 'the Sealing Spirit of Promise'.<sup>[7]</sup> As Barrie White observes, General Baptists saw the imposition of hands as an act which confirmed both the believer and the church's commitment to obedience to Christ and the pattern for the church which they saw laid down in Hebrews 6. To commit themselves fully to this way was also to draw upon the Spirit's presence, so they argued that not to lay hands in this way was to deny themselves some measure of the Spirit's presence and power. This explanation is supported by William Rider's tract, 'Laying on of hands asserted', (1656).<sup>[8]</sup>

While I cannot here pursue the course of this controversy, in which incidentally the Particular position (opposing the laying on of hands on all the baptised) seems to have won out, I think it is worth asking what really was at stake. It is not clear to me that it is simply about a second element in the process of becoming a church member, as H. Leon McBeth suggests, though it is something like that.<sup>[9]</sup>

The laying on of hands, at the time of baptism, was seen to invoke the Spirit and thus to express the seal of the new covenant upon the new believer. It did not mean that those whose hands touched the person in some literal sense mediated the Spirit. Only God gives the Spirit: the Spirit moves where it wills, not where we say it will. But at least one of the issues here was whether the seal of the Spirit was for all those called to faith in Christ, as witnessed in Baptism. On this both Particular and General Baptists were agreed. While the Particular Baptists reserved the laying on of hands for the ordination of ministers, this did not imply that only these people received the Spirit.

So what did this sign mean? Here I run the risk of over-interpreting events and movements of the distant past and attributing theological meanings which may not have been there. Nonetheless, I think we can infer some things from the significance given to this practice. To say that the Spirit is given to the newly baptised is to say that they now live in God and are gifted and called for this life. It is also to say that each member of the community can look to this person as an expression of God's presence amongst us. It is to say that this person has some gift from God, for us – which we must receive, value and use. And it is to say that this person also has a responsibility to contribute their gift to the life of our community. In short, what is signified here is a notion of how the Spirit gives life to the whole church. Each person is gifted, in some way, and they are invited and given scope to speak in the meetings because they have been baptised into Christ and have, as Hebrews 6 puts it, received a sure foundation and a taste of the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the age to come.

Much earlier, General Baptists had been ridiculed because their preachers were not educated types: in 1645 a tract had criticised Baptist preachers such as 'an honest glover ... a reverend Taylor (tailor?) ... a learned scholler ... a renowned cobbler, ... a button-maker, and divers others'.<sup>[10]</sup> In 1647, Edmund Chillenden issued a paper, 'Preaching without Ordination; or a Treatise proving the lawfulness of all Persons to preach and set forth the Gospell, though no minister, nor any other Officer in the Church of God.'<sup>[11]</sup>

What these things signify, I suggest, is that General Baptists saw the gifts of God's word coming to them through many lives and many people, and it was for this reason that their meetings invited more than one speaker and left open the opportunity for others to respond. The laying on of hands signified this radical openness to God's gift in and through each other and a continuing expectation that the gifts of the Word and the 'powers of the age to come' really were with them.

An interesting historical and theological question is why the Particular Baptists opposed this practice (remembering that initially not all rejected it, but by and large it was strongly opposed). The Particularist position seems to have been focussed on the office of the Messenger or Teaching Elder, who was to be called by the local congregation to this ministry and ordained by the laying on of hands. Though some groups denied this, most held that this ordination and laying on of hands was, as the Particular Baptists of 1704 said, 'an ordinance of Jesus Christ still in force'.<sup>[12]</sup> So whereas the Particular position did not deny the right of all to speak in the

meetings, nor the gift of the Spirit to all, they reserved the laying on of hands for the recognition and edification of those specifically called to the ministry of teaching and preaching. By 1693 the Western Association, meeting in Bristol, affirmed that the Lord's Supper and Baptism should be administered by an ordained elder, but they allowed (recognising that they must not limit the Holy One) that this might be done by one who was called by the congregation but had not yet been ordained by the laying on of hands.

### **Critical Issues Arising**

So what do we make of all this? In many places, until recent times, Baptists have not laid hands on the newly baptised. It is interesting to note, however, that the practice has been re-introduced in a wide variety of contexts, perhaps as the influence of Pentecostal movements has come into Baptist churches.<sup>[13]</sup> In my own local church, hands are laid upon people leaving the church to go to another place, usually as a sign of commissioning and blessing. I think a case can be made for the re-introduction of the practice at baptism. I am not sure that we would continue to exegete Hebrews 6 as offering us 6 principles of Christian faith, in the way the early Baptists did; nor perhaps would we see this as an issue of sufficient worth to cause dividing from our fellow-Baptists. But there is surely something of great importance in this historic practice. We are baptised into the missionary life of God in the real world, here and now. We are invited to have a part in the mission of the Spirit, and this part is mediated to, and through, each believer. We are each given a gift, for the whole mission of the church. And we are, each of us, a gift to and for the whole mission of the church. This is 'laid upon us' and for this we are accountable.

In passing, it is worth noting an interesting personal anecdote concerning the laying on of hands, which illustrates the unhappy separation of baptism and the reception of the Spirit from the corporate life of the church. In April 1890, as a young man of 19 years, the celebrated F W Boreham was baptised at the 'Old Baptist Union Church' in Stockwell. This took place without him being a participant in the life of that church, or at that stage any Baptist church. The pastor urged him to receive the Holy Spirit as hands were laid upon him. Boreham records in his autobiography: 'it really did seem to me that a gracious tide of spiritual power poured itself into my soul, and, for weeks afterwards, I lived in such ecstasy that I could scarcely believe that the earth on which I was walking was the dusty old earth to which I had always been accustomed.' (By the time Boreham went to Spurgeon's College the following year, he was a member of the Kenyon Baptist church.)<sup>[14]</sup>

There are some critical issues here, though, for Baptist identity and witness today. One of these is the question of why this discussion of all the baptised as equipped for ministry in and with the Spirit was so quickly limited to the question of teaching and preaching in the context of the gathered church. This is the question of the equipment of all the saints for the work of ministry not only in the gathered life of the community but in all the expressions of Christian life, in citizenship, in home and family, in working life and in neighbourhood. Today, we see our lives as expressed in many different areas. We even call them different lives: we say, 'my work life' or 'my home life', and (sadly) 'my spiritual life', as if each of these is a life apart from the others. The theology of baptism and the early idea of laying on of hands, suggested above, call for an understanding of our life and identity as Christians to be worked out in all aspects, in work and home, in citizenship and sporting clubs, and in the gathered life of the church. All these should

be one, integrated and holistic expression of our baptism – our immersion in the life of God, the creator and living Lord of all the world.

Another critical issue here concerns *whose* hands might be laid upon the newly baptised. In the context of ordinations, in other traditions, the idea of apostolic succession fairly clearly defines whose hands are laid. Those who ordain are those already ordained. In the early Baptist ordination of deacons and pastors, the hands were those of the elders and, commonly, pastors visiting from neighbouring congregations. There seem to be some vestiges here of the older ideas of office and apostolic succession. If today we wished to restore the practice of laying hands on all the baptised, to express the inclusion, gifting and responsibility of all in the mission of God, it is a vital question whose hands would represent the whole community in this act.

One interesting question is whether today we have any other expressions, in our worship, of these theological dimensions of our identity and mission. It might be suggested that the practice called ‘the right hand of fellowship’, extended to new members when they are ‘received’ into membership, is the successor to the laying on of hands. This would continue the view that the laying on of hands was part of the process of becoming a member, in which perhaps the members of the church affirm (by a second act) what has been done by God in the first act. I suspect in fact that this has been the trend, implying that being baptised involves a person’s relationship with God, while joining the church involves their relationship with other Christians. All too easily, this has made joining the church optional. To say this, however, implies that the church is not involved in the act of baptism. Furthermore, it ignores the clear association of the act of laying on of hands with the invocation and mediation of the Spirit. On the positive side, the right hand of fellowship expresses trust and encouragement to new members, recognising them as gifts to the local church and assuring them of the continuing support and prayer of their fellow members. It is worth noting that many churches now also pass the peace, an act in which people shake hands to express that collective fellowship in Christ. So this act can be seen as a continuous affirmation of the symbolic meaning of the right hand of fellowship first extended upon baptism and entry into membership.

It seems to me that the most important question to consider here is how the gathered life of the church, including and most importantly the worship service, acts of baptism and the laying on of hands, gives expression to the priesthood of all believers. This idea is perhaps the most misunderstood of all in our heritage, especially where it is taken to mean, as one commentator put it a generation ago, ‘getting the laity to help the clergy with their work’.

Beginning with an outright refusal of the distinction between clergy and lay, I would suggest that we need to re-think the idea of the priesthood of all believers in such a way as to recognise, with the earliest Baptists, that all Christians are called into ministry, each of us and all of us, as one life together in and with God. This is not a priesthood of each Christian, but of all. There is one, collective priesthood in which we each have a contribution.<sup>[15]</sup>

Secondly, I think it vital to say that the priesthood of all believers does not mean that anyone can do anything, in the ministry of the church, totally, nor specifically in the gathered activities such as worship. The priesthood of all believers does not mean that everyone is gifted for everything; nor that some are gifted for everything (despite their messianic pretensions).

Rather it means that all are gifted, and that together there is a ministry which is offered to God as an expression of our life in Christ, our one great high priest. We are together called to be 'a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (1 Peter 2. 9).

Thirdly, in explaining what this means for Baptist life, I find it helpful to distinguish the gathered life and the dispersed life of the local congregation. The gathered life of the church includes all its organisational expressions, the groups and meetings and missions and machinations, while the dispersed life includes all that the people do and are, at home and work, at leisure and in the wider community.

I want also to argue very firmly for the importance of the dispersed life as the primary context for ministry and worship. The priesthood of all believers is about offering the whole of our lives, and our whole life as a people of God, as worship.

In terms of the worship of the gathered community, however, the priesthood of all believers, understood in this way, is quite crucial. It is not about who can do what. Rather, it is about whose life is mentioned and challenged and prayed for and offered in worship.

Just as we asked the critical question, 'Whose hands?', in the laying on of hands, or the right hand of fellowship, so too it is a critical question whether the worship service is in fact the gathering of the whole lives of all the people. If we see our whole lives as immersed in the mission and life of God, then the worship service must be a gathering and naming of that whole life, individually and collectively, in prayers of thanksgiving and of supplication. Our preaching and praying will be acts of discernment and expectation: seeking where God is and what God is doing, and pleading God's blessing for those we know who are in need, in prison, in suffering and confusion, or praising God with those who are enjoying health and success in their endeavours. In such worship there must be prophetic challenge and positive inspiration, and a sending of all in the assurance that we do not take Christ into the world, rather we meet him, we go with him, alive in the Spirit. In short, if our lives are shaped by our baptism, if we are immersed continually in the life of God, then the worship service will be the gathering and the focussing of who we are, in all aspects: it will be the offering of all that we are, to the glory of God.

---

<sup>[1]</sup> 'The London Confession, 1644', reproduced in W L Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Revised edition, Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1969. Section XXXIII, p165.

<sup>[2]</sup> W J McGlothlin's translation of the 1580 Confession of the 'Waterlanders' is reproduced in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*. The section quoted is Article XXXII. Lumpkin, op cit, pp60-61.

<sup>[3]</sup> The argument sketched here has been published in my essay entitled, 'Future Church - a Crisis in Baptism?', in Ken Manley (ed), *Future Church: A Baptist Discussion*, Hawthorn, Victoria: Baptist Union of Victoria, 1996, pp81 - 91.

<sup>[4]</sup> Here it is worth noting that Jesus is the chosen one, affirmed as such in the baptismal narratives. So too, 1 Peter 2. 8 speaks of Christians as a chosen people. This element is not considered in our later discussion of a holy nation and royal priesthood, but would need to be considered in a more comprehensive study. The difficulties of the exclusive and possible supercessionist implications of this idea need to be addressed. In the context of the baptismal narratives, the stress of the expression seems to be more on the

situation of the chosen one as beloved, nourished and held precious to God, rather than any implications of preference over or exclusion of others.

[5] B R White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century*, Second edition (*A History of the English Baptists, Volume 1*, General Editor, Roger Hayden), London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1996. pp38 - 40.

[6] W T Whitley, *The Works of John Smyth*, Vol. 11, p388, cited in A. C. Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists*, London: Kingsgate Press, 1947. p 36.

[7] Thomas Grantham, *The Fourth Principle of Christs Doctrine Vindicated*, quoted in Underwood, op cit, p123.

[8] For a discussion of how this controversy was played out, and eventually faded out, in the subsequent century, see Raymond Brown, *The English Baptists of the 18th Century*, (*A History of the English Baptists, Volume 1*, General Editor, B R White), London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1986. pp 44 - 48.

[9] H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987, p195.

[10] This section is quoted by Underwood, from Louise F. Brown, *The Political Activities of the Baptists and the Fifth Monarchy Men in England During the Interregnum*, (Washington, 1912) p5, n7. Underwood, op cit, p86.

[11] Underwood, op cit, p75.

[12] Underwood, op cit, p131.

[13] Anthony Cross makes this observation also, in *Baptism and the Baptists: Theology and practice in twentieth century Britain*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000. p.405. Cross observes that the laying on of hands in one situation was explained as 'the recognition of the seal of the Spirit and commissioning for work in the priesthood of all believers'.

[14] F W Boreham, *My Pilgrimage: An autobiography*. London: Epworth Press, 1940. p88.

[15] A strong biblical argument for the priesthood of the whole church is presented by John A T Robinson in *On Being the Church in the World*, Chapter Four, 'The Priesthood of the Church', London: SCM Press, 1960. There is a helpful Baptist discussion of this idea in Nathan Nettleton's unpublished Masters thesis *The Liturgical Expression of Baptist Identity*, Chapter 11. (Melbourne College of Divinity, 2001).