

TWO OLD AND HONORED FRIENDS

by

ELD. MARK GREEN

FOREWORD

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It is an easily documented fact that among uninspired writings, the London Confession of Faith and the works of John Gill have been held by Primitive Baptists in high regard and with great respect. We have claimed them as our own and have referred to them time and time again in our defense of the faith against Arminianism and Fullerism. They provided a very visible link for us with the “old country” and those brethren who were not only of our faith, but also of our own language and a similar culture.

We Primitive Baptists have been very vocal in our claims that the true churches of God in this generation are found under our name. We have been unflinching in our assertion that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and that God has not let that truth fall to the ground but has preserved it by a direct succession of churches found under different names through the ages. “Their faith was our faith,” has been our cry. Probably no other works have been so frequently alluded to by our ministers in their writings concerning the agreement of Primitive Baptist faith and that of our forefathers as those we will examine in this article.

As the years flow by and one generation passes into another, the environment in which “the old paths” exist sometimes varies drastically. In the midst of these changing scenes, it is a matter of great comfort to the child of God to be able to read about his spiritual forefathers and their beliefs and practices, and rejoice that the gates of hell did not prevail against Truth and her pillar. Included in the contents of this article are numerous quotes from a number of leading Primitive Baptist ministers over the years concerning their affection for the London Confession and the writings of that fierce opponent of Arminianism, Dr. Gill. May their bold statements reconfirm our faith in God’s providential care for His eternal truths—those same principles to which we as Primitive Baptists hold.

It should be noted that Elders C. B. Hassell, Sylvester Hassell, J. S. Newman, and W. S. Craig in particular were well-known as experts in the history of our denomination. Others, including Elders J. Harvey Daily, S. N. Redford, R. H. Pittman, Jesse Cox, and Lee Hanks, published works in this field, and were serious students of the subject. Elder Lemuel Potter’s references to church history in his debates and lectures were so extensive that his knowledge in that field is unquestionable. When these men recommended these “two old friends” to their people, they knew whereof they spoke.

THE LONDON CONFESSION

“Denying Arminianism.” That statement rings out loud and clear in the opening paragraphs of the old London Confession of Faith of 1689. Perhaps no two words could have expressed more succinctly the struggles of the Primitive Baptist people in our history of one and two-thirds centuries. As we strove to hold up Grace and to combat the far-reaching intrusions of Arminianism, Fullerism, Free-willism and their related beliefs, our ministers have referred time and time again to the rich phrases of the Confession. Three of the first four Baptist associations in America were organized using the Confession as a statement of faith (and thus it may be referred to as the Philadelphia Confession). In debates with Missionary Baptists, our champions would quote the Confession frequently to show that their opponents had departed from the old faith.

The quotes that follow are from leading ministers among the Primitive Baptists, men whose ability and faithfulness have made them household words among our people. Elders J. K. Booton, C. H. Cayce, S. F. Cayce, W. S. Craig, J. Harvey Daily, T. S. Dalton, J. H. Fisher, Benjamin Griffin, Lee Hanks, C. B. Hassell, Sylvester Hassell, J. S. Newman, James H. Oliphant, John T. Oliphant, Lemuel Potter, S. N. Redford, G. W. Stewart, John M. Thompson, J. G. Webb: all these honored and respected men of God, and others, are found herein expressing their love and respect for the dear old London Confession. The Confession was a work of men, and thus we today may take exception to an expression here and there. That is not denied here. It would be greatly presumptuous, however, for us, their children, to ever cast aside this document which these men held so dear.

from History of the Primitive Baptists of Mississippi by Elder Benjamin Griffin [1853]

In 1689 a general assembly of the Particular Baptists of England and Wales, was held in London, for the purpose of forming a general Union, by setting forth the articles of faith upon which they were organized, which they honestly believed, to which they held privately and publicly, and according to which they acted. These articles of faith are divided into thirty-four chapters. They are in substance the same as those of the Primitive or Old School Baptists of this day.

from An Exposition of the Revelation of St. John the Divine by Elder Jesse Cox [1873]

More than one hundred churches in England and Wales, met by their representatives in London, September 3, 1689, and wrote out their confession of faith that others might understand what they believed and practiced. It was adopted, with some additions, by the Philadelphia Association, September 25, 1742, which would be fifty-three years after it was first written. This confession is too lengthy for insertion here, but suffice it to say that it is the same in substance as that of the Waldenses, a part of which I have already given, and the same, with but little variation, as that now held by the Old Baptists.

from Principles and Practices of the Regular Baptists by Elder James H. Oliphant [1883]

The London Confession of Faith and the Philadelphia Confession have been regarded by the Baptists as sound.

from History of the Church of God by Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell [1886]

In 1677 and in 1688, and again in 1689, was published the fullest and most esteemed Baptist Confession of faith—in 1689 the ministers and messengers of above a hundred churches in England and Wales meeting in London for that purpose, and, as they say in their prologue, “denying Arminianism.” This Confession is published in this volume, and adopts, on the subject of predestination, the strong language of the Westminster (the most esteemed Presbyterian) Confession...

What is called the Confession of 1688, in thirty-two chapters, by far the most important and authoritative of all uninspired Baptist Confessions, and still generally received by all Baptists who hold the doctrine of personal election and the certainty of the final perseverance of the saints, first appeared in 1677 at London, and was, in 1688 and 1689, approved and recommended by the ministers and messengers of above a hundred churches who were in session in London July 4-11, 1689. It was adopted by the Philadelphia Baptist Association, in Philadelphia, Sept. 25th, 1742, and is hence also called the Philadelphia Confession—the latter retaining all the old London Confession, and adding two other Articles (Chapter xxiii, Of Singing of Psalms, and Chapter xxxi, Of Laying on of Hands). The Charleston (South Carolina) Association was organized, in 1751, on the basis of the old London Confession; and the Kehukee (North Carolina) Association was organized in 1765 on the same Confession, adding, from the Philadelphia Confession, the Chapter on the Singing of Psalms, but not adding the Chapter on the Laying on of Hands.

from The Throgmorton-Potter Debate (Elder Lemuel Potter) [1887]

In the preface to the London confession of faith we read that the brethren who convened in London in 1689, to set forth their doctrine, faith and practice, “denying Arminianism.” They were denying Arminianism, while the Missionary Baptists fellowshipped it, and denied it at the same time. They fellowship both Arminianism and Calvinism. The Primitive Baptists deny Arminianism.

In 1689 this convention convened, and they denied Arminianism. Do the Missionaries today deny Arminianism? No, sir. Hence they are not the Primitive Baptists in doctrine. They are not Primitive Baptists. They do not deny Arminianism.

Remember, they had met to set forth their doctrines, faith and practice, and they emphatically denied Arminianism. It has been said, during this discussion, more than once, that if you wanted to drive a Hardshell, just tell him that where he stands is Arminianism. It must be evident, then, that we deny Arminianism. I claim that we do. We do not have to appeal to our brethren, and ask them any thing of that sort, for we are Calvinistic. In talking and in preaching, we deny Arminianism, just as the London Baptists did in 1689...

I want to show that we, and not the Missionary Baptists, are identical with the Primitive Baptists. In order to show non-fellowship for Arminianism it was declared by the

Primitive Baptists, as far back as 1689, as I referred yesterday to the London confession of faith, and showed that the ministry and messengers held a convention representing upwards of one hundred churches, in England and Wales, denying Arminianism. Is that fellowshiping Arminianism? I will let this people judge that. Is that the way we fellowship anything—to deny it? That is what these Primitive Baptists did in 1689. They denied Arminianism in the churches, so says their published confession of faith. He says we began to raise denominational tests of fellowship in 1832. He undertakes to make it appear that Arminianism has been in the church all along, and we tolerated it. It does not seem so from our record. . . .

He says we have not the Philadelphia confession of faith in any of our churches or associations. He says they have. It is not so much a matter of concern with me as to who have it, but as to who believe it and preach it. That is the question we are here to settle. We are here to identify each other by what we preach and teach; to identify ourselves with the Old Baptists on that subject. Remember, that although the Philadelphia confession of faith is still a “Hardshell” Baptist document some of the Missionary Baptist associations fight it. That is, the doctrine it contains. Not only a few of them, but take the country over, a majority of their ministers today preach the doctrine of Arminianism, the very thing that this London confession of faith denied when it was first gotten up.

from My Reasons for Leaving the New School or Missionary Baptists by Elder J. H. Fisher [1895]

But what did they believe about predestination and election? Well, a few held to these points, while the great majority rejected them, as held by the Old Baptists, and as set forth in all the confessions of faith of the Baptists in all ages. . . . Well, I went to searching to see what was the truth on this subject. I went back first to see if this was baptist doctrine. I found that the Baptists held most strictly to predestination and election, as held today by Primitive Baptists; the confessions of faith proved it. Especially did the London confession of faith present it in much clearness and fullness. This being a baptist document, it staggered me to find a people pretending to be Primitive Baptists, and yet not only refusing to believe it, but really contending against it.

from A Treatise on Regeneration, Christian Warfare, and the State of the Dead, by Elder Lemuel Potter [1895]

This has been the doctrine of our people for the past two hundred years, provided it was our people who first drew up and published the London Confession of Faith, in England, in the year 1689... In our efforts to identify ourselves with the Old Baptists against the claims of the missionaries, we claim to be identical with these old English brethren in doctrine. THE ADVOCATE does now stand, and always has stood there, especially on the new birth. We hope that none of our brethren will differ from them, and at the same time claim identity with them...

Our next witness will be Coffey’s History. In his arguments in favor of our identity with the original Philadelphia Baptists association, he says, “The above quotation shows very

conclusively, that the Philadelphia Association in 1775, was the same in practice that the Regular Baptists are to this day; and in order that the reader may have a knowledge of the principles upon which such association was founded, I here insert the confession of faith adopted in the year 1742, which confession was adopted by over one hundred congregations, whose delegates met in London in 1689. The Philadelphia Association, in 1742, endorsed the said confession, pages 107-108.” Elder Coffey then quotes the confession, in order to prove our identity, and the 23rd article reads as follows: [quote from the Confession]. We claim this identity, while there are some who have, for the last twenty-five or thirty years made war upon this old time honored Baptist doctrine, which distinguished them from the doctrine of the pope during the dark ages.

from Order and Disorder by Elder G. W. Stewart [1901]

In the old “London Confession of Faith,” put forth by our Baptist fathers in the year 1689, more than two hundred years ago, and of which all our confessions of faith are but abridgments . . .

In the next place let us notice the Old London Confession of Faith on this subject, which Confession was put forth by the Baptists of England and Wales in 1689, and was afterwards adopted by the Baptists of the United States... In the quotations which I have made upon the subject of predestination, you have the benefit of the views of the wise, prudent and conservative Respass; the great man in Israel, Beebe; the learned, zealous and humble Hassell; and our Baptist fathers of more than two hundred years ago, and I am satisfied that no uninspired documents can be produced which will present the subject in a clearer, stronger or more faithful manner from a Bible standpoint; and there is one important point upon which all agree, and that is, that man acts voluntarily in the commission of sin.

from Footsteps of the Flock by Elder J. K. Booton [1902]

Prompted by the belief that there is a need for such a book, I have compiled the following selections from Holy Writ, and from commentators, church works and historians, who as authority stand uncontradicted, pointing out the way by which God has led His people from the creation of man down to the present. (Elder Booton quotes the London Confession in its entirety in one chapter of the book.)

from The Two Witnesses by Elder G. W. Stewart [1905]

In 1689 the Baptists of England and Wales, in an assembly composed of more than one hundred baptized congregations (denying Arminianism they say) put forth a full confession of their faith in what is known as the London Confession of Faith... Every true Primitive Baptist of to-day is ready to say Amen to this confession.

from A Sermon on Church History, by Elder W. C. Arnold [1907]

“There is no record of the Baptists ever having become nonexistent in England,” Jarrell, p. 318. In 1643, seven churches in London published a confession of faith. This confession was readopted in 1689, and is today the confession of faith upon which we as Primitive Baptists stand.

Now, my friends, I have traced the old church from the apostles down to the present date. I have shown you her footprints in every century. Many have been her struggles as she has unfurled the old banner of sovereign grace, under which she has marched through the ages past, leaving her trail by the blood she has shed.

from History of the Primitive Baptist Church by Elder J. Harvey Daily [1909]

In 1643 the English Baptists drew up a “confession of faith,” which was afterwards revised and published in 1689, known as the “London Confession of Faith,” which contains all the doctrinal and practical features of all the former “confessions of faith” but forth by the Baptists. It has ever been recognized as the nearest correct expression of faith of true Baptists every where, until the present time, that has ever been published in a like form.

from The Baptists In All Ages by Elder J. S. Newman [1912]

In 1689 the ministers and messengers of upward of one hundred Baptist Churches of England and Wales met denying Arminianism, and drew up a confession of faith which has stood unquestioned as an expression of what our people believe on the points mentioned; which “confession we own as containing the doctrine of our faith and practice, and do desire that the members of our churches respectively furnish themselves with.” I will now quote a few articles from the above Confession of Faith...

If the Missionary Baptists do not believe the doctrine contained in the above quotations, then they are not the original Baptists, for the above is what the Baptists believed, preached and published before the division between us in 1832.

from A Voice From the Past Vol. 3 by Elder T. S. Dalton [1915]

But we will give here a short sketch from the old London Confession of Faith, which was adopted by the Primitive or Old School Baptists in 1689, and was approved and published by the Philadelphia Association of Baptists in 1742, and surely if we claim to be identified with those old brethren we must teach what they taught.

from History of the Church and Church Identity by Elder S. N. Redford [1915]

In 1688 the confession of thirty-two chapters was published, and is generally received by the Baptists as an expression of their faith, with the exception of a few expressions.

from History of the Primitive Baptists by Elder W. S. Craig [1925]

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER (These Principles are the great truths taught by the prophets, Christ and His apostles in the Holy Scriptures, affirmed, in regard to eternal salvation, by the early European reformers and martyrs of the 14th and 15th centuries, similarly reaffirmed by the Protestant reformers, including the Episcopalians of the 16th century, embodied, in the substance of doctrine with reference to final salvation, in the Articles of Faith of the Presbyterians, Independents or Congregationalists, and Predestinarian Baptists of the 17th century, fully set forth in the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, adopted as an expression of their belief by all the Predestinarian Baptists of the United States in the 18th century; and these principles, exactly as here published, were unanimously approved by the general meetings of Primitive Baptists at Oakland City, Ind., Sept. 27, 1900, and at Fulton, Ky., Nov. 14-18, 1900, representing two-thirds of the Primitive Baptists of the United States; and, I believe, that they are the sentiments of nine-tenths of all Primitive Baptists now living.) [The Gospel Messenger was edited by Elder Sylvester Hassell.]

from The Church of God by Elder Lee Hanks

For quite awhile, for the love I have for God's children and that they may clearly understand where the Church of God is, I have felt deeply impressed to compile a Church History to show who the Church of God is... I have not compiled this book for my benefit, but for the dear Old Baptists, it is their History. [Elder Hanks inserted as Chapter Two of his History the London Confession of 1689 in its entirety, with the footnotes of the Fulton Council.]

THE FULTON CONFESSION OF FAITH

In the year 1900, with many trials afflicting Zion, as has always been the case, two meetings of Primitive Baptist ministers took place. The first was at Oakland City, Indiana, on September 27, involving fifteen ministers, including Elders James H. and John T. Oliphant. At this meeting a general address to Primitive Baptists was written, in which various subjects were discussed, and in which the London Confession was recommended to the denomination. Then in November, fifty-one ministers met at Fulton, Kentucky. They republished the Confession, adding some explanatory footnotes and a general address, and appended the Oakland City address. Included in the ministers at that meeting were Elders John M. Thompson, James H. Oliphant, S. F. Cayce, C. H. Cayce, Lee Hanks, J. K. Stephens, J. G. Webb, and a number of other prominent ministers. Following are excerpts from the addresses published at both meetings, as well as recollections and observations of two of the ministers who were there.

from the Fulton Confession of Faith, November 1900

The London Confession of Faith was approved by a unanimous vote of the meeting. In view of the fact that this instrument was written more than two hundred years ago and that our language naturally undergoes some change in so long a time, it was deemed prudent to add some explanations to those sections that seemed ambiguous.

The whole Confession, with the explanatory notes, was approved by a unanimous vote, and we now offer the whole in this form to our dear brethren everywhere, with the fervent prayer to Almighty God that it may be received and approved by our suffering Zion with the same unanimity and tender love with which it has been approved in this meeting, and that our feeble efforts may result in establishing union and fellowship among us everywhere, and that we may go to our homes from this place with a renewed energy in laboring for peace and union among all our people, and to this end we beg all our people everywhere to unite with us in prayer to the Lord God Almighty to remember us with a blessing, that our eyes may see days of increased gladness and the sweetest union among our people...

The London Confession of Faith, adopted over two hundred years ago by thirty-seven of the ablest ministers of England and Wales, representing over one hundred churches, has served one of the most needful services among our people of any document of faith since the days of the apostles, and has stood unquestioned as an expression of the Primitive Baptist's interpretation of the Bible from then till now. At the present assembly of fifty-one ministers, representing three hundred and thirty-five churches, aggregating fourteen thousand five hundred members in direct correspondence with over one hundred thousand Baptists, the Confession has been carefully read and approved. Language through the lapse of many years undergoes variations in applications and meanings, whereby certain clauses become more or less obscure in meaning. Wherever, in the opinion of this assembly, the meaning of a section was not apparent footnotes were added to bring out the meaning. The office of this Confession of Faith is not to be regarded as a standard of faith and practice, but as an expression of our interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, which is the only rule of faith and practice. We recommend the Confession with the notes to careful perusal of all Primitive Baptists, and insist that they make themselves familiar with its teaching. Believing that such a course would obviate many of the difficulties that have so sadly distressed our beloved Zion in the few years passed, we would be glad to see this document, that has stood the test as an expression of our faith for more than two hundred years, become uniformly used in our local churches as their expression of faith and practice.

Praying God's blessings on his holy cause everywhere and that general prosperity may soon follow, we are your obedient servants and ministers of the gospel in the fear and love of God.

from the Oakland City Appendix to the Fulton Confession

We recommend the London Confession of Faith as an expression of Bible truth. The articles of faith of our churches are substantially in harmony with the doctrine and practice set forth in that instrument, and we do heartily recommend the London Confession to the household of faith everywhere.

from The Autobiography of Elder J. H. Oliphant

In November, 1900, I attended the national meeting at Fulton, Kentucky. It was the largest gathering of Primitive Baptists I ever saw. Fourteen states were represented, and numerous preachers from many states were there. The old London Confession was publicly read and approved, section by section. I served as moderator of the meeting. I thought it was prudent to hold that meeting, and some thought that it would be prudent to hold such a meeting every year, which seemed to me to be unwise. I met a great many elders at this meeting. Elders Hanks of Georgia, Webb of Texas, Little of Arkansas, Verell of Mississippi, Stevens of Arkansas, Cayce of Tennessee, and many others. The meeting was made up, for the most part, of true Primitive Baptists. There were many tears shed as the strong sentiments of the London Confession were read and considered. None could see the manifestation of love for the old doctrine that was there made without being impressed that these truths will still survive many years to come. It has long been predicted that the Primitive Baptists will pass away “when the ministers now living are dead.” But as death takes the old ones away, others are raised up to take their places. The doctrine of our people is taught in the Bible, and is in harmony with the experience of all the children of God and common sense. It has the elements that will endure strong opposition, and even persecution, and will yet live as the centuries go by. When the Lord comes again He will find these principles still dear to many who “love His appearing.”

from Editorial Writings from 'The Primitive Baptist,' Vol. 6 by Elder C. H. Cayce [1939]

From November 14 to 18, 1900, there were gathered and assembled together at Fulton, Ky., a large number of Primitive Baptists from different states of the Union. Fifty-one ministers were present and took part in the meeting. In that meeting a general address was read and approved by a unanimous vote of all present. When the proceedings of that meeting were printed or published this address was in the book, under the above heading. On account of circumstances which exist in some parts of the country, and some things being done in some places, we feel that this address is timely now, and worthy of serious and prayerful consideration by the Primitive Baptists in every section of our country. When that address was put forth thirty- nine (almost) years ago it was evidently the sentiment then of the great body of Baptists. We were at that meeting, and we then fully endorsed the sentiment and principles set forth in that address—and we stand there yet. What do you say, dear reader? Do you stand now where the Baptists stood thirty-nine years ago? Remember that principles are eternal and never change. Following this address, which we copy below in full, are the names of fifty-one ministers who were in attendance at the meeting, with the post office address of each one at that time. Many of them have crossed over the river, and some left our people and went to another order.

Following this address we also copy an article which was written by several ministers and brethren assembled at Oakland City, Ind., on September 27, 1900. This article was unanimously approved by the Fulton meeting in November, same year, and published as an “Appendix.” We recommend a careful reading and study of these addresses. If the things set forth therein were good then, they are good now. The Primitive Baptists as a body raised no objection then to the principles set forth therein. We stand now on the same principles as set forth therein.

JOHN GILL

John Gill lived from 1697 to 1771. Largely self-educated, he was beginning to learn to read his fourth language at the age of twelve. He was ordained to the ministry in 1720 and pastored until his death the church at Horsly-down in London.

Gill is probably best known for his three great works— Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, A Body of Divinity, and The Cause of God and Truth. He was an acknowledged expert in the writings of the Jews, such as the Talmud and the Targum.

To Primitive Baptists, one of Gill's greatest contributions was his unflinching adherence to the pure doctrine of Particular Redemption. When Andrew Fuller began propagating his watered- down version of redemption in the late 1700's, Gill became the champion of the lovers of grace. David Benedict, a Missionary Baptist minister, published in 1860 his Fifty Years Among The Baptists. In it he observes: "Forty years ago (1817) large bodies of our people were in a state of ferment and agitation in consequence of some modifications of their old Calvinistic Creed, as displayed in the writings of the late Andrew Fuller, of Kettering, England. This famous man maintained that the atonement of Christ was general in its nature, but particular in its applications, in opposition to our old divines, who held that Christ died for the elect only... Dr. John Gill, of London, was in his day one of the most distinguished divines among the English Baptists; and, as he was a noted advocate for the old system of a limited atonement, the terms 'Gillites' and 'Fullerites' were often applied to the parties in this discussion. Those who espoused the views of Mr. Fuller were denominated Arminians by the Gillite men, while they, in their turn, styled their opponents Hyper-Calvinists." Thus, Gill became the standard for those who believed in a limited atonement, or the doctrine of Particular or Definite Redemption.

One writer noted that it would test the constitution of most of the literary men in England just to read all that Gill wrote. With such a volume of words flowing from his pen, it is inevitable that anyone would find points here and there in which he differed with Gill. Still, all in all, as Charles Spurgeon said, in the matter of sound, massive, sober Scriptural comment, Gill cannot be excelled. Primitive Baptists have been in hearty agreement. Their opinions of the good Doctor follow.

from The Old Baptist Test by Elder John M. Watson [1867]

I will now show, most conclusively, that Parkerite ultraisms have changed some of the Old Order of Baptists into a new sect. Facts must speak here. I will contrast a tenet of the Particular Baptist Church of London, about 1720, with one of a Baptist Church lately constituted, on a tenet of Parkerism: "A declaration of the Faith and Practice of the Church of Christ at Horsleydown, under the Pastoral Care of Mr. John Gill, etc."

from History of the Church of God by Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell [1886]

The eminently pious and learned Baptist ministers, John Skepp (who died 1721), John Brine (who died 1765), and John Gill (who died 1771)--the latter the most learned man that has ever borne the name of Baptist—entertained precisely the same views of the sovereignty and efficacy of Divine grace as are held by the Bible Baptists of today. Though they proclaimed to sinners that they were in danger and on the high road to perdition, they did not call upon all men, whether spiritually concerned or not, to repent and believe the gospel...

John Gill, of London, the soundest, the most learned, and the most able Baptist theologian since the death of the Apostle John—the author of a complete critical Commentary on the Old and New Testaments, and of a Complete Body of Divinity—the only man that ever hunted and drove out Arminianism from the explanation of every verse in the Bible...

from The Throgmorton-Potter Debate (Elder Lemuel Potter) [1887]

But we wish to continue this same quotation: “This was the strict Calvinistic, or Gillite plan.” He is talking about the doctrine that had been uniformly believed among the Baptists, and this doctrine of particular atonement was called the strict Calvinistic or Gillite plan. Then, you see, we stand with Dr. Gill...

Dr. Gill was our man. And I know that it is not necessary to state here that Dr. Gill believed and taught what is now called Calvinism. He was one of the brightest lights that the Baptist churches have had since the days of the apostles, and there is no Baptist that is a Baptist that does not speak of Gill with pride.

from A Treatise on Regeneration, Christian Warfare, and the State of the Dead by Elder Lemuel Potter [1895]

We have others present, but can not quote them in this article, as Elder Jesse Cox, Dr. John Gill, and others who believed as we do. These have been our spiritual fathers; and they have all believed without controversy that at death the soul left the body. These men of God are our witnesses today, in favor of our claims to the name of old Primitive Baptists.

from Thoughts on the Will by Elder J. H. Oliphant [1899]

I desire to give a lengthy quotation from Gill’s “Cause of God and Truth” which will show how our people met Arminius in his time...The above is Whitby’s argument against our people. The following is Gill’s reply...

Gill contends for liberty of will, yet not as the Arminians of his times...The Arminian argued that if the will of an evil man were determined to sin only this fact would destroy liberty of will, and also that it would clear the sinner of all blames, for sin. Gill argued that the will is free and yet determined to evil only, which I think I will demonstrate to be true later on in the work.

from Footsteps of the Flock by Elder J. K. Booton [1902]

Having so extensively quoted from Dr. Gill's Commentaries on the Scriptures, it is perhaps necessary that I should give a sketch of his life...

From his voluminous, learned and most critical comments, I have made most of my extracts.

from The Two Witnesses by Elder George W. Stewart [1905]

I quote first from a confession of faith put forth by the Baptists of 1720, written by John Gill, one of the most learned and noted Baptists of modern times.

from Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers in the United States by Elder R. H. Pittman [1909]

John Gill, of London, Eng., was perhaps the most learned, able, sound, upright and humble Baptist minister since the days of Paul. He was the author of a complete critical commentary on the Old and New Testaments, and of a complete Body of Divinity, and was the only man that ever hunted and drove out Arminianism from the explanation of every verse in the Bible—from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. Wm. Cathcart, author of the "Baptist Encyclopedia"—a New School work, says that Gill "Knew more of the Bible than any one else with whose writings he was acquainted; that he was a man of great humility, and one of the purest men that ever lived; that, in his 'Body of Divinity,' the grand old doctrines of grace, taken unadulterated from the Divine fountain, presented in the phraseology and with the illustrations of an intellectual giant, and commended by a wealth of sanctified Biblical learning only once in several ages permitted to mortals, sweeps all opposition before them, and leaves no place for the blighted harvests, the seed of which was planted by James Arminius in modern times." How sad to think that the great body of New School Baptists of today have repudiated Gill's works, turned a deaf ear to the plain teachings of the Holy Scriptures and become the devoted apostles of James Arminius!... Yet how soon is this great teacher in Israel set aside for the carnal reasoning, flesh pleasing, pride fostering, God debasing and man-exalting doctrines of James Arminius? And how absurd and inconsistent for the New School denomination to claim John Gill and many other Bible Baptists when they deny through the press and in the pulpit the doctrine they contended for? Only a short time after the bones of this wonderfully gifted servant of God had been laid in the grave, Andrew Fuller began to ponder upon the expediency of making a change in Baptist tactics, and after years of heated controversy with his brethren led the majority of those professing the Baptist name into the Arminian camp. I have given these few points in the life of Gill to show that he preached the same doctrine and contended for the same practice that the Primitive or Old School Baptists are the only exponents of today.

from A Theological Discussion on the Plan of Salvation (the Daily-Throgmorton Debate) [1912]

So much for John Gill. How about this work from which I am quoting? Was it written when he was a boy and didn't know? By no means. In the Memoirs of John Gill, found in his "Body of Divinity," it is said: "This was his last work, and contains the substance of what he delivered to his people through the space of five or six years." So much for Dr. John Gill. Yes, I stand where Dr. John Gill did in his mature age, when he had thought the matter over studiously. So, as I follow Brother John Gill, my brethren can follow me along. Rather, you follow me as I follow Christ. That is the proper rule.

from The Baptists In All Ages by Elder J. S. Newman [1912]

The views of John Gill were the prevailing doctrine held to or believed by the Baptists prior to the introduction of modern missions among them.

from Principles and Practices of the Church by Elder J. D. Holder [1961]

Mr. Fuller, and those who worked with him, quietly waited until this great man Dr. John Gill's remains rested in death, and his voice was stilled, and his fruitful pen rested on his desk, before they advanced their new ideas of taking the world for Christ. Dr. Gill's scholarly writings, his Body of Divinity, and his complete commentary on every verse of the Old and New Testaments are more sound, and show a deeper, richer mind than any scholar of his day and some say than any man since New Testament times. While very few of Mr. Fuller's distinguished followers care to pull from the shelf his writing and ponder their meaning as well as their failure to stand the test of Bible theology.

from The Holy Scripture on Women Preachers by Elder P. T. Oliphant

Dr. John Gill: This author was the standard of orthodoxy among the PRIMITIVE BAPTIST of England for over two hundred years. [caps in original]

from The Church of God by Elder Lee Hanks

John Gill, perhaps the most learned, able, sound, upright and humble Baptist minister since the days of Paul—author of a Commentary on the Whole Bible, a Body of Divinity, etc.