

**THE STANDARD  
MANUAL FOR  
BAPTIST CHURCHES**

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The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches by Edward T. Hiscox

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**EDWARD T. HISCOX**

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FOR  
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BY  
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Ministers," "The Star Book Series,"  
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## PREFACE.

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It is now thirty years since the "Baptist Church Directory," prepared by the writer, was first published. That work was designed to be somewhat of a *consensus* of the opinions of those best able to judge in matters of Baptist Church polity and usage, especially as to what concerns administration and discipline. It might thus prove a help to both pastors and members, particularly in perplexing cases liable to arise. Thus it was hoped it might help to rectify the order and customs of our churches through our widely extended ranks. This hope has been realized. More than fifty thousand copies of that book have been circulated in this country. It has also been translated, more or less fully, into six or seven different languages by our missionaries, for use in our missions and foreign fields.

But many of the churches desired a smaller and less expensive manual, which they could put into the hands of all their members. To meet this want, sixteen years ago, the writer prepared the little "Star Book on Baptist Church Polity," which many churches have adopted, furnishing their members and candidates for membership with them freely. This has had a circulation of over thirty thousand copies; and both this and the "Directory" are in as great demand as at any previous time.

It is something more than twenty years since the "Baptist Short Method," by the same author was published. The purpose of this manual was to give a concise view of those distinctive features which mark the difference between Baptists and other denominations, especially as to the ordinances and church order; and also to furnish the proofs by which our position in these respects is justified. About ten thousand copies of this book have found their way into circulation.

The preparation of the present manual was undertaken at the request, and by an arrangement with the pastor, R. S. MacArthur, D. D., on behalf of the Calvary



Baptist Church, New York City, for the special use of that church. Something was desired smaller than the "Directory," and more full than the "Star Book," embracing certain features of the "Short Method." When completed, it was thought to be, on the whole, so much superior to anything ever before prepared, as a manual for general use in Baptist churches, that by mutual consent, it was decided to have it published for general circulation, rather than confine it to the use of a single church.

To both ministers and members, such a manual, it is hoped, will prove a valuable helper in the interest of church order, and of denominational unity and prosperity. Especially for the younger members, so many thousands of whom are yearly admitted to the fellowship of the churches, with an unlimited franchise, while but imperfectly instructed as to either doctrines or order, it should prove a most valuable assistant. Concise and accurate in statement of facts, transparent in arrangement of matters, convenient in form, and cheap in cost, pastors will find it to their own advantage, as well as to that of their members, to see that their churches are liberally supplied

with copies. The pastor of one of our very largest and most prosperous churches, for whose use its preparation was undertaken, shows his estimate of its value, and sets other pastors a wise and worthy example, by ordering in advance of publication, *one thousand copies* for his church.

May the divine blessing make this, as other works have been made, a means of furthering good order, spiritual vitality, and efficient service for Christ, in the churches for which it is designed.

Mount Vernon, N. Y.,  
January 24, 1890.

E. T. H.

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CHAPTER I.

A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE word "church" is, in common language, used with large latitude of meaning. It is applied to a building used for Christian worship, to a congregation of Christian worshipers, to a religious establishment, to a given form of ecclesiastical order, to the aggregate of all Christian believers, and to a local company of Christian disciples associated in covenant for religious purposes. The latter is its common use in the New Testament.

The Greek word *ekklesia*, rendered "church" is derived from a word meaning