

Texas Baptists Committed

May 2000

Reflections on the Baptist Faith and Message

**2000 TBC Annual Convocation
July 14-15 • Corpus Christi**

Reflections on the Baptist Faith and Message will be the theme for this year's Texas Baptists Committed annual convocation. The convocation is always a non-political event designed to give TBC supporters a 24-hour time of fellowship, encouragement and spiritual direction.

Already there is some anticipation about this year's theme as the convocation will follow the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention which will hear from a committee which will recommend changes to the Baptist Faith and Message. The committee chaired by Adrian Rodgers is expected to make recommendations that will support the prevailing political agenda of SBC leadership. The Baptist General Convention of Texas has voted to remain mainstream as they have passed resolutions supporting the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message.

The meeting will begin with a banquet at 6 p.m., Friday, July 14, at the Ramada Inn Bayfront Hotel in Corpus Christi. William L. Hendricks, consultant to the Baptist Studies Program at the Brite Divinity School of Texas Christian University, will be the keynote



Keynote Speaker

William L. Hendricks

In this special issue!

A historical perspective of the SBC takeover by fundamentalists from previous TBC articles



speaker. Special music will be provided by Nancy Lanmon Cooke of Corpus Christi. She is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and has recently returned from studying in England.

Other featured speakers, reservation forms and program are on pages 26-27. Mail-in reservations are preferred, but phone reservations will be accepted through our office beginning July 1 by calling 915-659-4102. Reservations also may be made on our web site at txbc.org.

FREE CHILD CARE for pre-kindergarten children will be available at FBC, Corpus Christi. Call our office so we can reserve a place for your child.

Rooms are available at the Ramada Inn Bayfront, 601 N. Water Street, for \$70. Call the Ramada at 361-882-8100 and ask for the Texas Baptists Committed block of rooms. Plan now to attend and encourage others from your church to join us for this outstanding program and warm experience of fellowship!

Let the BGCT Speak for Itself on Controversial Issues

By Billy Spencer, Pastor, FBC Brady



**Tri-Chair, TBC
Billy Spencer**

Lies continue to circulate in fundamentalist rhetoric about the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Using guilt by association fundamentalist publications paint BGCT leaders as not believing the Bible and as supporters of homosexuality and abortion. These publications, however, do not present the truth. The BGCT has taken positions on each of these issues. Those who want the truth instead of propaganda should let the BGCT speak for itself.

As churches make decisions about partnerships in reaching our state and our world for Christ, they will need to consider trust. Can we trust what they say? Can we trust they will do what they say?

I cannot trust groups like fundamentalists, who make blatantly false, misleading and self

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serving accusations.

I also find it hard to understand other non-aligned leaders who remain silent knowing rumors against BGCT leaders are false. I am glad to be a part of TBC because it has the integrity to respond. These are Baptists whom I can trust. I can serve beside them to reach our world with the life changing gospel of Jesus Christ.

To help those who do not know what the BGCT has said on some controversial issues, perhaps statements from the Committee on Baptist Integrity will help.

Statements from the Committee on Baptist Integrity may help inform others about the BGCT's position on controversial issues. Excerpts from their report in the October 6, 1999 issue of *The Baptist Standard* follow.

2. The BGCT view of scripture.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas always has given reverence and respect to Holy Scripture, believing it to be divinely inspired and authoritative for faith and practice for Christians and churches. In 1980 the BGCT passed a motion that affirmed the Baptist Faith and Message adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 as the guideline for doctrinal beliefs. It is noted that the preamble to the 1963 statement states, "the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over conscience."

The first item listed under Values in the Texas 2000 plan is "Biblical Authority." The BGCT is committed to the truth of the Bible. The statement about the Bible in the 1963 "Baptist Faith and Message" is as follows: "The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is a record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error for its matter." Charges that the BGCT lacks commitment to biblical authority are unfounded.

3. The BGCT stance on homosexuality.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas has spoken very forthrightly on the matter of homosexuality.

In 1982 the convention approved in annual session the statement, "The homo-

sexual lifestyle is not normal or acceptable in God's sight and is indeed called sin."

In 1996, the convention approved a committee report on homosexuality that declared, "The Bible teaches that the ideal for sexual behavior is the marital union between husband and wife and that all other sexual relations—whether premarital, extramarital, or homosexual—are contrary to God's purposes and thus sinful. Homosexual practice is therefore in conflict with the Bible."

In 1998 the BGCT Executive Board subsequently approved a recommendation from the Administrative Committee that financial contributions from a church that had endorsed a practicing homosexual as a deacon be declined.

Therefore be it resolved that we strongly urge this convention and Texas Baptists to continue to publicly oppose any type of abortion as a means of birth control." —1996 Resolution

The BGCT, while advocating ministry to homosexuals, has stated clearly "the homosexual lifestyle is not acceptable behavior for Christians."

Several Texas Baptist leaders have been maligned through guilt by association tactics. The views of these men are readily available with a telephone call or letter. They are as follows:

Jerold McBride, Pastor of First Baptist Church of San Angelo; president, BGCT, 1994-95: "God's Word strongly condemns homosexuality as a sin. Both Old and New Testaments make it crystal clear that such conduct is unacceptable to God. Our Christian response should be one of uncompromisingly opposing homosexuality while at the same time unquestionably loving the homosexual and unceasingly seeking to lead the homosexual to Jesus Christ who alone can rescue that person from this sin.

"I firmly believe that a person chooses this lifestyle rather than being a helpless victim of circumstances, genetics or any other factor. I do not believe one who follows this lifestyle should serve in any place of leadership in the church, be it pastor, staff member, deacon, Sunday School teacher or any other place of service. I also hold this view in reference to any person

who is living in such a manner as to bring reproach to the cause of Christ.

"With all my heart I believe that the things that are impossible with man are possible with God and that if the person (homosexual or heterosexual) is in Christ Jesus, old things are passed away and all things become new. Christ alone is the answer to this problem and to every other problem."

Russell H. Dilday, Jr. President of the BGCT: "According to the Bible, God's ideal for sex in marriage is one man, one woman in a monogamous relationship for life. Any divergence from ideal is contrary to God's will and therefore sinful. Homosexual practice is a perversion of God's plan and is described in the Bible as an abominable sin. Of course, there are other perversions, such as adultery and premarital sex, which the Bible also condemns as sexual sins.

"Churches are to be commended for witnessing and ministering to gays and lesbians, but should never condone homosexual lifestyle or behavior as legitimate. Churches should offer hope to homosexuals and all sinners that there is forgiveness, restoration and new life through faith in Jesus Christ. The scripture says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God... but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Herbert H. Reynolds, chancellor, Baylor University: "I believe that each of us has various propensities that are sinful, unwise and unhealthy. An individual may have homosexual tendencies, but he or she has a choice to either repress those urges or give expression to them. Their decision will determine their destiny. In other words, I believe that if an individual chooses to be an active homosexual that he or she is acting in a sinful, unwise and unhealthy fashion; whereas, if an individual does not give active expression to his or her homosexual urges, then they have acted wisely and are without sin in this area of their lives."

James R. "Dick" Maples, coordinator, Office of Minister/Church Relations, BGCT; president BGCT, 1992-93: "I believe all homosexual practice to be outside the will of God and unacceptable in both male and female relationships. It clearly violates the teachings of Scripture and should be identified as a sin against God. I reject completely the notion that homosexuality is an acceptable alternative lifestyle and believe it to be a perversion of the gift of God in human sexuality.

“There are individuals who are latent homosexuals who chose to remain sexually chaste, just as there are heterosexuals who have made similar commitments. The sin is not in having sexual thoughts or urges, but in the practice of immoral behavior. Being physically attracted to others is not evil, but sexual relationships outside of the marriage relationship of one man and one woman are clearly forbidden by the Scriptures and should be rejected by all Christians.

It is difficult to understand other leaders who know that what is said about the BGCT leadership is false and yet they remain silent.

“We must never lose sight of the basic truth that Jesus died for all, and it is our responsibility to share the gospel of salvation with all people, both heterosexual and homosexual, and to seek to lead them to redeeming faith in Jesus Christ.”

Charles R. Wade, pastor, First Baptist Church of Arlington; president, BGCT, 1996-97: “The statement that we approved in 1996 while I was president of the convention fairly states my position. I have preached and believed that homosexual behavior is sinful. I believe in a gospel of forgiveness and in the power of God’s Spirit to give courage to overcome temptation and in the power to change. Christians must always reach out to those who do not live by scriptural standards, which includes us all.

“Our church has opened our facilities to Living Hope Ministries, which is affiliated with Exodus International and is led by a dedicated core of men and women who are strugglers in their bout against homosexual behavior. We are convinced that even as we identify homosexual behavior as sin we also want to create a safe, nurturing environment where those who struggle with these temptations and isolations it brings can have a place to recover and to find strength and courage to live full and confident lives.”

W. Winfred Moore, director, Center for Ministry Effectiveness, Baylor University; pastor emeritus, First Baptist Church of Amarillo; president, BGCT, 1984-85: “My preaching from the pulpit of First Baptist Church of Amarillo was, I think, clear and strong against homosexuality—that it is a

sin. I take the Scripture very seriously (for example, Lev. 18:22-23; Romans 1).

“At no time have I ever held or expressed a different view on homosexuality. At the same time, I have always believed and so expressed in sermon that God forgives this sin as He does all other sins; and in sermon I offered help from professionals in my city to anyone who wanted it and would call for the names of the professionals who would help them.

“I believe that homosexuality is, according to my understanding of scripture, a sin. I believe these sinners, like all others, are the objects of God’s love and He will forgive. I have never held or stated any other view.”

David R. Currie, director, Texas Baptists Committed: “Homosexual activity is sinful as I understand the written word of God. All persons are sinful as I understand the written word of God. Practicing homosexuals should not be elected leaders nor should persons practicing greed, hatred, anger and prejudice (as a lifestyle) be church leaders. The church must balance Christ’s call and example of treating sinners with grace and love while affirming biblical morality and the truth that things are clearly right and wrong.”

Phil Lineberger, pastor, Williams Trace Baptist Church of Sugar Land; president, BGCT, 1990-91: “I do not believe homosexual activity is natural or biblically acceptable, but I do believe people who have these tendencies need to be treated with respect as human beings created in the image of God.”

Phil Strickland, director, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission: “I believe that the Bible teaches that homosexual practice is inconsistent with Christian living. The Bible teaches the same about adultery, vengefulness, greed, self-righteousness and an unforgiving spirit. This is to say that while homosexual practice is sin, it is not the only sin, but one sinful practice among many which estrange us from God. We follow Jesus as we welcome all sinners to repent, to receive the forgiveness of God and to enter into the fellowship of God’s people.”

11. The BGCT position on abortion.

Texas Baptists are opposed to abortion.

In 1980, the convention passed a resolution reaffirming the “view of scripture of the sacredness and dignity of all human

life, both born and unborn, and...that we favor appropriate legislation prohibiting abortion except to save the life of the mother or in cases of incest or rape.”

In 1982, the convention reaffirmed the 1980 position, adding, “and that we also support and will work for legislation which will prohibit the practice of infanticide.”

In 1986 a convention resolution encouraged “all Texas Baptist institutions, cooperating churches and members to work diligently to support counseling, housing, adoption placement services and appropriate health care for women in crisis pregnancy, emphasizing a reconciled relationship with Jesus Christ...”

In 1991, a resolution stated, “...the messengers of this convention urge Texas Baptists to oppose the practice of elective abortion; and...that we urge Texas Baptist individuals and members to communicate effectively the Biblical instructions concerning sexual responsibility and sanctity of life.”

The BGCT has spoken very forthrightly on the matter of homosexuality.

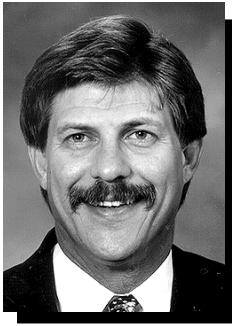
In 1996, a resolution stated, “Whereas abortion as a means of birth control violates the sacredness of human life; and...Whereas more recently the procedure of partial birth abortion and the development of new drugs that will induce spontaneous abortions compound the tragedy of abortion as a means of birth control; Therefore be it resolved that we strongly urge this convention and Texas Baptists to continue to publicly oppose any type of abortion as a means of birth control.”

In 1997 a motion was approved to “condemn partial birth abortion.”

In 1998, the convention approved a resolution on parental notification, stating, “Whereas under current Texas law...abortions can be performed on children without their parents’ knowledge...Be it therefore resolved that the Baptist General Convention of Texas...express support for legislation which would require parental consent 48 hours before any abortion could be performed on a minor child; and...Be it finally resolved that Baptists teach our children the values and biblical mandate of chastity before marriage, the sanctity of life and the tragedy and sin of elective abortion.”

**Fear, Conviction
and Kamikaze
Pilots**

By
David R. Currie,
Coordinator



I enjoy watching fascinating shows on cable TV's history channel.

Japanese Kamikaze airplane pilots recently were portrayed sacrificing their lives by flying their planes into American ships during World War II. Pilots, believing in the dominance of their country around the world, preceded their flights with a religious ritual. Rightly or wrongly, the depth of their convictions cannot be questioned.

We should be used to guilt by association by now, but once again, another missile has been discharged against Mainstream Baptists Committed in Missouri, the group patterned after Texas Baptists Committed. The attack also took aim at Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, TBC and me.

The assault was launched by—you guessed it—none other than Roger Moran, director of Missouri Baptists Laymen's Association. The 16-page document, with 154 footnotes, attacked Mainstream Baptists Committed for being a sister organization of TBC, CBF and me because I serve on the CBF Coordinating Council and the board of The Interfaith Alliance.

Some seriously question whether Moran is the author, due to his background. Whoever wrote it, I have to give him credit for being a person of conviction. The writer is mean, implies things that are not true, twists truths to make false accusations—but, he is a person of conviction. Rightly or wrongly, fundamentalists are people of conviction. They are like kamikaze pilots, willing to give their all for their cause.

In case you doubt that assessment, think about Paige Patterson's, Richard Land's and R. Albert Mohler's responses to messengers refusing to endorse the revised Baptist Faith and Message at last year's BGCT convention.

They accused Texas Baptists of not believing the Bible. They honestly believed it and said it, regardless of consequences. They are as strongly convinced of their opinions as Kamikaze pilots were of theirs. Seemingly, they care only about their convictions and gaining control of all of Bap-

tist life. Texas Baptists sent over \$40 million last year to support SBC undertakings, but these men voiced their conviction anyway... so what if Texas Baptists get offended?

Asking the Fear Question

Now consider conservative/moderates—do we have the same level of conviction? Not a chance. We always ask the FEAR question. "How is this going to affect my church? How many churches will the BGCT lose if we take this action? We do not want to rock the boat. We do not want to have any conflict in our local church." We ignore our convictions because of our fear of the consequences.

It is time to act
out of conviction
rather than fear.

The Kingdom of God suffers and more people are lost. The Baptist name is tarnished as Mohler says one stupid thing after another. Land speaks for Baptists in Washington, D.C. Jerry Falwell is a hero to leaders in the SBC. Meanwhile, more money is needed for students to train in our new seminaries as traditional Baptist ministers. Buckner Benevolences needs more money to change lives through social ministries such as their seriously underfunded adoption program. And many Baptist preachers across the country have not said one word for 20 years and most never will!

Why is this the case? Lacking courage, we do not follow our convictions. We live in fear. We are more concerned with people thinking we are "nice people" than we are in doing what is right. Some of us are so anxious for peace that we are willing to say and do anything (or *not* say or do anything). Many will give the SBC leadership what they want—*total submission*—rather than say a word that someone might consider "divisive."

There is a choice

TBC supporters have a choice. We can allow fear to continue to control the actions of the BGCT or we can have as much courage as the Kamikaze pilots. We know fundamentalism is wrong. We know sending money to support SBC endeavors, except foreign missionaries, is poor steward-

ship, but we keep doing it. We feel we must never abandon our missionaries, but we need to know how to really help.

We continue giving because we are afraid not to. We are fearful some churches will stop supporting the BGCT. We are scared that doing what is right will divide our church or state convention.

Fundamentalists do not share this fear. They do not mind splitting their local church for the cause. They are willing to pay the price for what they believe. They are people of conviction, not fear. They will dominate SBC life forever unless they are resisted by real Baptists with MORE conviction for Jesus and Baptist Principles than we now have.

Look at recent events. The Baptist Faith and Message statement is being used as a creed and will soon be rewritten to the point that it no longer is a Baptist document. Land fights the historic definition of religious liberty Baptists have held for hundreds of years. Mohler attacks people of other faith perspectives and now attacks Baptists most cherished doctrine, soul competency (*see page 8*).

The SBC has become an independent fundamentalist convention because current leadership fails to affirm Baptist principles like our Baptist forefathers.

It promotes exactly what Jerry Falwell promoted when he was an independent fundamentalist. And yet most Baptist state convention leaders, Directors of Missions and pastors urge everyone to ignore these truths, reveal no conviction and keep the peace.

TBC supporters, we have not worked the past 10 years to continue to support fundamentalism. It is time to start a new dream of building the Kingdom of God without fundamentalism. It is time to act out of conviction rather than fear. It is time to go forward, ignoring the consequences.

Southern Baptists' part in the Kingdom of God is at stake. No future for Texas Baptists lies in the SBC. It is dead as we know it.

We are dealing with Kamikaze pilots. If American sailors in WWII had stood on their ships and said, "I can't shoot that plane down because it is being flown by a man created in the image of God just like me. He probably has a family just like me, or at least a Mommy and Daddy. I can't shoot him down," and refused to respond with conviction, every American ship in the Pacific would have been sunk and we might all speak Japanese today.

We won that war because we had the

Texas has not moved!



Speech by Betty Rutledge at the BGCT meeting in Austin, 1997, Messenger from North Baptist Church, McKinney

Editor's Note: Reprinted from December 1997 TBC newsletter.

The Effectiveness/Efficiency Committee has been given the challenge of dealing with a tragic reality that someone in Baptist life has moved off true center in cooperative sharing of the Gospel.

The Texas convention has not moved to exclude from planning and policy making those individuals and congregations whose generous contributions to Baptist work are readily accepted.

The Texas convention has not moved its leadership selection process to a self-appointed group of power brokers.

The Texas convention has not moved toward a purge of dedicated denominational employees through forced terminations and firings, because they held to convictions of conscience.

The Texas convention has not moved to a practice of closed meetings, security guard and restricted sharing of information.

It would be irresponsible of Texas Baptists to conduct our work in God's Kingdom as if nobody had moved, when someone has!

Currie, continued...

conviction to fight with everything we knew how to fight with. Adrian Rogers has declared — "We are at war!" As crazy as his words sound, we must take him seriously, or he and other SBC leaders will destroy the Baptist witness in America.

We must not live in fear. We must be people of conviction who will pay any price to serve Jesus and preserve the Baptist witness in America. It is time for Texas Baptists to show conviction and move forward. We will only reach a new, glorious future by following our convictions and Jesus Christ. Are you coming?

THE FRUITS OF NORRISISM

by L. R. Scarborough, circa 1924

Editor's Note: This article is an excerpt from "The Fruits of Norrisism," by L.R. Scarborough when he was president of Southwestern Baptists Theological Seminary.

This trace is a discussion of some of the fruits of an old cult under a new name. The following are some of the characteristics of this cult - Norrisism:

1. It is toward true religion what socialism and bolshevism are to politics and industry: wholly destructive in spirit and methods.

It thrives on sensationalism, misrepresentation and false accusations of good men and true causes.

2. It is anti-missionary and anti-institutional. It gives nothing to associational, state or home missions and only enough to foreign missions to get representation in the convention. It spends most of its money on itself — sometimes in court trials for perjury, arson and murder, and in sending our free literature seeking to destroy the causes other people try to build.

3. It thrives on sensationalism, misrepresentation and false accusations of good men and true causes. It masquerades under the cloak of anti-evolutionism, anti-modernism and anti-Catholicism in order to ride into public favor and cast poisonous suspicion on the leadership of the causes of constructive Christianity.

4. In its chief leadership it is the embodiment of autocratic ecclesiasticism. All the privileges and rights of the church heading up in the pastor.

5. It uses the pulpit, the press and the radio to create suspicion, to foment class prejudices and to vent its hatred again innocent personalities and institutions.

6. It divides and splits families, churches, associations and strikes its poisonous fangs at the brotherhood of Christianity.

7. It lowers the standards of right conduct, individual righteousness, ministerial ethics, personal integrity and gives to the world a false conception of the character, spirit and methods of Christianity.

8. The only people or causes it praises are those who bow down to its dictum or fail in any wise to cross its path.

9. The individual, the preacher or church who joins in sympathy with this cult will sooner or later cease to cooperate with the mission, educational or benevolent enterprises fostered by God's people.

10. It has some noble names upon the escutcheon of its false accusations and public misrepresentations: Carroll, Gambrell, McDaniel, McConnell, Mullins, C. V. Edwards, Brooks, Sampey, Groner, Ray, Robertson, Forrest Smith, Cullen Thomas, Truett and others—multitudes of false accusations, such as : infidelity, graft, heresy, theft and such like, and groundless insinuations have gone out against these good men for years.

This tract deals with only a few of these false and slanderous charges against these brethren. These are but sample - there are many others which are groundless as these. *Research for this article provided by Ron Ellison.*

A Book Worthy of Consideration

In the Name of the Father is an analysis of the persuasive strategies and loyalist rhetoric of the post-1979 Southern Baptist Convention. With a membership of more than 15 million, the SBC is the largest denomination in the South and the largest Protestant denomination in the United States.

In the Name of the Father: The Rhetoric of the New Southern Baptist Convention by Carl L Kell and L. Raymond Camp examine current leadership discourses on fundamentalism, inerrancy and exclusion because they characterize the new messages of the denomination.

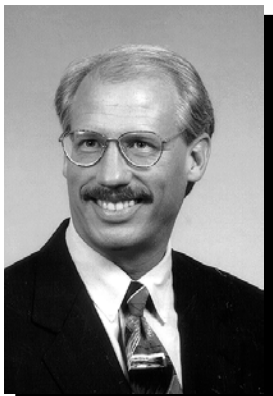
Baptist scholars trained in evaluating discourse, Kell and Camp write as insiders about the rhetoric that overpowered the voices of moderation at the 1979 Convention. They investigate the rhetoric of impassioned pleas for a cleansed denomination.

This book is available from the publisher, Southern Illinois University Press, 800-346-2680 or contact Dan Seiters at 618-453-6633.

Who moved, the Southern Baptist Convention or the Baptist General Convention of Texas?

History sheds light on the answer

Charles C. McLaughlin, Associate Coordinator



The conflict between moderate/conservatives and fundamentalists is not a fight between contemporary preachers. Attitude, belief and behavior differences are rooted in history.

One man stands out in the early history of Texas Baptists. He led malicious attacks on the BGCT, Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary.

When Baylor and Southwestern Seminary refused to teach according to his specifications, he accused them of doctrinal liberalism and denying the Bible.

From his church he sent out a paper, the *Fundamentalist*, that regularly attacked Texas Baptist leaders and institutions. In the 1920s J. Frank Norris was known for creating suspicion, circulating falsehoods and publicizing misleading implications.

SBC Opposes Norris

Norris's attacks motivated L.R. Scarborough, Southwestern's second president, to lead the way in unseating messengers at the state and associational meetings from the First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, where Norris was pastor. In a tract called *The Fruits of Norrisism*, Scarborough wrote against the destructive danger of Norris's attack of hatred against innocent personalities and institutions (see page 5). In 1948, the Southern Baptist Convention refused to seat Norris.

One historian cited that "when church trustees attempted to fire him, he fired all of the trustees and deacons. Six hundred members left the church, a move Norris

viewed as a 'purification process.'" In 1938, Norris formed the World Fundamental Baptist Mission Fellowship, a movement identified with independent non-Southern Baptists.

In 1979, following similar appeals against liberalism, an organized effort began a successful attempt at taking over the SBC. After 20 years, the changes continue to become self-evident.

Now there is another state convention, Southern Baptists of Texas, whose supporters are throwing the same rocks Norris used to attack the BGCT. Instead of the *Fundamentalist*, we have *Viewpoint*, a publication of the Missouri Baptist Laymen's As-

Billy Ramsey explained: "I feel if J. Frank Norris were here today and saw the direction the SBC was moving, he would vote with us to reunite with Southern Baptists."

sociation, mailed out by a Baptist church in Mineral Wells, Texas. They echo the same cry of liberalism, the same twist of information to present false implication, the same attacks to create suspicion. Only now, the attacks are supported by the SBC, because it is dominated by fundamentalists.

In fact, the SBC has so radically changed that the independent Baptists are now at home. In 1998 Jerry Falwell and some of his church members attended the SBC as messengers. Falwell said he and his church have always been identified with the independent fundamentalist Baptist movement, which was founded by the late J. Frank Norris.

"Now there is no reason at all for any Bible-believing independent conservative Baptist church not to become a part of the SBC," Falwell said.

One reason Falwell gave for participating in 1998 was to vote for his close friend, Paige Patterson, as convention president. SBC President Patterson has apparently received his wish expressed in a 1994 speech in Virginia, "We keep hoping that Uncle Jerry will come our way."

SBC embraces Norris

This week, officials of the North American Mission Board announced that it will

partner with Falwell's church, Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., to start a "flagship" church in Chicago's northern suburbs. Thomas Road and NAMB each will be funding \$250,000 for a flagship church over a two-year period.

The hope is for the Chicago church to become a mega-church and then for it to start other churches in the region. The church planter, who will pastor the church, is a member of Thomas Road and finishing a doctoral degree at Falwell's Liberty University. Four other mega-churches, will be following the same plan in other cities. Do you think a moderate mega-church that gives to the SBC will be considered for

this program?

It is obvious that the SBC tent has shifted dramatically to the right. The BGCT is receiving criticism for not moving with the SBC. And it is Texas Baptists Committed that remains beside L.R. Scarborough in opposing Norrisite fundamentalism. Churches, associations and other state conventions will inevitably have to choose to go the way of Norris or remain with historic Baptist principles.

The choice is to go the way of Norris or remain with historic Baptist principles.

Be assured the SBC made its decision years ago and will never turn back. First Baptist Church of Fort Worth voted in 1990 to rejoin the SBC in light of the denomination shift. Pastor Billy Ramsey explained the decision, "I feel if J. Frank Norris were here today and saw the direction the SBC was moving, he would vote with us to reunite with Southern Baptists. This is an effort to complete the fight for the Bible started under Norris."

Why do traditional Baptists continue to fund an independent fundamentalist convention? It is not the BGCT that has moved!

NAMB taps Thomas Road for partnering to reach cities

By Jimmy Allen, *asst. editor of Biblical Reporter, news journal of the North Carolina state convention*

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Officials with the North American Mission Board are hoping today's mega-churches will beget mega-churches in other cities.

Five Southern Baptist churches thus far are partnering with the Southern Baptist Convention agency to start "flagship" or "regional" churches in four large cities with the ultimate goal of reaching every people group in those cities with the gospel.

Richard Harris, NAMB's vice president of church planting, said the sponsoring churches and NAMB each will be funding \$250,000 for a flagship church over a two-year period. Within five years, NAMB hopes the flagship churches will grow to the point they begin to plant other churches in their respective cities. NAMB's funding stops after two years.

"The basic thesis is that large churches know how to grow churches in cities and impact the cities," Harris said.

One of the mega-churches is 22,000-member Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., where Jerry Falwell is senior pastor. The church will be sponsoring a mission congregation in Chicago's northern suburbs.

"We're training 1,000 pastors right now."

—Jerry Falwell

"Church planting is the heartbeat of most of the Southern Baptist Convention churches I fellowship with," Falwell told the Biblical Recorder, a news journal for North Carolina Baptists. "Frankly, it's the only hope we have for our nation in the 21st century."

Thomas Road first affiliated with the SBC in 1997 through its financial support of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia state convention, although it maintains relationships with independent Baptist groups. Thomas Road plans to give at least \$100,000 to the Cooperative Program this year — the first year such gifts have come from the church's budget rather than designated contributions.

Falwell described the concept of NAMB's partnership with mega-churches as dynamic.

"It harnesses the awesome resources of the largest evangelistic movement in North America, if not the world," he said. The idea of a local church taking the lead in a church plant and NAMB providing the support is scripturally based, he said.

The other sponsoring churches and the cities where leaders will plant new churches: First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla. — Philadelphia; First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga. — Las Vegas; Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas — Boston; and First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas — Boston. About 15 other mega-churches are considering partnerships.

Two of the five sponsoring churches — Thomas Road and First Baptist, Woodstock — have already called a church planter to pastor the new churches.

In Lake County, just north of Chicago, 26 families have already expressed interest in participating in the church-planting project, Harris said. Church planter Kevin Garber, a Thomas Road member who is finishing a doctoral degree this spring at Falwell's Liberty University, plans to move to Chicago in May with his wife and three children.

Sponsor churches were asked to participate by NAMB during an annual meeting of mega-church pastors, said Doug Metzger, NAMB's director of strategic focus cities.

Thomas Road chose Chicago, Falwell said. "We have a strong television constituency in Chicago. Many, many write us wanting a good evangelistic, Bible-teaching church in the area," he said.

Southern Baptists have a presence in each of the cities where a flagship church is sought. For example, the Chicago area has four Baptist associations with more than 200 Southern Baptist churches. The largest of the four, Chicago Metro Baptist Association, is composed predominantly of African American and ethnic churches, Metzger said. The other three are in suburban areas to the north and west.

All four associations are working together on the church plant, he said. "It's created a marvelous partnership that never existed before," Metzger said.

Harris acknowledged some local churches might have animosities toward the church plants, thinking they will hurt their ongoing outreach. "We're not going there to harm. We're going there to try to help," Harris said.

Most of the existing churches have never grown to any significant number of members when compared with other churches in the area, Harris said. More than 200 churches in the Chicago area may seem like a lot, Metzger said. But the population of the Chicago area is 8.6 million. In contrast, Houston has a population of 4.2 million and 500 Southern Baptist churches.

Advantages of flagship churches are not only the financial resources, which are much larger than for a typical church plant, but the other types of support from the sponsoring church, Metzger said. The sponsors will send multiple mission teams on a continual basis for six months or a year, he said.

A Thomas Road member who is finishing a doctoral degree this spring at Falwell's Liberty University, plans to move to Chicago in May

Some members of the sponsoring churches may move to help with the church plant, Harris said. The churches can challenge lay people who work for national companies to relocate to the church plant area, and some are responding, he said.

The concept of flagship or regional churches is one part of a strategic plan for reaching large cities, Metzger said. Mission trips to these cities to sponsor block parties and to canvass neighborhoods to distribute tracts or "Jesus" videos also are planned, he said.

Thomas Road Baptist Church, since its founding in 1956, has sent out 2,100 former members who are now senior pastors, Falwell said. About half of them serve in churches they have started, he said.

In a 1998 interview about joining the SBC, Falwell noted Thomas Road's emphasis on starting new churches. "We're training 1,000 pastors right now," Falwell said. "Church planting is a major priority with me and has been all of my ministry. It is with Paige Patterson [president of the SBC and North Carolina's Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary], and we plan to coalesce with our graduates in planting a lot of new Southern Baptist churches."

Mullins scholars see Calvinism behind Mohler's speech

By Mark Wingfield
Managing Editor, *The Baptist Standard*

Al Mohler's criticism of E.Y. Mullins and the Baptist doctrine of soul competency has more to do with advancing a strict Calvinistic theology than with Baptist history, according to historians and theologians who have studied Mullins extensively.

Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., gave a Founders' Day address there March 30 in which he said Mullins, the seminary's fourth president, put Southern Baptists on a wrong course with his emphasis on personal experience and his advance of the doctrine of soul competency.

The speech mirrored Mohler's introduction to a 1997 reprint of Mullins' classic book, "The Axioms of Religion." In that introduction, Mohler warned that soul competency "serves as an acid dissolving religious authority, congregationalism, confessionalism and mutual theological accountability."

Soul competency is a belief that individual Christians are responsible to God for reading, understanding and living out God's word. It implies that no other human authority can dictate how an individual interprets Scripture or relates to God.

Mohler's criticism of Mullins and soul competency "is a back-door way again to get the Calvinistic agenda out there," said Alan Lefever, director of the Texas Baptist Historical Collection in Dallas.

Lefever and other Mullins scholars challenged Mohler's description of Mullins' theology as being weak on biblical authority.

The problem Mohler appears to have with Mullins, these scholars said, is that he departed from the more rigid form of Calvinism embraced by his predecessors.

The doctrine of soul competency—labeled by Mullins and later by Herschel Hobbs as the most distinctive belief of Baptists—does not fit well with strict Calvinism, added Russell Dilday, distinguished professor at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary and immediate past president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"The idea of soul competency is that nothing stands between us and God, that we can go directly to God without pope or priest," he explained. "That would contradict Mohler's view on Calvinism," which emphasizes the sovereignty of God to the

Mohler criticizes Mullins' influence and doctrine of soul competency

by Mark Wingfield

An "autonomous individualism" has "infected" the Southern Baptist Convention through the doctrine of soul competency and driven Southern Baptists of the 20th century away from biblical authority, Al Mohler said in a Founders' Day address at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary March 30.

Mohler, president of Southern Seminary and the SBC's visible spokesman on national TV, critiqued the influence of E.Y. Mullins, the seminary's fourth president, who served from 1899 to 1928. Mullins was the most visible Southern Baptist spokesman of the early 20th century, a shaper of Baptist theology and the driving force behind creation of the Baptist Faith & Message doctrinal statement in 1925.

Mohler currently serves on a committee charged with proposing revisions to the Baptist Faith & Message. Those revisions, which have not yet been enumerated publicly, are to be considered by messengers to the SBC annual meeting in June.

Soul competency is a belief that individual Christians are responsible to God for reading, understanding and living out God's word. It implies that no other human authority can dictate how an individual interprets Scripture or relates to God.

Both Mullins and Herschel Hobbs, chairman of the committee that revised the Baptist Faith & Message in 1963, called the doctrine of soul competency the most distinctive belief of Baptists. "The Baptist Faith & Message of Southern Baptists is based upon the competency of the soul in religion," Hobbs wrote in a 1971 book explaining the doctrinal statement.

exclusion of any need for personal experience.

One of the most controversial tenets of five-point Calvinism is that God predetermines which humans will be saved and which humans will be damned to hell. A related tenet teaches that those predestined to be saved—the elect—will irresistibly be drawn to faith in Christ and cannot choose otherwise.

"It is too male, too rationalistic and too authoritarian."

—Curtis Freeman

Mohler is part of a growing network of Southern Baptist Calvinists who want the Southern Baptist Convention to return to five-point Calvinism, which they cite as the doctrinal moorings of Southern Seminary's founders and some of the founders of the SBC itself.

Southern Seminary founders James Petigru Boyce and John Broadus embraced Calvinism, also known as Reformed theology or "the doctrines of grace."

While Mohler wants Southern Baptists

to return to the theology of Boyce and Broadus, Southern Baptists largely turned away from this theology for good reason, said Bill Leonard, a Baptist historian who previously taught at Southern Seminary and now is dean of the new divinity school at Wake Forest University.

"For one thing, they could not accept the damnation of infants," Leonard said. "They could not accept the idea of election. They rejected the Boyce/Broadus tradition of election and limited atonement. They turned away on the question of limited atonement toward general atonement."

General atonement is the belief that Christ's death on the cross was effective for all who would believe in him for salvation, with the implication that all people have equal opportunity to accept or reject Christ. Limited atonement is the belief that Christ's death on the cross was effective only for the elect, those predestined to salvation.

Leonard said Mohler is guilty of buying into a "fallacy of Baptist origins."

"There is an idea that there is one kind of Baptist history, one kind of Baptist identity and if we can find it, we can be real Baptists," Leonard explained. "The moder-

TBC welcomes three to serve as Tri-Chair leaders

Over the past 10 years Texas Baptists Committed has had two people share the load of leadership serving as co-chairs. TBC has always had the desire to have a broad base of shared leadership. This year three persons have been elected to serve, sharing mutual responsibilities for guiding TBC. **Billy Spencer, Jaclanel McFarland** and **John Cash Smith** will contribute articles to the newsletter. Each will serve on the administrative committee and preside at executive committee meetings and other TBC gatherings. TBC also has an advisory board consisting of over 1,600 members.

Spencer is the pastor of First Baptist Church, Brady, Texas. McFarland is an attorney and member of South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas. Smith is an attorney and member of First Baptist Church, Orange, Texas. They succeed Jerold McBride, pastor of FBC, San Angelo and Rudy Sanchez, pastor of Primera Iglesia Baptista, Dallas.

"I believe all TBC members are excited to have the excellent leadership that Billy Spencer, Jaclanel McFarland and John Cash Smith will provide in the coming year. Each has made numerous stands for traditional Baptist principles and practices," commented David Currie, coordinator of TBC.

Continued from page 8...

ates have that same fallacy at times, as do the conservatives.

"Historians have to keep reminding Baptists that they are the only post-Reformation people who began at both ends of the theological spectrum," he added. "This idea that there's one kind of Baptist and I know which kind it is, is to miss the point of the whole Baptist identity."

While Mohler makes much of the presumed change in direction at Southern Seminary from Broadus to Mullins, "the only true progression you see between Broadus and Mullins is the de-emphasis on Calvinism," Lefever said.

This change was in keeping with the changing view of Baptists at the time, he added.

During Mullins' tenure at Southern, Texas Baptists founded Southwestern Seminary, with B.H. Carroll as president. Carroll was a "modified Calvinist," Lefever said, who was followed in the presidency by L.R. Scarborough, a "whosoever will may come" evangelist.

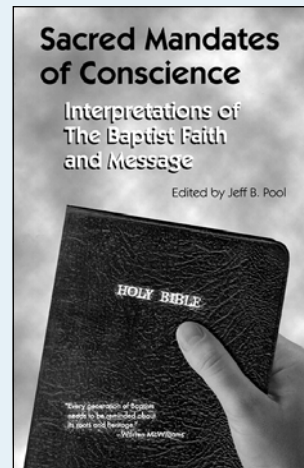
To suggest that Mullins opened the door to theological liberalism among Southern Baptists would be an "unfortunate misrep-

Soul competency is a belief that individual Christians are responsible to God for reading, understanding and living out God's word. It implies that no other human authority can dictate how an individual interprets Scripture or relates to God.

resentation," added Dilday, who wrote his doctoral dissertation on Mullins.

"This man spoke an orthodox Baptist view at a time when it was being questioned," he continued. "To attack this man whom, at his death, George Truett and others said was one of the greatest men who ever lived, is a cheap shot. Mullins probably was the most important Baptist apologist of the century."

Mullins must be understood in the context in which he lived and worked, Leonard



Smyth & Helwys published a book that we recommend: *Sacred Mandates of Conscience: Interpretations of The Baptist Faith and Message*, edited by Jeff B. Pool. Contributors include N. Larry Baker, Molly T. Marshall, Bill J. Leonard, Warren McWilliams and William R. Estep.

Sacred Mandates of Conscience may be ordered through Smyth & Helwys at 1-800-747-3016.

Book on Baptist Faith and Message Recommended

Because of the controversies surrounding the past and anticipated future changes of the Baptist Faith and Message (BFM) by the Southern Baptist Convention, we believe many of our readers might be interested in a book that expounds on this subject. In 1997,

said. "He was trying to come to terms with a changing world post-slavery, post-industrial revolution and new science.

"You can fault Mullins if you want to for no longer being helpful in a postmodern context, but had we continued in the Boyce/Broadus tradition, we would have remained a racist Southern sect. Mullins, for better or worse, was trying to get away from that."

Curtis Freeman, professor of Christianity at Houston Baptist University and a sometimes critic of Mullins himself, agreed with Leonard's point.

"As we assess the Mullins legacy, we may well find that soul competency has too much rugged individualism in it to reach a lonely postmodern culture of moral strangers," Freeman said. "Here we may find help in the 16th and 17th century Anabaptists and Baptists who emphasized the responsibility of each believer's priesthood within a community of disciples.

"However, I am not persuaded that going 'back to the future' with the (Calvinistic) orthodoxy of Boyce and the Princeton theology which birthed it offers a viable approach of relating the gospel to our culture," he said. "It is too male, too rationalistic and too authoritarian."

1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

SOUL COMPETENCY AND PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER

God is the Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. (God the Son) dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. (God the Holy Spirit's) presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer.



A Summary of the SBC Controversy: 1979 to 1994



*Pastor,
Baptist Temple,
Houston*

Paul Kenley

Editor's Note: In May 1994, we published the following article by Paul Kenley written to state as briefly as possible a summary of the SBC controversy. An update to this article covering 1995 to 2000 is found on page 13.

A Presupposition

This account begins with a basic presupposition: the Southern Baptist Convention, as we have known and loved—no longer exists. We must accept this fact in our own minds from the outset of this discussion. The SBC is now Baptist in name only. Historical Baptist heritage, polity, and principles are not believed in nor practiced by the current SBC leadership. As a result many of our most familiar terms can no longer be used as we have spoken of them previously. To say you are a “Southern Baptist” is likely to say something about you that is no longer accurate. To speak of the “Cooperative Program” no longer means the same thing that it once did when we spoke of it out of a love for missions. What has happened to so radically alter the makeup of our beloved convention?

A BRIEF HISTORY

Initial Objections

Southern Baptists were enjoying a boom period in the 1950s. Church growth was at its apex, and the denomination as a whole was attuned to its missions' enterprises. But one of Baptists' great attributes, their toleration of great diversity, ironically provided the environment for a takeover.

The champion of fundamentalism in the

first half of the 20th century was J. Frank Norris, the fiery pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Worth. His attitude and spirit were one of blatant contempt for Southern Baptists in general and for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in particular. He was known to send boxes of rotten fruit as Christmas gifts to seminary professors!

Because of Norris's well-publicized hot temper and his brash boldness in criticizing other evangelicals, most of those who agreed with him in his fundamentalist views shunned any identity or association with him publicly. He always had his followers within the SBC, but they remained in the closet until someone could legitimize their cause in a more public forum.

That opportunity came in the 1960s when Norris's charges of liberalism in Baptist schools found a more sympathetic ear among grassroots Southern Baptists. A few well-publicized, but isolated instances of what many considered to be blatant liberalism on SBC school faculties set the stage for fundamentalists to come out of the closet and make their case. Rather than cleansing the schools doctrinally, they took advantage of the unrest caused by the few disturbing cases, to wrest control of the SBC away from those in charge.

A Strategist for the Cause

In the late 1960s, Paul Pressler, a state appeals' court judge in Houston, began to look into the inner organizational structure of the SBC. He was seeking a way for one group to assert its will on the convention by taking over key positions of leadership.

He discovered that all power is vested in the president, who controls the makeup of the various boards and agencies through the appointment process. (see diagram on this page)

On a now famous audio tape entitled *Firestorm Chats*, Pressler proudly describes his discovery of how the convention's own structural make-up provided the only procedure necessary to effect a complete takeover of every board and institution. Once he had learned how to bring about the takeover, he just needed an inroad to the pastors of the 36,000+ SBC churches and a theological red flag to alarm the grassroots Baptist people.

This article is for the benefit of those just now being introduced to the twenty year-old controversy effecting the SBC and the BGCT.

The Pressler-Patterson Coalition

Pressler and Paige Patterson, then president of the Criswell Bible College, Dallas, met to plan their strategy at the Cafe du Mond in New Orleans in the early 1970s. Patterson, who had demonstrated an affinity for classical fundamentalism from his college days at Hardin-Simmons, took to pulpits across the convention as a conservative theologian.

He expressed his viewpoint that convention leaders in general, and seminary professors in particular, no longer believed that the Bible was the inerrant Word of God. He challenged Bible believers to join their cause claiming they would return the SBC to its true conservative roots. Patterson and Pressler made numerous visits to every major state convention during the months prior to the SBC annual meeting in June 1979 at Houston. They continued to do the same during the early 1980s as their movement gained strength. That year, fundamentalists elected Adrian Rogers of Tennessee, their first president.

Ironically, that same year, Southern Baptists adopted Bold Missions Thrust, a plan for spreading the gospel over the whole earth by the year 2000. Since then, presidents sympathetic to the fundamentalist agenda have been elected at all succeeding annual meetings: Bailey Smith, 1980-81; Jimmy Draper, 1982-83; Charles Stanley, 1984-85; Adrian Rogers, again 1986-87; Jerry Vines, 1988-89; Morris Chapman, 1990-91, and Ed Young, 1992-93.

Much deception has marked the movement. Sometimes it included an outright manipulation of the ballot box to protect the plan's momentum. At the 1985 convention, as in other annual meetings, parents registered small children as messen-

gers and then cast the children's ballots for them.

Annually, busloads of messengers would arrive for the convention, vote in a block with their bus captain and then leave. Many made the trip just to vote for president. Some convention meetings have required an early adjournment for lack of a quorum because thousands of messengers would arrive on busses on Tuesday morning, vote in the presidential election that afternoon, and then leave.

At San Antonio in 1988, many well-meaning messengers stood outside the convention center long before the doors were open to get a seat in the main hall, only to find that busloads of fundamentalist sympathetic messengers had been brought in through the back way and already occupied all the seats near the platform area. At the 1985 Dallas convention, the vote for president was so close that many suspect that a fallacious tabulation was announced, insuring that the takeover was not derailed.

The 1990 convention in New Orleans is viewed by many as the completion of the takeover. Moderate-conservatives made one, last-gasp effort to regain control of the presidency. But the platform was totally inaccessible, positioned in isolation in the center of the Superdome floor.

Well-meaning speakers voicing valid concerns were silenced in mid-sentence as their microphones were turned off. Daniel Vestal, then a pastor in Dunwoody, Georgia, was defeated by Morris Chapman in

the presidential race.

And through it all, Pressler was firmly ensconced on the platform, delighting in the success of his now complete takeover plan.

But how could great preachers, many of whom were well meaning, fall prey to such devious tactics of outright lies and manipulation?

Many had believed that the problem was a single people split into two factions, each trying to gain power over the other. But while power and control was a driving force, it was not the whole issue. Over the years, obvious philosophical and theological issues began to surface, hearkening back to the Norris movement decades before.

SOME TENETS OF FUNDAMENTALISM COUNTER TO TRADITIONAL BAPTIST PRINCIPLES

"The End Justifies the Means"

Fundamentalist religious causes from time immemorial have operated by this misguided principle. Conducting holy wars in the name of religion has inflicted tremendous injustices on humanity. This principle was used to justify ballot manipulation at various SBC meetings to insure control of

the outcome.

Trampling and besmirching reputations and destroying careers of many Southern Baptist key leaders became the name of the game. Fundamentalist control of the media resulted in the firing from Baptist Press of Al Shackleford, director and Dan Martin, news editor. The ouster of Lloyd Elder, president of the Sunday School Board, quickly followed. Pressured resignations grabbed Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern Seminary, Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, and most recently, the outright firing of Russell Dilday as the president of Southwestern Seminary. These men were fired or forced into early retirement not because they were liberal in their theology, but because they refused to bow to the demands of the political agenda first set out by Pressler and Patterson in the 1970s.

The Definition of a Liberal

To a fundamentalist, a liberal is anyone who does not agree with him. For instance, a basic tenet of fundamentalism is a premillennialist view of the return of Christ—a view which, while held by many Southern Baptists, is subject to varied interpretation. If one happens not to accept this basic fundamentalist interpretation, then his whole faith and experience are called into question.

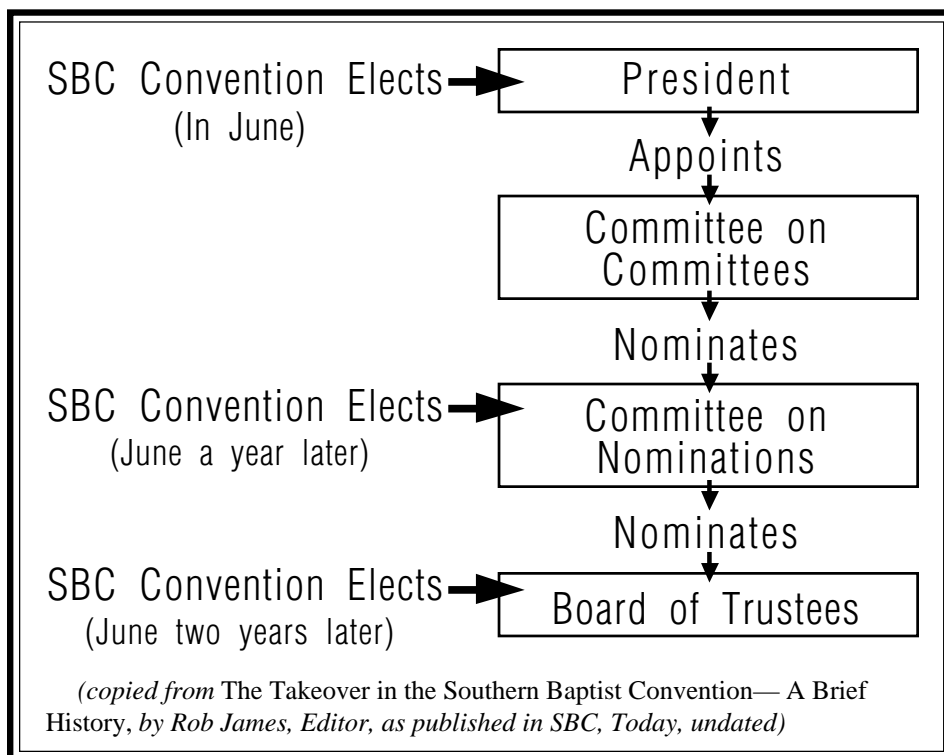
Classic liberalism denies the virgin birth of Christ, His vicarious death, His bodily resurrection and His imminent return. By these standards, there was not a true liberal leader in the entire SBC!

The Matter of Inerrancy

The fundamentalist claims to be an inerrantist, in that he believes that every word of the Scripture— one word following the next— is inspired, and thus penned by men under the direction of God. Most any evangelical will accept a fully inspirational view of Scripture, but the question arises, "What version of the Word is inerrant?"

Patterson has set a standard for the fundamentalists by saying that the original manuscripts or autographs were inerrant. The only problem with that is we have no original autographs! The bottom line is you are not an inerrantist unless you fall in line with certain prescribed interpretations of the Scripture.

Since no original autographs are extant, the King James Version, for most fundamentalists, has been substituted for the



originals! All this has the effect of turning the scripture into a creed and rules out individual interpretation.

The Priesthood of the Believer and Religious Liberty

Baptists have always believed that each individual Christian can discover the truth of God's Word under the leadership of His illuminating Holy Spirit. The fundamentalist, however, believes that the pastor-preacher is to be the sole authority of God's revelation to His people.

The fundamentalist agenda in its purest form discounts the separation of church and state, shuns a free press, and seeks to elevate its own brand of doctrinal and religious bent to the status of the law of the land.

It is interwoven into the very fabric of the Religious Right on today's political scene, and is bosom buddies with independent right-wing religious/political leaders such as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell. Six prominent SBC leaders serve on the Board of Trustees of Falwell's Liberty University. Falwell has endorsed all that has happened in the SBC in the past 15 years.

The Pastor as Ruler of the Church

If the pastor is the sole channel through which God conveys His truth, then he obviously is to be the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. This is perhaps the most "non-Baptist" belief of them all. Fundamentalist Baptist churches tend not to have business meetings and many of them have abolished all committees in favor of pastoral rule.

A Basic Difference in How We Do Missions

Under fundamentalist control, our Foreign Mission Board has departed from traditional approaches to mission work overseas in two basic areas:

1. Centralized Control

Traditionally, many decisions were made by the missionaries in the field because they know best the local culture and the needs of their particular assignments. The new philosophy is to have headquarters in Richmond make more of these decisions and more closely supervise missionaries. More decisions, therefore, are made by people who have less knowledge of local conditions.

2. The Missionary as Evangelist

Baptist philosophy has been that local people can witness to their neighbors better than an outsider can. As churches were started, pastors from that area or country were found, and churches were encouraged to start other churches.

In foreign countries, seminaries were established to educate leadership. The churches in foreign countries formed their own conventions and played an active role in spreading the Gospel. The new SBC leadership emphasizes the missionaries as evangelists, spreading the gospel by means of mass media, crusades, etc., thereby de-emphasizing local churches, conventions and seminaries.

This sends the subtle message to the local people that they are not considered capable of the task. Consequently, the SBC chose to totally defund Ruschlikon Seminary in Switzerland just at the time when the fall of the Berlin Wall signaled a new openness to the Gospel in Europe.

These two key changes in direction, coupled with the replacement of our best mind in foreign missions' leadership, Keith

Parks, must lead thinking Baptists to question the motivation of the Foreign Mission Board trustees who are the source of all these changes both functional and philosophical.

A Sad, But Challenging Conclusion

The SBC has departed so radically from traditional roots that many of us have been led to confess that while we are still Baptists and proud of it, we can no longer be called Southern Baptists in terms of denominational affiliation.

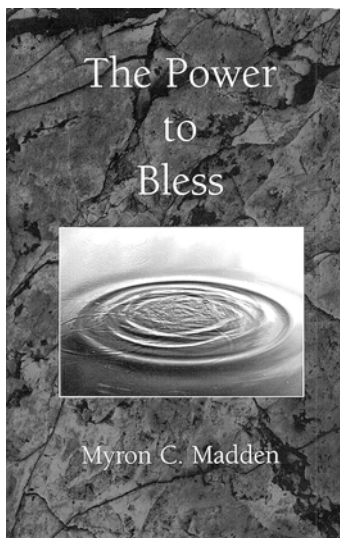
Tragically, we have allowed the election of leaders who have been willing to instantly surrender principles bought with the blood of our Baptist forefathers, many of whom came to this continent to freely exercise their faith.

For years we tried to defeat the takeover with our ballots at the conventions. We were unwilling, however, to use the fundamentalists' own political tactics so we failed to rescue the convention from its irreversible course toward a calamity.

1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

Voluntary Cooperation Among Churches

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as many best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner...



The Power to Bless

By Myron C. Madden

From my earliest memories I was alert to how family blessing was given and withheld; of how one particular child put the sparkle in the eye of one or the other parent; of my grandfather, who could never take delight in my father; and of how my father took delight in my next older brother but not in me. I set about to earn his blessing, a thing I learned was not possible. Working to get blessing is what to apostle Paul called "the curse of the Law."

So I worked under "the curse" until I learned that blessing was God's gift, intended for me if I could accept it. Accepting it freely was difficult. I didn't want to be obligated for something so wonderful. But there were no options. It left me sorrowful that I could not help my father loosen his grip and accept that he could not get my grandfather's blessing. He worked for it for 30 years after my grandfather died, not being aware of what drove him. I try to speak to these things in this book.

— Myron C. Madden

About the author:

Myron C. Madden has been a pastor, army chaplain, and director of hospital pastoral care. He was a clinical professor in the Department of Psychiatry of the Louisiana State University School of Medicine upon his retirement in 1985, and he now is a consultant and supervisor of clinical pastoral education.

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A Summary of the SBC Controversy: 1995 to 2000

by Paul Kenley,
Pastor, Baptist Temple, Houston

In 1995, the SBC's fundamentalist machine undertook the most massive reorganization in the convention's long history. It is known as "The Brister Report." It was as if they were trying to deliberately distance the convention from any of its historical roots.

Practically speaking, the transformation was so comprehensive that even the names of the most familiar SBC agencies were changed. The Foreign Mission Board became the International Mission Board (IMB); the Home Mission Board became the North American Mission Board (NAMB); and the most ironic misnomer of all, the Christian Life Commission became the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

Reorganization went far deeper than mere name-changing, not the least significant of which was the abolishing of the SBC Historical Commission. The Woman's Missionary Union was likened to an adulterous woman for publishing missions' materials for Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The charge of unfaithfulness in their marriage to the SBC, was leveled by IMB Chairperson John Jackson in 1995.

The indiscreet and inflammatory remarks further widened the division between the SBC and those they alienated. It was the initial step in an ever-increasing denigration of women that would culminate in the amendment of the Baptist Faith and Message in 1998.

The SBC further alienates traditional Baptists and diminishes its public witness every year at annual meetings. Such was the case in 1996 with what is now known as the infamous "Disney Boycott." This event was significant in that it sounded another neo-SBC theme the targeting of gays. When Disney World hosted a "Gay Pride Day," the SBC reacted by calling for a boycott of all Disney enterprises.

In addition to incurring the charge of homophobia from the nation's gay communities, the far-reaching effects of this action on Baptist life have been significant. The SBC's stance on homosexuality has almost replaced inerrancy as its battlecry. They charge moderates as being

soft on homosexuality, mainly because we do not single out homosexuality for political castigation over other kinds of immorality.

Though CBF and BGCT leadership have constantly repeated their stance that homosexuality is a sin, propaganda from those speaking on behalf of the SBC continue to describe moderates as pro-gay.

Three Significant Events

At its 1998 annual meeting in Salt Lake City, three significant events occurred that solidified the SBC's steadfast course to the right.

Though CBF and BGCT leadership have constantly repeated their stance that homosexuality is a sin, propaganda from those speaking on behalf of the SBC continue to describe moderates as pro-gay.

First, Patterson, an original architect of the takeover, was elected president, thus, forever proving that no broadening of the tent or any kind of movement back to the center was possible.

Secondly, Falwell, the chief spokesman of independent fundamentalists in America, attended the meeting as a messenger for the first time, proving that the SBC had now moved far enough to the right to serve as a comfortable home for even the most radical fundamentalists.

Thirdly, the convention adopted the previously-mentioned family amendment to the Baptist Faith and Message, which had not been amended in 35 years. The amendment, which called all women to graciously submit to their husbands, bears huge implications that extend far beyond the traditional family.

Strong opposition to the ordination of women, or any involvement of them in leadership roles in the church, is an underlying

premise of the amendment. Choices concerning women traditionally have been a local church option.

A motion affirming the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement passed at the Nov. 1999 session of the BGCT resulted from the SBC's action. That action against women served to clarify the BGCT's opposition to the direction the SBC has gone in the past 21 years.

The Texas body, thus, has become the target of numerous misinformation campaigns, characterizing Texas Baptist leaders as pro-homosexual and pro-abortion. Revelation of the ugly underbelly of the fundamentalists' willingness to resort to anything to have their way can be credited to the campaigns, perhaps more than to any other single factor.

The most visible of these organized attacks has been leveled by a group known as the Missouri Laymen's Association. Led by Roger Moran, the group has spent huge sums of money to flood churches with propaganda denigrating BGCT and CBF leaders. The movement has become so public that the Texas Baptist Executive Board elected a special committee to respond to the unfounded charges.

A move by a group of pastors in Texas for reconciliation has at this point failed to take hold mainly because reconciliation requires the participation of both parties in a conflict. Since SBC leaders have made their intolerance of other viewpoints clear, one cannot help but conclude that acquiescence and submission are the only terms they will accept in any move toward reconciliation.

Had it not been for David Currie and Texas Baptists Committed, the BGCT would have fallen victim to the SBC takeover years ago. The TBC movement has proven that resistance, while at times unpleasant, has not only been effective, but absolutely critical. May we increase our resolve to further protect both our freedom and our faith.

The documentation for this update is found in the 1999 edition of The Fundamentalist Takeover in the Southern Baptist Convention: A Brief History by Rob James, Gary Leazer, and James Shoopman, published by Impact Media, Timisoara, Romania.



Chronology of Major Events in the Controversy

by *Charles McLaughlin, TBC Associate Coordinator*

1967 — Seminary Doctoral student Paige Patterson and Judge Paul Pressler meet at Cafe du Monde in New Orleans and discuss a long term strategy for fundamentalist domination of the Southern Baptist Convention.

1974 — The Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship identifies inerrancy of the Bible as the issue to be used in their struggle against moderates and liberals in the SBC.

1979 — Patterson, Pressler and others run a “get out the vote” campaign in 15 states prior to the Convention, urging a defeat of ‘liberalism’ in the SBC.

Voters are bussed to the convention in mass numbers but leave after the vote for president.

Fundamentalist pastor Adrian Rogers is elected president.

1980 — Judge Pressler publicly announces the strategy of the fundamentalist takeover, which is to elect the SBC president a sufficient number of times to gain a fundamentalist majority on the boards and agencies of the Convention. This is to be accomplished through the president’s power to make appointments. Pressler calls this, “Going for the jugular.” [Trustee turnover is accomplished in 1989.]

Fundamentalists successfully elect all presidents of the SBC from 1979 to present.

1985 — The SBC forms a “Peace Committee” to investigate the growing conflict and make recommendations for conflict resolution. Dominated by fundamentalists the committee fails to approach reconciliation. Cecil Sherman resigns from the committee in 1985, followed by Winfred Moore in 1986 because he did not feel he could participate in a “police committee.”

1986 — The Home Mission Board trustees become majority fundamentalist. The trustees bar women from receiving pastoral assistance in mission churches supported by HMB.

Seminary presidents attempt peace in the “Glorietta statement” but to no avail.

1987 — The Peace Committee report is adopted, recommending that hiring practices of boards and agencies reflect “the most commonly held beliefs” in the denomination. Moderates charge that Creedalism becomes official SBC policy through this action.

The Southeastern Board of Trustees becomes majority fundamentalist. They take the Faculty out of the process for hiring new instructors, and place this power solely in hands of the president, who must use the Peace Committee document as a doctrinal guide for hiring.

President of Southeastern Seminary, Randall Lolley, resigns in protest.

HMB votes to forbid missionary appointment to persons who speak in tongues and divorced persons, unless the divorce falls within strict “Biblical guidelines.”

1988 — HMB uses the Peace Committee report to enforce creedalism in hiring practices.

The SBC meeting in San Antonio passes a resolution elevating strong pastoral authority and denigrating the priesthood of all believers by a vote of 10,950 to 9,050.

Richard Land, a fundamentalist leader, becomes President of the Christian Life Commission.

The Foreign Mission Board fires moderate missionary Michael Willett after a fundamentalist missionary reports on Willett’s opinions.

1989 — Fundamentalist leaders give the Christian Life Commission greater responsibility for dealing with church/state issues, in order to circumvent working with the more moderate Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

1990 — Southern Seminary Board of Trustees becomes majority fundamentalist. Trustees give students permission to openly tape classes.

Trustee Jerry Johnson of Colorado accuses Southern Seminary President Roy Honeycutt and many faculty of heresy.

Baptist Press editors Al Shakleford and Dan Martin are fired by the SBC Executive Committee due to their reporting on the fundamentalist takeover effort and their refusal to cease writing such stories. Associated Baptist Press is formed in order to maintain a free press for Baptist news.

Daniel Vestal calls a national level meeting of moderate Baptists in Atlanta. 3000 people show up and vow to meet again the next year. This will be the birth of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

1991 — Southeastern Seminary publishes new statement of purpose and the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy becomes official policy.

Moderate Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder is forced to resign due to a hostile board of trustees. Fundamentalist leader Jimmy Draper becomes President of the Sunday School Board.

The Foreign Mission Board votes to defund Rushlikon Seminary in Europe because of liberal professors.

6000 Baptists in Atlanta formally organize the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Moderates no longer offer an alternative candidate for President of the SBC.

1992 — Paige Patterson becomes President of Southeastern Seminary.

Career missionary and President of the Foreign Mission Board, Keith Parks, resigns in protest against a hostile fundamentalist board of trustees. Parks becomes missions director for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

1993 — President of Southern Seminary, Roy Honeycutt, resigns due to a hostile fundamentalist board of trustees. Al Mohler, a leading fundamentalist, becomes President of Southern Seminary.

The SBC votes to cease giving funds to the Baptist Joint Committee for Public Affairs, because it will not cooperate with the fundamentalist agenda to restore publicly-led prayer in schools, government vouchers to attend religious schools and other right

wing political/religious goals.

Fundamentalists attempt to refuse seating for messengers from the church where President Clinton has his church membership.

The Southern Baptist Convention affirms a report critical of membership in Freemasons.

Gary Leazer is fired from the Home Mission Board for explaining the meaning of that vote to Masons at a Masonic meeting.

1994 — SBC Executive Committee leaders command SBC Seminaries to cease hosting booths at Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meetings.

Moderate Professor Molly Marshall is forced to resign from Southern Seminary.

A Hostile board of fundamentalist trustees at Southwestern Seminary fire President Russell Dilday and change the locks on his office.

SBC meeting in Orlando votes to refuse CBF funds designated for Missionaries and other SBC agencies.

SBC Executive Committee requests that State Conventions cut all ties to CBF.

1995 — Diana Garland is fired as Dean of Carver School of Social work by seminary president, A1 Mohler.

FMB President Jerry Rankin sends a letter to 40,000 pastors and Women's Missionary Union Directors, urging them to pray that the National WMU would cease cooperating with the CBF.

John Jackson, then chair of the Board of Trustees for the FMB, compares the WMU's cooperation with the CBF with the acts of an adulterous woman.

1996 — Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia form into rival state convention, in protest at the moderate nature of the existing state Association (convention), which cooperates with the CBF and other moderate Baptists.

Southwestern Seminary president Ken Hemphill cancels edition of its theological journal, editor and professor Jeff B. Poole removed from teaching.

1997 — The Carver School of Social Work is cut from the curriculum at Southern Seminary and transferred to another college.

Paul Debusman, librarian at Southern for 35 years, is fired over the content of a personal letter to Tom Ellif, then the SBC President.

New Orleans seminary withdraws invitations to teach from two adjunct instructors due to their ties with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The 1997 SBC meeting in Dallas calls for a boycott of Disney Company and related companies, because of immorality in movies and business policies friendly to homosexuals.

1998 — There has been a 70% faculty turnover at Southern Seminary since 1991. Between 1992 and 1996, 42 employees had resigned, retired or were fired and three departments experienced complete turnover or loss of faculty.

Jerry Falwell attends SBC as a messenger for the first time and identifies SBC seminaries as "fundamentalist."

Fundamentalist Baptists in Texas formed Southern Baptists of Texas, to serve as a rival state convention in protest against the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

SBC passes a new article on the family as an amendment to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963. The amendment emphasizes female submission to the husband.

Paige Patterson, early leader of the fundamentalist takeover, is elected President of the Southern Baptist Convention.

1999 — Southwestern Seminary professors Alan Brehm and Dan Kent resign after the seminary requires faculty to sign off on the SBC amendment of the Baptist Faith and Message emphasizing female submission.

SBC Messengers commission a panel to re-examine the Baptist Faith and Message Statement, with a view toward revising it to reflect "unambiguous" fundamentalist language.

Midwestern Seminary trustees fire fundamentalist Mark Coppenger for "misappropriate anger."

Reorganization of SBC from 19 organizations to 12 does not result in larger budget percentages for "frontline missions." Instead the money went to the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, the seminaries and the Executive Committee.

Article adapted from the Fundamentalist Takeover in the SBC, by James, Leazer, and Shoopman. Book is available through the TBC office.

The Classic Baptist Heritage of Personal Truth

The Truth as It Is In Jesus

a book by Frank Louis Mauldin

Frank L. Mauldin has written a book that tells the story of the Baptist passion for personal truth, a story full of significance for understanding the identity and the integrity of Baptists, both past and present for encountering the personal truth itself. The book is a historical and systematic analysis of the theme of "the truth as it is in Jesus" in the writings of American and English Baptists in the 17th/18th centuries.

"The book documents and demonstrates that Baptists have always majored on experiential religion informed by the "Holy Word of God" and quickened by God's Spirit. Mauldin affirms that "Baptists defend the thesis that truth is someone real, not something true."

—James Dunn, Ex. Dir., Retired,
Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

Every Baptist should read this book. When Baptists emphasize "the truth," we grow. When we major instead on "truths," we lose ground and our soul."

—Clyde R. Majors, Southern Baptist Pastor and Emeritus
Professor of Bible, Ohio and Texas

Frank Mauldin is a professor of philosophy and religious studies at the University of Tennessee. The book is \$18.95 and available from the publisher at 1-800-321-5692.



Why We Left The SBC

by Luther C. Peak, 1956

Editor's Note: Following is an edited (for length, not content) version of four articles published in The Baptist Standard on April 7, 14, 21, and 28, 1956. Peak was the pastor, Central Baptist Church, Dallas, when he wrote this series, "Why We Left Fundamentalism—to Join Southern Baptists." Reprinted from May 1998 TBC Newsletter.

The mission of this message is to reach every young preacher, Sunday School teacher, active worker and individual Baptist who may be somewhat troubled and disturbed by the charges which are recklessly hurled at Southern Baptists, and who may be considering the possibility of leaving the denomination and affiliating with some splinter Baptist group.

Splinter groups are essentially and basically proselyting 'isms, growing largely upon the labors of Southern Baptists, from which "converts" are gathered by misrepresentation and misinformation.

It was impossible to work within the framework of Fundamentalism without being drawn into conflict with others.

I write with reference to Fundamentalism and with particular reference to Fundamentalism among Baptists, originating mainly in the Southwest, especially in Texas. I hasten to say, however, that I make a distinction between individual Baptists who are to be found within Fundamentalism and the movement of Fundamentalism itself. Some of the finest Christians I have ever known are in Fundamentalism.

Some of the most godly and consecrated preachers, Sunday School teachers and Christian workers are to be found in the ranks of Fundamentalism. I value their friendship and fellowship in the Christian faith. I have nothing but goodwill in my heart toward all who are earnestly and sin-

cerely serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ wherever they may be found.

The sincerity of some individual believers, however, does not justify the movement itself. There are many wonderful people and many sincere and devout people in the Catholic church, but this does not justify Catholicism.

My emancipation from Fundamentalism was Spirit-led. The passage that the Lord used was Ephesians 4:29-32:

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

I write without bitterness or rancor. The first step that my mind took, which resulted in breaking the chains of spiritual and mental bondage in which I was held for so long, was to accept without reservation and in absolute honesty the above passage and to apply it to my heart and life. When this film of prejudice, bias, and false pride was wiped from my eyes, Southern Baptists were a different people to me from what they had ever been before.

In the Fundamentalist movement we were usually in a fight of some kind. When we were not fighting Southern Baptists, Northern Baptists, the National Council of Churches, the Catholics, Communism or Modernism, we fought each other.

It was impossible to work within the framework of Fundamentalism without being drawn into conflict with others. I was no exception. The terrific pressures could not be escaped, and long before my mind had accepted the possibility of working with Southern Baptists, I systematically set about to become reconciled to all brethren with whom I had been drawn into controversy.

I withdrew from the fellowship and the Norris movement as such as a result of a change in my concept of the basic philosophy of the Christian religion. I believe in all of the fundamentals of the faith but I do

not believe in the methods and outlook of such that had been classified as 'Fundamentalism,' particularly in the Southwest.

I have not been alone in this, by any means. Across the nation thousands of ministers of the Gospel have been led by the Spirit of God likewise.

In the United Evangelical Action magazine of February 15, 1955, Dr. Bernard Ramm is quoted as follows: "Fundamentalism originally referred to the beliefs that there are certain great truths in Christianity, which, if changed, would dissolve Christianity. Each Christian is allowed per-

This is the bondage of Fundamentalism; pastors and churches either follow the party line or they are mercilessly attacked and, if possible, ruined.

sonal conviction in respect to a great number of doctrines and interpretations but the personal liberty is hedged about by key infallible and eternal doctrines. This is the term in its historic and good sense.

"In more recent years another movement has developed within historic Fundamentalism that had given the word an odious connotation. Men with much zeal, enthusiasm and conviction, yet lacking frequently in education or cultural breadth and many times highly individualistic, took to the stump to defend the faith.

"Many times they were dogmatic beyond evidence, or were intractable of disposition, or were obnoxiously anti-cultural, anti-scientific and anti-educational. Hence, the term came to mean one who was bigoted, and obscurantist, a fidelist, a fighter and an anti-intellectual. Many of these are men godly in life, in belief thoroughly Christian, and, therefore, spiritual brothers of all who accept Biblical Christianity."

Before proceeding further, I would like to make it crystal clear that I have had no change of mind whatever with reference to the great doctrine of the Christian faith.

1. I believe the whole Bible from Gen-

Luther Peak: Speaking Truth Forty Years Ago

By David R. Currie, Coordinator

Luther Peak was a one-time follower of J. Frank Norris. Fundamentalism, as he describes it, is alive and well and embodied in the current leadership that dominates the SBC. In 1956, fundamentalism was an extreme position on the edge of Southern Baptist life. Most fundamentalists were Independent Baptists who encouraged churches to leave the SBC. Some participated in a limited manner with the SBC financially. They gave very little to the Cooperative Program, which is also characteristic of most churches pastored by SBC presidents from 1979 to the present. Today, fundamentalism, as described by Peak, is no longer on the fringe, but dominates the SBC. Even Jerry Falwell, an independent fundamentalist Baptist, now feels at home with the SBC while traditional Baptists feel estranged. —David Currie

esis 1:1 to Revelations 22:21 as the verbally inspired and infallible Word of God.

2. I believe Jesus Christ was born of Mary the Virgin and is the Son of God and God the Son.

3. I believe that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God.

4. I believe that He rose from the grave the third day according to the Scriptures.

5. I believe that He, only, is the great High Priest; and we need not the intercession of any man, but that Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us.

6. I believe that Christ will come again in person, bodily, visible, to establish His kingdom on the earth.

7. I believe that in order to be saved the soul must be born again.

The philosophy of Fundamentalism is unchristian. It has no basis in the Scriptures upon which to rest. That philosophy is: Fundamentalism supposes itself to be right doctrinally. Therefore people who are not aligned under its banner are wrong.

8. I believe that every truly born-again soul should declare his faith by the act of baptism, setting forth the Lord's death, burial and resurrection.

9. I believe that the church is a body of baptized believers whose only mission is not to "reform the world," but to preach

and teach the Gospel of salvation to the individual soul.

10. I believe that a New Testament Baptist church should recognize: 1. Christ as its only Head. 2. The Holy Spirit as its only administrator. 3. The Word of God as its only message. 4. The winning of souls as its mission.

But I am not a Fundamentalist. Why? That is the purpose of this paper. We will endeavor to give some, but not, by any means, all, of the reasons why we left Fundamentalism to work with Southern Baptists.

Follow or be attacked

As a church we exercised our freedom for a number of years and cooperated with that group of Baptists known in the Southwest as Fundamentalists.

Because of a number of reasons, as a free and independent church we exercised our liberty and our freedom to change the channel of our cooperation to that of the Dallas Baptist Association and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

We had as much right to direct our contributions and our cooperation and fellowship toward these organized bodies, as we had to direct our contributions and cooperation and fellowship toward the Fundamentalists in the first place.

During the 15 years we cooperated with Fundamentalists, a threat hung over our heads. If we should have disagreed with the decisions which were handed down from the top our church would have been attacked, maligned and misrepresented.

The pastor would have been attacked, smeared, and misrepresented. Great harm

and untold injury would have undoubtedly been done. This was done in hundreds of cases throughout the nation, from coast to coast, when a pastor and a church decided to pull out. Since we made our decision, attack after attack has been made against us; and they are continuing, and every effort has been made to destroy the church.

This is the bondage of Fundamentalism; pastors and churches follow either the party line or they are mercilessly attacked and, if possible, ruined.

Today as an independent and sovereign Baptist church we are not under the dictation and control of anyone. We are in fear of no man or group of men, but of our own voluntary free will and choice we are cooperating with Baptist brethren whom we can trust and in whom we have confidence as Christian men.

Problem of explaining what kind of Baptist you are

We got tired of explaining what "kind" of Baptists we were. As a pastor I have made home calls constantly, and during the past 20 years I have explained to many thousands of people just what "kind" of Baptist church I was pastor of. I found myself constantly under the necessity of trying to explain what the difference was, and I don't believe that I ever explained this difference one time with any degree of satisfaction.

The philosophy of Fundamentalism is: that "it is right to do wrong in order to do right."

Today there is a sprinkling of churches across the nation claiming to be Baptist. Many of them are true Baptist churches, while others are semi-Baptist or half-Baptist. For instance, there is the innocuous "Bible church" which is strong on dispensationalism, strong on "separation," strong on "faith missions," and strong on using the name "Baptist," but not strong on the distinctive principles and tenets of Baptists at all.

The only use such churches have for the name "Baptist" is because it proves useful to them in catching innocent Baptist people and getting them into the membership.

This type of church wants to feed and grow upon the increase of Baptists, but its leadership is not interested in supporting the Baptist way, the Baptist program, the distinctive Baptist plan for evangelizing the world. This type of Baptist church has nothing to do with the regular and genuine Baptist churches of its locality.

It will associate with the various “Bible” churches, “independent” churches, interdenominational churches, Gospel missions and whatnot, having plenty of time to have representatives of various faith missions, some of them operated by only one man, where all of the money is handled by one man, and an accounting is given to no one — to speak in its pulpit. But it never sends one cent to legitimate Baptist channels to be spent under the supervision and direction of responsible Baptist leadership.

The endless wars and factional fights among brethren

Meetings of Fundamentalists are called “Fellowship Meetings,” but they are everything else but that.

I have attended such meetings which were truly spiritual and uplifting, but especially in recent years when the bankruptcy of leadership began to really show up and the movement fell into a state of disintegration, every meeting was the scene of endless factions and disputes among brethren.

The energies of those who were laboring to promote a solid and constructive work were spent in adjudicating differences between pastors and churches and in an atmosphere of antagonism, while many preachers were clamoring and struggling for office, for recognition, for leadership to generate and gather a personal following around themselves. It proved to be a well-nigh impossible task.

Not only so, but various small publications of the “yellow journalism” type carried these wars and frictional fights out to the people in the churches, so that the pastor was embarrassed by having to explain these matters or to try to settle the minds of this people over some issue which had been raised.

We came to see that this was because any banner of protest raised by any reformer of the denomination gathers around itself the dissident and divergent elements of the ministry. Every preacher who has flunked out with the denomination immediately as-

sembles with others under the banner of protest. Every preacher seeking a position of some kind gathers there. Every preacher with some grudge against his brethren gathers there.

The false philosophy of Fundamentalism

The philosophy of Fundamentalism is unchristian. It has no basis in the Scriptures upon which to rest. That philosophy is: Fundamentalism supposes itself to be right doctrinally.

Therefore, people who are not aligned under its banner are wrong. Therefore any steps that Fundamentalism may take to gather disciples out from under the banner of others and assemble them under its own banner are right, and they are fully justified in taking them.

The philosophy of Fundamentalism is that it is right to do wrong in order to do right. This is why many a Fundamentalist preacher has no conscience whatever as to the ethics of the ministry.

Fundamentalism judges, tries, condemns, sentences and executes...

A certain church comes to mind. The church employed a song leader. The pastor and his wife and staff of workers had worked very hard and built up a congregation. Unknown to the pastor, the song leader went to work to undermine and to split the congregation, which he was successful in doing. He took a large group of people with him, organized them into a new church in the hope of establishing himself in a secure position.

However, it was not long until this same man was discharged by the very people he had led out, whereupon another pastor in another city in the same movement immediately picked this man up and installed him in his own church as the music director. The song leader who did this doesn't seem to bear any signs of reproach, and what he did is passed over as of no consequence.

Such ethics would not be tolerated in the business world. A doctor who would do a thing like this would have his license revoked and would be disowned by the American Medical Association. A lawyer who would do a thing like this would be disbarred by the State Bar Association, and

he should be.

But in the realm of Fundamentalism, preachers may split each other's churches, make war upon one another, print and publish lies and slander against the character of others and all be accepted as the normal procedure. It is a lawless and anarchistic world under the guise of evangelical Christianity. Many are the broken and blasted lives which this scourge has touched through the past quarter of a century.

You cannot blame a man for being ignorant, but he is to be blamed if he remains ignorant.

Fundamentalism judges, tries, condemns, sentences and executes those with whom it disagrees in order to gain a following or carry a point. I repudiate personally and utterly the false philosophy of Fundamentalism as such. I believe in fair play. Loyalty to Jesus Christ will not allow any man to make such damaging accusations of another without having absolute proof of the truthfulness of the charge.

The whole movement of fundamentalism is a proselyting movement. It is a parasite, feeding upon the labors of others to a large degree.

Fundamentalism is down a dead end street. It is a negative proposition. In the eyes of Fundamentalists there are few Christians outside of their own ranks. Everything that is done in church life which is different from the way Fundamentalists do it is classified as “modernistic.”

Understanding Fundamentalism

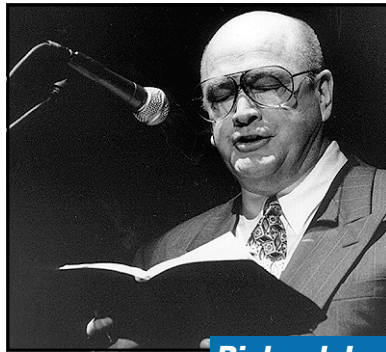
“Fundamentalism is a reaction against the modern world rather than a commitment to the Bible. It is a kind of retrenchment, going back into a shell, talking only to people like themselves, naming the enemy. What happens with fundamentalism is an almost total rejection of the present culture — the creation of a counterculture, really, which tries to pretend it's pure from Scripture, but doesn't read Scripture intelligently ... As a result, the Bible becomes a magic book of proof-texts, read irrespective of its historical context.

Graham Cray, interview, reprinted by permission *The Door*, May/June, 1994



Richard Jackson Shares His Heart

**Editor's note: Reprinted from October 1994 TBC newsletter. Richard Jackson returned to his native Texas and brought the Jackson Center for Evangelism with him, located at Howard Payne University in Brownwood. His closest friends 20 years ago now are the leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention. Why is Jackson not a SBC leader with them? Read his words and find out. This article contains excerpts of his remarks at one of the TBC dinners in 1993.*



Richard Jackson

When I started getting invited to Southern Baptist platforms (in the 1970s), I immediately started speaking up about the necessity of upholding the Word of God; staying hot after the trail of the lost; holding on to biblical prospective and evangelical zeal. That is who I was and everybody knew it.

The interesting thing about my speaking out was that whenever I thought there was drifting a little too far one way or the other, I would say so. I said it on seminary platforms and convention platforms. No one ever censored me. I was never criticized for saying what I believed was important at that time.

I can remember having an eerie feeling that something was not right. I had no idea about it, but my spirit was not right.

In the mid '70s, I was invited to Nashville to a meeting to talk about Bold Mission Thrust. My job was to offer ideas about how we could finance Bold Mission Thrust. Our plan was to see that by the year 2000 every soul on the face of the earth would be presented with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Boy, I tell you I was so pumped. I was excited and I said when it was my turn to speak, 'Listen, you are on the right page. You are finally not only playing the right game, but you are in the right ball park. This is where Baptist people have been wanting to be all the time.'

I really believe Baptist people believed in winning people to Christ and I was all for this thing. So, you know it started getting pumped up and then in 1978, I started

getting phone calls from people who were saying to me, 'You know we really have got to stop the liberal drift in Southern Baptist life. We have got to do it right now. We have got to take over.'

Everything in me started backing up. I got a phone call one day from a man in Houston who wanted to know if he could come spend two days with me to talk about the Southern Baptist Convention. I said no. After hanging up the phone, I felt as though God had written on my office wall, 'have nothing to do with this.'

It was that plain. The writing was not on the wall, but it was that plain. I got to Houston, Texas, to preach at the 1979 Pastors' Conference. I was in that crowd of people who wanted to be used to accomplish the takeover objective.

I can remember having an eerie feeling that something was not right. I had no idea about it, but my spirit was not right. On Wednesday night, we joined hands, 50,000 strong, and committed ourselves to tell everybody alive about Jesus.

Now folks, do not give the devil too much credit. He is not omnipresent. He can be in only one place at one time. But if you were Satan, and you knew that the strongest evangelical body in the world had representatives meeting in the Houston Astrodome, to commit to presenting the gospel to everybody alive, where would you have been that night? I would have shown up in Houston. That is what I would have done. I think the devil was in Houston at that 1979 convention. I do not have any doubt about it. Bold Mission Thrust has long since been put aside. We lost our whole perspective and objective.

Later I heard a man say, 'There are not

but two professors at Southwestern Seminary that believe the Bible and one at New Orleans Seminary and none in the other four seminaries.' Another man looked at me and said, 'Well, what do you think of that Richard?' I said to him, 'I think it is a lie. I do not think that is true.'

They started calling men that had invested their lives in me — men that prayed for me — shared the Scriptures with me — calling those men liberals, saying they did not believe the Bible.

So you wonder how Richard Jackson was weaned away from that movement? Biblical belief was not the reason. You are listening to a biblical conservative. I am a simple Bible believer. I am not a scholar. I study the scholars. I am just a mechanic.

But I can tell you one thing, I have bet my life on the Book.

But I can tell you one thing, I have bet my life on the Book. I have preached it, loved it, tried to live it, and repented when I did not live it. I am an evangelical zealot. Now why am I not in this movement, if this is who I am? I can tell you why. Because the movement is political and has been from the beginning.

Everything we hold dear as Baptists is under attack. I am telling you if you want the freedom and the autonomy of the local church and the individual believer priest to be protected, you better keep Texas Baptists committed to Texas Baptists and biblical Baptist positions.

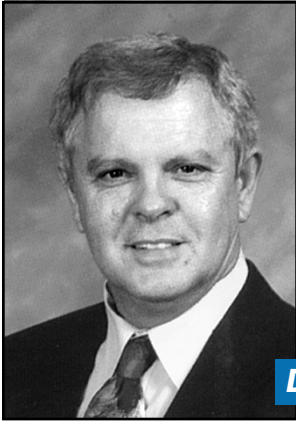
1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

LOCAL CHURCH AUTONOMY

(The New Testament) church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

(Associations and conventions) have no authority over one another or over the churches.

SBC Leaders Have Questionable Ties



**Pastor,
FBC
Onalaska**

Don Wilkey

Roger Moran has tried to link CBF, BGCT and TBC leadership with left wing organizations. Moran is research director of Missouri Baptist Laymen's Association.

Many leaders have responded that they are not taking the position Moran assumes they share with national agencies they have served on or participated in. Smacking of spiritual McCarthyism, Moran's allegations of guilt by association seem to be stretching it. That logic holds that if you once had a second cousin who knew one, you are one. Using Moran's approach, it can be determined that SBC leaders have questionable ties.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE:

Richard Land received the call as head of SBC's Christian Life Commission while his pastor made national news calling separation a figment of an infidel's imagination.¹

Jerry Falwell called separation "bogus."²

Pat Robertson, who claims the Southern Baptist' mantle and has Land's backing, said separation is a Soviet concept.³

Recent SBC president Tom Elliff wrote a book claiming the idea of separation is foreign to the Constitution and came from a misguided court ruling in the 1940s.⁴

Rick Scarborough, a Texas pastor and past fundamentalist candidate for BGCT president, said the idea of separation is a lie.⁵

Scarborough was paraded before the convention and given a platform through Morris Chapman's mailout, SBC LIFE. Also included in the issue was an interview with separation enemy Peter Marshall Jr.⁶

The foremost enemy of separation is David Barton who has written a book called the *Myth of Separation of Church and State*.

Barton is embraced by Land and Falwell.⁷

REGARDING RACISM:

The SBC Public Affairs Committee chose Jesse Helms as Man of the Year as one of its early accomplishments. Helm's link with SBC takeover leadership is well documented. Helms has a track record of shady racial attitudes well noted around the nation. He once warned that voting for a political candidate might mean Negroes working beside you on the job and using the same toilet facilities.⁸

Falwell and W.A. Criswell were known to be vocal segregationists earlier in their ministries. Criswell adhered to the Curse of Ham theory.⁹

Some historians claim his recanting of the theory was similar to Henry Ford's backing off of his anti-Semitism. Insiders claim the men changed views under public pressure but still privately held them. Falwell publicly supported the late South African apartheid government.¹⁰

Falwell condemned Affirmative Action as not Christian. He once said there are almost as many alcoholics as there are Negroes.¹¹

Falwell condemned the Supreme Court ruling that mandated the integration of public schools in the 50s. He said the decision was a satanic plot.¹²

Paul Pressler has been a leader in the Council on National Policy which has been known to house ex-Nazis and racists according to author Russ Bellant. Also linked with this group is the noted Coors Beer family which has known right wing views.

A noted historian and author related a story to me about Pressler's participation in a church controversy in Austin, Texas. The author told me the church was struggling with the issue of admitting black members from the university in the 50s. Pressler was outspoken that the church should not tolerate black membership since they were not ready for it.

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

As noted, some SBC fundamentalists have come out for Exodus 2000 which is the pulling out of Christians from public schools. Tim LaHaye, an outspoken leader in the crowd, has published a book dotted with John Birch Society references attacking public education.¹³

Ed Young held a family conference at

Second Baptist and invited Holiness preachers, Marlin Maddoux and Pat Robertson to be speakers. Both men told the audience that Congress was working secretly with the United Nations to brainwash public school children to worship the Anti-Christ through public TV. Land has suggested that sending our Christian children to public schools is like sending them to the Middle-ages Children's Crusades.¹⁴

Morris Chapman, something of the SBC Executive Committee, has put out articles to attack public education.¹⁵

Falwell said he will not be satisfied until public education in the nation is done away with.¹⁶

Tim LaHaye's wife, a noted leader in the SBC CLC, participated in a Separation Alliance in 1997. The Alliance is a national organization seeking to separate public education from the state. SBC liaison David Barton was also on the program.¹⁷

FAR RIGHT:

SBC Fundamentalist leadership has been linked with extremists groups such as Reconstructionists, the John Birch Society and cult leader Reverend Moon. Pressler has been tied to Reconstructionists through the Firestorm Chat tapes.¹⁸

Falwell has sent out pamphlets with the avid Reconstructionist Gary North's articles.¹⁹

George Gant is a Reconstructionist whose books are sold through Land's office.²⁰

Larry Pratt, linked with Militias and White Supremists rallies, also had tapes for sale through Land's newsletter.²¹

A sampling of Reconstructionist writings believes that slavery is a viable option for today. Some articles suggest the Civil War was actually a holy war with Southern five-point Calvinists fighting a Unitarian North.²²

Falwell and LaHaye have both been recipients of cult leader Rev. Moon's financial gifts. Ed McAteer, a member of Adrian Rogers' church, holds national conferences with John Birch Society members handing

...continued on next page

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What is Fundamentalism?

by Edward John Carnell

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from A Handbook of Christian Theology, edited by Arthur A. Cohen and Marvin Halverson. Reprinted from the Feb. 1996 TBC newsletter.

Fundamentalism is an extreme right element in Protestant orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is that branch of Christendom which limits the basis of its authority to the Bible. Fundamentalism draws its distinctiveness from its attempt to maintain status by negation.

Fundamentalism dates its birth from the turn of the present century. Its initial "rugged bursts of earnestness" were among the finest fruits of the Reformation. The theory of evolution and the documentary hypothesis were examined with prophetic courage. Many fine scholars joined battle, publishing a series of essays entitled *The Fundamentals*. They sought to prove that modernism and the system of biblical Christianity were incompatible. They reached their goal.

But in due time fundamentalism made one capital mistake. This is why it converted from a religious movement to a religious mentality. Unlike the Continental Reformers and the English dissenters, the fundamentalists failed to develop an affirmative world view.

They made no effort to connect their convictions with the wider problems of general culture. They remained content with the single virtue of negating modernism. When modernism decayed, therefore, fundamentalism lost its status. Neo-orthodoxy proved too complex for it to assess. It be-

came an army without a cause. It had no unifying principle.

came an army without a cause. It had no unifying principle. This is why fundamentalism is now a religious attitude rather than a religious movement. It is a highly ideological attitude. It is intransigent and inflexible; it expects conformity; it fears academic liberty. It makes no allowance for the inconsistent, and thus partially valid, elements in other positions.

This is why fundamentalism is now a religious attitude rather than a religious movement

This attitude helps to explain its crusade against the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. No study was made by the Fundamentalists of the canons of lower criticism or the delicate shades of meaning in Hebrew and Greek idioms. Such scholarly labor was considered unnecessary.

Fundamentalism believes that liberals corrupt whatever they touch. Since liberals shared in the translation of the Revised Standard Version, the work is "ipso facto" heretical.

Fundamentalism is an ironic position. Its distinctives do not even comprehend the leading issue of the Protestant Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church affirms "the five fundamentals"—the infallibility of the Bible, Christ's virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the resurrection, and the second coming. Fundamentalism fails to see the irony in its own position because it does not understand the interrelatedness

of Christian doctrine.

Fundamentalism is a paradoxical position. It sees the heresy in an untruth but not in unlovliness. If it has the most truth, it has the least grace, since it distrusts courtesy and diplomacy.

Fundamentalism forgets that orthodox truth without orthodox love profits nothing. The more it departs from the gentle ways of Jesus Christ, the more it drives urbane people from the fold of orthodoxy.

Fundamentalism is a lonely position. It has cut itself off from the general stream of culture, philosophy, and ecclesiastical tradition. This accounts, in part, for its robust pride. Since it is no longer in union with the wisdom of the ages, it has no standard by which to judge its own religious pretense. It dismisses non-fundamentalist efforts as empty, futile or apostate.

Its tests for Christian fellowship become so severe that divisions in the Church are considered a sign of virtue. And when there are no modernists from which to withdraw, fundamentalists compensate by withdrawing from one another.

1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

Congregational Church Government

The church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ... Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

out literature.

A John Birch Society member wrote the booklet that got Second Baptist of Houston in trouble with the IRS for partisan political activity. The best handle on the Society's identity is illustrated by a story regarding the Kennedy assassination. President Kennedy woke up in Fort Worth the day of his death and read a crazy John Birch Society ad in the Dallas paper. It was a type of death threat saying the nation would be better off if someone killed the President. He commented to his wife that they were heading into "nut country."²³

Some of us must also wonder as we head into the 21st century.

Endnotes

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- ²Rob Boston, *THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN AMERICA*, Prometheus Books, Amhurst, NY, 1996, pg. 17.
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- ⁴Tom Elliff, *AMERICA ON THE EDGE*, NCM Press, Oklahoma City, OK, 1992, pg. 64.
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¹³Tim LaHaye, *THE BATTLE FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS*, Fleming, Old Tappan, NY, 1981.

¹⁴*BAPTIST TODAY*, July 1999, pg. 5.

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¹⁷"Private Education Champions," *THE NEW AMERICAN*, Feb. 3, 1997, pg. 33.

¹⁸Rob James, "The Takeover," *SBC TODAY*, 1989, pg. 38.

¹⁹"Christian Perspectives," Liberty Univ., Law School, Lynchburg, VA. Vol. 5, No. 2, pg. 6.

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Inerrancy: Definitions and Qualifications



James C. Denison,
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Editor's Note: Reprinted from the July 1994 TBC newsletter. It should be noted that TBC has a number of supporters who are comfortable with the term "inerrancy" and may hold differing views to those expressed in this article. TBC values the diversity of its supporters.

In an address to the 1993 statewide meeting of Texas Baptists Committed, I made the statement that "inerrancy" is a term with some eight definitions and twelve qualifications.¹ In recent days several persons have requested more information regarding this statement. This paper is intended to be a brief, nontechnical documentation of my statement and thus an answer to these requests will conclude with a brief statement of my own approach to the "inerrancy" of Scripture.

Eight Definitions

The word "inerrancy" first came into common use in the nineteenth century.² Across subsequent years, numerous definitions and characterizations of the word have been suggested. In fact, the word has been employed in such divergent and contradictory ways that in 1978 some three hundred scholars gathered in Chicago to attempt a general definition of the term.³ Unfortunately, this noteworthy effort has not served to resolve the confusion which still surrounds the word.

Today at least eight different definitions of "inerrancy" are to be found in the works of leading, conservative scholars. This list is by no means exhaustive, as still other approaches will undoubtedly continue to be formulated. However, the following list illustrates the difficulty in using inerrancy as a simple test of orthodoxy today.

First, we might state a "general" definition for inerrancy. Here Clark Pinnock's statement would describe what is probably the most popular approach to the term: "Inerrancy simply means that the Bible can be trusted in what it teaches and affirms."⁴ This definition would use "inerrant" in the simple sense of "trustworthy." As a common-sense description, then, "inerrant" would simply mean that we can trust the Bible. Used in this way, the word provides no clarification over what Baptists have al-



James C. Denison

ways believed and said about the Bible.

Second, "formal" inerrancy makes the claim that "Scripture does not contradict itself."⁵ Adherents of this approach would argue that the Bible contains no contradictions with its own claims, but would not necessarily contrast biblical statements with those of scientific and other extra-biblical materials.

Third, "material" inerrancy expands the above definitions greatly: "Scripture does not lie or deceive or err in any assertion it makes."⁶ The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy offers a similar definition: "inerrant signifies the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake and so safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions."⁷

Some interpreters refer to this approach as "strict" or "full" inerrancy. This definition claims that the Bible contains no "errors" of any kind, and is often what so-called "inerrantists" mean by the term. However, they qualify this definition in important ways, as will soon be shown.

Fourth, there is an approach which might be termed "soteriological": the Bible is "inerrant" in all its teachings regarding salvation. The Roman Catholic Church adopted this definition at Vatican II: "the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully, and without error that truth which God wanted to put into the sacred writings for the sake of our salvation."⁸ In this understanding, the Bible speaks without any error when it leads to saving faith, but may or may not contain errors in other areas.

Fifth, adherents of "limited" inerrancy claim that the Bible is without error in matters of faith and morals, but may or may not contain errors in other areas such as

science, geography and history.⁹

This approach would expand the scope of inerrancy beyond soteriology, but not to the point of the "material" definition.

Sixth, there is a less common approach is called "indefectability." By this definition the unified truth presented by the Bible is considered to be reliable or "inerrant," but not necessarily its individual words or statements.¹⁰ In this method the overall doctrines and truths of Scripture are without error, but the specific words or claims of the texts may or may not contain errors.

Seventh, "secondary" inerrancy applies to the quotations and speeches recorded in Scripture. Adherents of this definition would argue that the Bible records these speeches inerrantly, but this does not guarantee the inerrancy of the content of these speeches.¹¹ For example, Luke records Stephen's speech of defense exactly as he delivered it (Acts 7), but this does not guarantee that Stephen's words were themselves inerrant.

Eighth, there is a very popular approach called "purposive" or "intentional" inerrancy. This definition states that the Bible is inerrant in accomplishing its intended purpose, whatever that purpose might be. As Pinnock claims, "inerrancy is relative to the intention of the text."¹² Advocates of this approach would note that the Bible does not intend to be a book of science, history, or geography, and thus would not purpose to speak without error in these areas. God has preserved an inerrant text in all areas which he intends the Bible to address.

As one can easily see, these eight definitions vary significantly with one another. Each can claim conservative, scholarly adherents. This diversity of approaches to the meaning and usage of "inerrancy" demonstrates the unsuitability of the word as a general test of orthodoxy regarding the Scriptures.

Twelve Qualifications

The "material" view of inerrancy is by far the strongest claim of the eight definitions sketched above. Those who adhere to this definition insist that the Bible is "free from all falsehood or mistake and so... is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions."¹³ It is important to note, however, that even these "strict" inerrantists accept several very important qualifications

to their definition. A brief survey of these qualifications will further show the unsuitability of “inerrancy” as a simple test for belief in the trustworthiness of God’s word.

One: all “inerrantists” will immediately note that their claim applies only to the original manuscripts of the Bible, not to the copies we possess today. They will admit along with all responsible exegetes that the copies now extant have many problems, some more significant than others.

There are contradictions between manuscripts, omissions and additions. While we can trust that the copies we now possess provide the substance of the original texts with a high degree of accuracy,¹⁴ no one can responsibly claim that our copies mirror exactly the original texts. And since these original “autographs” no longer exist, it seems that we will never possess their exact content.

As a result, “inerrancy” is claimed for documents we cannot possess or examine. It is not claimed for the texts we do possess. Two related, damaging results follow.

One, this claim can be a depreciation of the texts we do possess. Their preservation is a miracle of God,¹⁵ one made less significant by this claim that only the originals are “entirely true and trustworthy.”

Two, this claim can cause us to have even less confidence in the Bibles we now own. If a text must be inerrant to be “entirely true and trustworthy” and our current Bibles are admittedly based on manuscript copies which do not possess this character, then our modern texts could be seen to be less than true or trustworthy today. In this case the argument for inerrancy produces the exact opposite of its desired effect. And yet this qualification is claimed by all who call themselves “inerrantists.”

Eleven other qualifications of “inerrancy” follow. They are taken from Robert Preus’s paper, “The Inerrancy of Scripture,”¹⁶ and are chosen for this purpose because Preus is himself a strong defender of “material” inerrancy (in fact, I cite his defi-

nition of the term above).¹⁷ They will be numbered two to twelve below.

Two: “Inerrancy does not imply verbal exactness of quotations.”¹⁸ This means that the New Testament writers may or may not quote the Old Testament or other extrabiblical documents with precise accuracy.

Three: “Inerrancy does not imply verbal or intentional agreement in parallel accounts of the same event.”¹⁹ Since different writers work from different perspectives and/or purposes, their accounts will naturally differ.

Four: inerrancy does not preclude figurative speech, rounding of numbers, and other imprecisions of language.²⁰ In other

I do not use the word “inerrant” to describe my personal understanding of God’s word. I do, however, believe that the Bible is exactly what it claims to be: “God-breathed” in its entirety

words, the Bible does not employ “modern scientifically ‘precise’ language.”²¹

Five: inerrancy does not preclude popular phrases and expressions used in its day. Here Preus cites such phrases as “bowels of mercy,” “four corners of the earth,” and the statement that Joseph is the father of Christ,” and claims: “No error is involved in the use of such popular expressions.”²²

Six: inerrancy does not require scientifically precise language in describing the things of nature. For example, biblical statements that the earth is motionless and circled by the sun (see Eccl. 1:4-5) and that a bat is to be classed with birds (Lev. 11:19) are phenomenal and thus not “errant.”²³

Seven: inerrancy does not preclude the

use of mythology or folklore, language which would be considered unscientific today (see Job 3:8 and Is. 34:14).²⁴

Eight: inerrancy does not require historiography of modern standards. Chronology, genealogy, and other matters of historical record can be imprecise or interpretive.²⁵

Nine: inerrancy does not require that the biblical author understood the “full divine implication” of all his words.²⁶ In this way the New Testament writers do not commit error when they offer a new and/or different interpretation of Old Testament statements (for example, see Matthew’s use of Hosea’s prophecy, Matt. 2:15/Hosea 11:1).

Ten: inerrancy does not preclude the use of non-precise descriptions of the biblical books by their authors and/or editors. For example, the book of Proverbs begins with the self-description, “The proverbs of Solomon” (Prov. 1:1). While Solomon did not write the book per se or even all its contents (see chs. 30-31), this title is a non-precise, general, and thus acceptable description for the book.²⁷

Eleven: inerrancy does not require that etymologies in the Bible conform to modern analysis or usage. As Preus states, “The ancients are not thinking of etymologies in the modern sense.”²⁸

And twelve: inerrancy is to be accepted as a faith assertion, not the result of an inductive study of the evidence at hand. Preus makes this claim clear: “inerrancy is always to be accepted on faith!... no corroborating evidence for Biblical assertions is necessary or sought for.”²⁹ Belief in the inerrancy of the Bible is not founded on or subject to evidences for its veracity. As a result, no evidence can dissuade an inerrantist from his conviction.

In addition to Preus’s qualifications, two others may be mentioned briefly.

First, many inerrantists preclude as “errant” apparent contradictions in the Scriptures which may one day be harmonized.

Two, many use their word with the qualification that other problems with the Scriptures which cannot be solved now may be solved one day when more information is available. By the use of these qualifications a apparent problem with the Scriptures can be dismissed.³⁰

Conclusions

For the sake of clarity and emphasis, three conclusions should be restated. First, “inerrancy” is a term so variously defined

1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God’s revelation of Himself to man... It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and the truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter... The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

that common usage as a test of orthodoxy is impractical and misleading.

When one is asked if he is an “inerrantist,” his or her first response must be: “By what definition?” Surely a “limited” inerrantist and a “material” inerrantist do not share an identical view of Scripture. They are both “inerrantists,” and yet by each other’s definitions they are not.

The word is flawed as a simple test for one’s belief in the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Second, “inerrancy” applies only to the original manuscripts, and thus is a theoretical claim at best. Since we do not possess these documents, we cannot test this claim.

I further believe that God has preserved his word in the texts we possess today.

And further, this claim can actually depreciate our trust in the documents we do possess. Since they admittedly do not mirror exactly the originals, they do not meet this necessary test of truthfulness.

Third, “inerrancy” is so qualified by its employers that again, common use as a test of orthodoxy is untenable. When asked if we are “inerrantists, we must ask, “With what qualifications?” Those accepted by some will be rejected by others.

For these reasons, I do not use the word “inerrant” to describe my personal understanding of God’s word. I do, however, believe that the Bible is exactly what it claims to be: “God-breathed” in its entirety (2 Tim. 3:16). I personally believe that every word was given by God, through men. In a mystery akin to the Incarnation, I believe that the Bible is both divine and human. The words of Scripture bear the characteristics of both their Author and their authors.

They are absolutely trustworthy as the words and word of God.

I further believe that God has preserved his word in the texts we possess today. Our copies of the original autographs have been given to us through a process which God has protected. I therefore reject the implication that since only the originals are “inerrant” our copies are somehow less acceptable. I have given my life to preach, teach, and seek to live by the word of God I have today.

My rejection of the word “inerrant” is thus in no way a challenge to the absolute trustworthiness of God’s word. This trustworthiness I accept and preach wholeheartedly. Rather, it seems clear to me that any word with at least eight definitions and twelve qualifications has lost its value as a simple, common test of anything. Let us cease insisting on certain words of men and return to proclaiming the word of God. The one is not the other.

¹See the transcript of my address: “Standing For Freedom and Grace: A Personal Response,” *Texas Baptists Committed* (October 1993), 4.

²Mark Noll, “A Brief History of Inerrancy, Mostly in America,” *The Proceedings of the Conference on Biblical Inerrancy*, 1987 (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1987), 9; hereafter cited as *Proceedings*.

³This statement, with nineteen articles of affirmation and denial, is called “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy.” It has been widely circulated; one record of the statement in full is *Evangelicals and Inerrancy*, ed. Ronald Youngblood (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 230-9; hereafter cited as *Evangelicals*.

⁴Clark H. Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984), 78.

⁵Robert Preus, “The Inerrancy of Scripture,” *Proceedings*, 49.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷“Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy,” in *Evangelicals*, 237; italics theirs.

⁸Dei Verbum, art. 11; quoted in Richard J. Coleman, “Reconsidering ‘Limited Inerrancy,’” *Evangelicals*, 163.

⁹See Coleman, 165-66.

¹⁰See Coleman, 166-67.

¹¹See Rex. A. Koivisto, “Stephen’s Speech: A Case Study In Rhetoric And Biblical Inerrancy,” *Evangelicals*, 217-29.

¹²Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle*, 78.

¹³“Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy,” 237.

¹⁴Here it is comforting to note the often-quoted assessment of the outstanding textual scholar F. F. Bruce: “The variant readings about which any doubt remains among textual critics of the New Testament affect no material question of historic fact or of Christian faith and practice” (F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?*, 5th ed. rev. [Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1960], 19-20).

¹⁵A number of excellent treatments of this fascinating story are available. One of the best is F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1988).

¹⁶Robert Preus, “The Inerrancy of Scripture,” in *Proceedings*, 51-55.

¹⁷See note 6.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 51.

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²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*

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²⁴*Ibid.*, 53.

²⁵Preus, 5 4 .

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*, 54-55.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 55.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰For further discussion of problems with the use of “inerrancy,” consult Clark. H. Pinnock’s articles, “What Is Biblical Inerrancy?” and “Parameters of Biblical Inerrancy” in *Proceedings*, 73-80 and 95-101.

1963 Baptist Faith & Message speaks on...

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or are not contained in it. Church and state should be separate.

The state owes protection and full freedom to every church in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others.

Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work.

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New Moran Document Continues “Big Lie” Philosophy

by David R. Currie, coordinator

I enjoy listening to sermon tapes by Jim Denison, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas.

Recently, he preached a series of sermons on the Ten Commandments. He noted in the ninth one, that history says Adolph Hitler rose to power on the “Big Lie” philosophy. That is, if you tell a lie often enough with enough passion, and it is not countered, masses of people will believe it a sad truth.

Recently Roger Moran, director of the Missouri Baptists Laymen’s Association, sent out a lengthy document to Missouri churches that follows the Big Lie philosophy. It was sent also to Texas churches by the Texas Baptists Laymen’s Association, attacking me, TBC and CBF.

I serve on some boards with persons who share different beliefs from me about homosexuality and abortion, therefore, Moran assumes I support homosexuality, abortion, etc.

When will Texas Baptists put a stop to this?

Since I am the director of TBC and chair the CBF finance committee, then both are tarred with the same brush. I have been attacked on the premise of “guilt by association.” The illogical logic of the Moran piece has the depth of saying “Hitler was a German. You are a German. You are like Hitler.” It is propaganda.

I do not know about beliefs of some people I serve with on Boards. I have never asked them about these issues. Prying into people’s personal lives is not my nature.

I do not support homosexuality or abortion and never have. I proudly support The Interfaith Alliance (TIA) because it counters the Religious Right’s exclusive claim to “know the mind of God” on political issues and because it encourages respect for the beliefs of others.

When Moran lists TIA’s board members, he does not list the Mahatma Gandhi’s grandson, the two Jewish Rabbis, the Buddhist or the Moslems. He lists only the Protestant, Catholic and Unitarian. Why are these persons omitted? Because, you might think the Interfaith Alliance was about “interfaith issues,” which is its obvious focus.

Suppose you are a Rotary Club member

because you want to serve others, but some of the members are gay or Catholic or Jewish. Would this mean you endorse their beliefs? It does according to the arguments used by Moran. Could the same logic be used to write about you?

Are many facts used by Moran true? Yes, I suppose so, the way they are written. All the truth, however, is not explained. Allow me to give a true story example.

When I worked for the Texas Department of Agriculture in the mid 80s, three employees went to Houston for different reasons. That night we all met together with a group of farmers in a nearby community. We all drove Lincoln Continental Town cars from the same rental car agency.

Suppose the Agricultural Commissioner’s political opponent, after hearing about state employees driving Lincolns had made a TV commercial declaring, “Three state employees drove rented Lincoln Continentals to a meeting with farmers. Vote for me and this type of thing will be stopped.”

He would not be lying. The story of three state employees driving Lincolns is true, it just isn’t the whole truth. When only part is told, it equals a total lie.

We had all reserved compact cars but when we arrived the rental agency had only Lincolns. We rented them for compact car rental prices. The Moran document gives a twisted report repeatedly.

There is no “close relationship,” as Moran claims, between TBC and TIA. I am the only “supposed” link. One person does not make a closely aligned relationship as Moran implies.

Moran is critical of persons to receive TIA’s Walter Cronkite award. I’m not on the committee to make the selection, but you may know some of the names that are: former president Gerald Ford; former U.N. ambassador Andrew Young; Nobel peace prize winner Elie Wiesel; and author Bill Moyers.

I could go on refuting spurious logic. When will Texas Baptists put a stop to this? You can stop it by refusing to support the SBC in any area except world missions. You can make a real difference for God by taking a stand.

The SBC is not a Baptist organization. Is there a single SBC seminary president or agency head who believes in one single historic Baptist principle? Why should Bap-

tists support non-Baptist seminaries and agencies when they work to destroy our historic Baptist principles?

Moran, unfortunately, reflects the mind set of SBC leaders. After reading the paper, *Viewpoint*, I noticed that Jesus was never mentioned. I’m not surprised. The legacy of successful fundamentalism is to forget Jesus because it is about politics, power and control. Jesus was about love, grace and freedom.

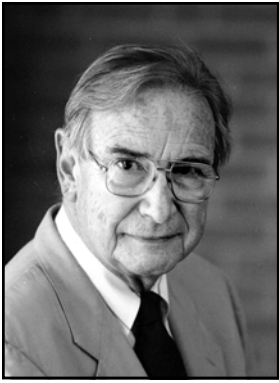
The Gospel and Fundamentalism are mutually exclusive movements, just as the Pharisees’ religious system and Jesus’ message were. We are in a 2000 year old battle. The outcome will determine the Baptist witness and Baptist effectiveness in the 21st century. Much is at stake.

I noticed that Jesus was never mentioned by Moran.

In 1956, Luther Peak left the fundamentalist movement of J. Frank Norris. He wrote a series of articles in *The Baptist Standard*, see page 16 of this newsletter. Read his statements below on the philosophy of fundamentalism and join me in making a firm commitment to oppose fundamentalism.

“The philosophy of Fundamentalism is unchristian. It has no basis in the Scriptures upon which to rest. That philosophy is: Fundamentalism supposes itself to be right doctrinally. Therefore people who are not aligned under its banner are wrong. Therefore any steps that Fundamentalism may take to gather disciples out from under the banner of others and assemble them under its own banner are right, and they are fully justified in taking them. The philosophy of Fundamentalism is that it is right to do wrong in order to do right... Fundamentalism judges, tries, condemns, sentences and executes those with whom it disagrees in order to gain a following or carry a point.”

Peak, writing more than 40 years ago, well describes Moran, and the leaders of the Texas Baptists Laymen’s Association. They do not care who they hurt or what they destroy in their quest for control and power. It is an insidious cancer destroying Baptist work everywhere. We must reject the Big Lie, fundamentalism’s stock and trade for more than 20 years.



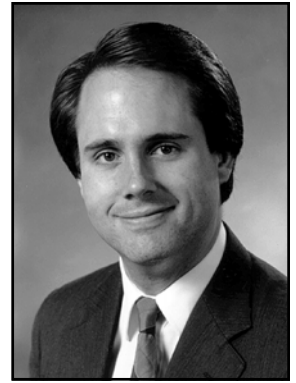
William L. Hendricks

Reflections on the Baptist Faith and Message

TEXAS BAPTISTS COMMITTED ANNUAL CONVOCATION

RAMADA INN BAYFRONT

JULY 14–15, 2000 • CORPUS CHRISTI, TX



James Denison

Friday, July 14

6:00 p.m.

Session One, Banquet • \$20

“B-I-B-L-E”

—God, the Bible and Authority—

William L. Hendricks

“Prone to Wonder”

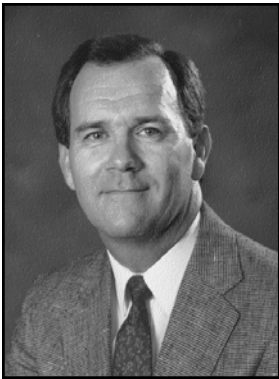
—Preamble—

Robert Newell

“Identifiable Christ”

—Christology—

Mateo Rendon



Robert Newell



W. Hulitt Gloer

Saturday, July 15

7:00 a.m.

Texas Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Breakfast • \$11

“Responding to the Changes by the SBC”

James Denison

9:00 a.m. Session Two

“The Church: Being the Body”

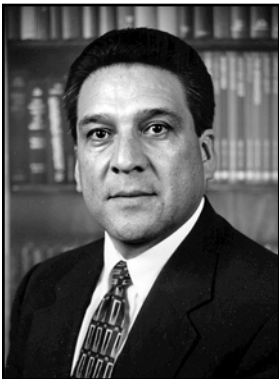
—Ecclesiology—

Hulitt Gloer

“A Trip to Cold Mountain”

—Social Ethics—

Bill Tillman



Mateo Rendon



Bill Tillman

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m.

Session Three

“Freedom in the Pursuit of Spiritual Ends”

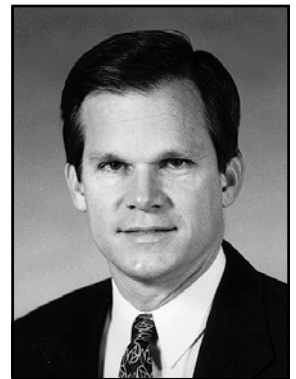
—Religious Liberty—

Brad Creed

11:45 a.m. Adjourn



Nancy Lanmon Cooke



Brad Creed

**Special Guest Soloist Nancy Lanmon Cooke will provide
Inspirational Music during each session**

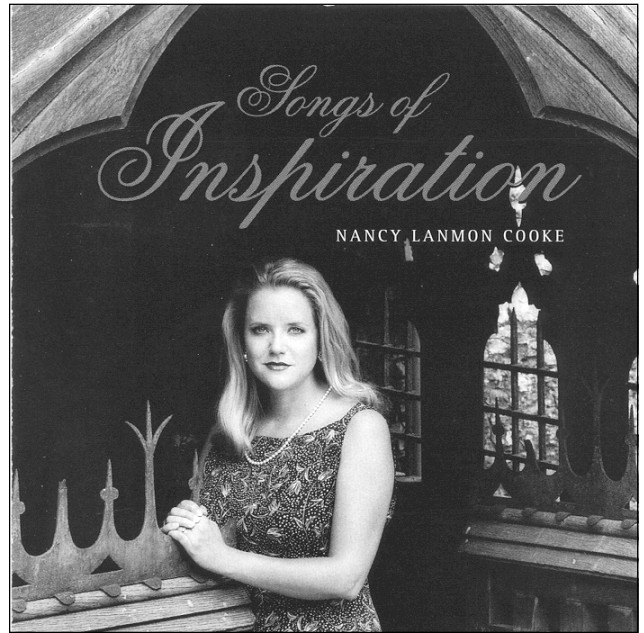
**Child care provided at FBC, Corpus Christi
For child care or meal reservations call TBC, 915-659-4102
For reservations at Ramada Inn Bayfront call 361-882-8100**

TBC is excited to have Nancy Lanmon Cooke to enhance our convocation with inspirational music

A Classical Career - A Christian Calling

Nancy Lanmon Cooke has recently returned home to Texas and gospel music after 10 years singing opera in England. Born in Corpus Christi, Texas, Cooke is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, where she was a four-time finalist and winner in the National Association for Teachers of Singing (NATS) competition. The recipient of a Rotary International Scholarship, Cooke continued her studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. Cooke has toured Great Britain with the D'Oyly Carte and Welsh National Opera companies, and has enjoyed a varied concert and recital career.

Following a calling that dates back to the discovery of her musical talent at the age of eight within her family church, Cooke was led to record the songs and hymns that have inspired her faith. Cooke is currently on a concert tour promoting her album *Songs of Inspiration* accompanied by her musical director and arranger, Tom Thompson. Cooke performed at the 1999 Texas Baptist Church Music Conference in Waco and was the featured soloist with the Corpus Christi Symphony in December's "Home for the Holidays—A Touch of Frost" concert at Selena Auditorium. Cooke will also be the featured soloist at the Cynthia Mitchell Pavillion in The Woodlands on Easter Sunday and will continue to appear across the state in churches and schools sharing her music and message of God's grace in her life.



RESERVATION FORM

TBC CONVOCAION BANQUET 2000 RESERVATION FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Church _____
 Daytime Phone Number _____

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ for _____ tickets at \$20 per plate to the TBC Convocation banquet featuring William L. Hendricks on Friday, July 14, 2000 at the Corpus Christi Ramada Inn Bayfront at 6 p.m. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)

TEXAS CBF Breakfast July 15

Texas Baptists who support the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will host a breakfast during the annual Texas Baptists Committed convocation in Corpus Christi. The breakfast will be Saturday morning, July 15, at 7 a.m. The featured speaker will be James Denison,

Pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas. Keeping with the theme of the convocation, he will be speaking on "Responding to the Changes by the SBC."

Order tickets on the form below. They should be mailed to the Texas Baptists Committed office. Cost for the breakfast is \$11. Mail-in reservations are preferred, but phone reservations for the breakfast will be accepted beginning July 1 by calling 915-659-4102.

RESERVATION FORM

TEXAS COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST 2000

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Church _____
 Daytime Phone Number _____

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ for _____ tickets at \$11 per plate to the Texas CBF breakfast featuring James Denison on Saturday, July 15, 2000 at the Corpus Christi Ramada Inn Bayfront at 7 a.m. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)



Summary of Changes in the SBC from a Missions perspective

By Keith Parks, 1993

Editor's note: Reprinted from March 1993 TBC newsletter as quotes from a dialogue with Keith Parks. In 1992, Parks resigned from being the president of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1999, he retired as global missions coordinator for Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and now lives in Richardson, Texas.

"Some interesting things have happened in the last dozen years or so ... when things began to move in different directions in the Southern Baptist Convention... I had conversations with quite a number of those who have emerged as leaders and those in control of the SBC now, and found they were arguing that it really was not missions but doctrine that held us together.

"Now our charter, our constitution, our budgets, and our history, all say missions was the cohesive force that brought us into being, and the dominate force that has kept us together. But the SBC leaders being elected said "no, that is not true at all."

"I argued with them thinking that they were just misunderstanding our SBC history, but it finally dawned on me that they were Baptists who do believe that we are joined together by doctrine. Once that be-

came the most important thing about the SBC to those who were in the controlling leadership posts, everything with our convention began to change.

"When expression of a particular doctrinal view is the litmus test, when that is the most important thing, whether you are being considered as a trustee of an institution, an executive of an agency, or to pub-

"When we changed from a missions denomination to a doctrinal denomination, then the missions program and other things dramatically changed."

licly speak somewhere, when that is the determining factor, then the SBC has changed from where it once was. This means that everything we do has begun to change, including our mission program. "I am up close enough to the SBC mission program that I can identify many, many changes that have taken place.

"Another change that has taken place is

that when doctrine is the crucial issue, and not just doctrine but the kind of doctrine that certain leaders insist that everyone espouse, believe, preach, support, — when that is the central issue then everything that we do is measured by that rather than be missions.

"And when missions begins to be measured by doctrinal purity, according to that definition, then missions here, the missionaries, what happens overseas, all begins to be radically altered.

"Another change that has happened is that never in our history have trustees wanted to control everything that was said. Anything displeasing that might be said, they have moved in to put pressure on that missionary, that staff member, to retract, change, or simply not say that particular thing.

"When you come to a place where fear, intimidation, where reward and punishment are the controlling factors in a denomination then we are no longer a Southern Baptist Convention. That has happened in every agency all across the convention.

"When we changed from a missions denomination to a doctrinal denomination, then the missions program and other things dramatically changed."

MISSION STATEMENT OF TEXAS BAPTISTS COMMITTED

Texas Baptists Committed is dedicated to reach people for Christ through local churches, to uphold historic Baptist principles, and to cooperate with the mission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and its related institutions.

The TBC Newsletter is a periodical published and mailed six times a year to churches in Texas and to all Baptists Committed members and supporters. You may be on several lists. If you get two newsletters, please pass one along to a friend. Send Address changes to: P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, Texas 76902-3330.

Texas Baptists Committed

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