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THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

JANUARY 20, 2005

Fundamentally Flawed

FORWARD

In this article, I have no intent to address the popular expanded use of the term "Fundamentalist," which gives it the meaning of "a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles" regardless of the origin of those principles. As was the original intent of the man who coined the term [Curtis Lee Laws, Watchman-Examiner, 1920], I use the term "Fundamentalist" exclusively to represent the "movement in 20th century Protestantism emphasizing the literally interpreted Bible as fundamental to Christian life and teaching" and centered upon a belief in the inspiration of Scripture, creation by an act of God, the Trinity—emphasizing the Deity of Christ, the miracles of the Old and New Testament—particularly the resurrection of Christ, and the Return of Christ. The movement was further marked by two additional factors that are not always appreciated by modern writers: Fundamentalists, by definition and by nature, were separationists and militants. Fundamentalism developed into a semi-organized, quasi-denomination following the First World War. [Quotations are from Merriam-Webster.]

(Continued on page 3)



this and that

Editor and Staff

Jerald L. Manley D. D.

J. Alan Wolf

Gary Roland

A Stick In A Drain Pipe

I was but five at the time; otherwise, I should have known better. As I sauntered past a drain pipe from a neighbor's roof gutter, I heard a curious buzzing sound. With the natural Hoosier ingenuity at my disposal, I took the broomstick stick horse that I had just dismounted and probed the darkness of the drain. The buzzing intensified and I met my first hornets. I abandoned the

horse to his fate and ran. Encouraged by the prods of the hornets, I attained Olympic speeds and charged through the nearest neighbor's back door. Looking through the screen at the angry circling hornets, I vowed never to stir a hornets' nest again. I probably have broken that vow with this article. Sadly, I am too old to run.

—Pastor Manley

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JANUARY 20, 2005

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 38)

state of deterioration. While the cycle shows how things begin as a "sect" moves to a "fellowship" and ultimately a "denomination," it then starts over after liberalism has taken over the denomination. There will be a split out of the denomination into a sect.

Back in the 1970s, I well remember attending a Youth Director's Conference at the old site of the Kansas City Baptist Temple. Dr. Towns was speaking to this group of youth workers who were primarily connected with the Baptist Bible Fellowship, Springfield, MO. With this statement as his foundation, he shared this sociological cycle. He said, "I am going to make a shocking statement. Before you get upset, listen to me." Here was the statement. "Someday Baptist Bible College will go liberal." He did not say when it would go liberal. He simply said that with time everything is bent toward deterioration and disintegration.

SUMMARY

Toleration of others is the strong emphasis in "Breaking Barriers!"

Such a word ("toleration") requires that I have a kind attitude toward others in spite of differing viewpoints and that others treat me in the same manner. However, I did not see that in this meeting. Instead, there was an emphasis to lay aside convictions in practice as per Monroe's statements on music and Dr. Rawlings' scorn of the camp in Oklahoma. There seemed to be intolerance toward those with convictions but a tolerance toward those without convictions. I understand tolerance to be a two-way street. Furthermore, why should anyone have convictions of godliness if convictions are to be downplayed? This foundation for the Independent Baptist Network will crumble because of the compromise.

All of the above is personal observation and my opinion. For these reasons, I cannot join or recommend that my church join with the Independent Baptist Network. Others will, but I cannot.

Bro. Bob Wallace

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acknowledgment is appreciated.

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 37)

Fundamentalists. The differentiating issue between these two [New Evangelicals and so-called Fundamentalists] is primarily one of practice. The Contemporary Music crowd, in my mind, would be primarily New Evangelical. They believe "the end justifies the means." The ultimate test of acceptability to them is soul winning, even if one is disobedient to the Scriptures. Paul emphatically declared to Timothy, "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." (II Timothy 2:5)

4. Can we truly have revival when the Scriptures are violated by compromising our practices? Dr. Monroe in his closing remarks said we need an old fashion revival and cited the passage in Acts 2, "They were all in one accord and in one place." He seems to imply that just as long as we are in accord on the earth then revival will come. Will it?

Amos asked, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Is that an agreement among Independent Baptist preachers? The context of that passage in Amos is a vertical agreement between man and God. We can be in an earthly union and not be in total agreement with God. If that is the case, there will be no revival. Furthermore, revival comes with a holy atmosphere, not through the laying aside of convictions.

5. Rather than having some geographical preaching and explanation sessions to form a super structure for the purpose of influence, why not pray for revival?

The super structure will cost a lot of money put into Baptist rat holes while revival will cost all of us much time in prayer.

6. Once a pastor or church joins a Fellowship or Network, he loses a voice in order to have a collective voice, which may not totally represent him and his church.

It is easy to join, but hard to separate when the occasion arises because many times allegiance to the Fellowship or Network is greater than it is to the local church.

7. The reference to the "Sociological Cycle of Church Growth" in Dr. Elmer Towns' book, "The Ten Largest Sunday Schools" is really a misinterpretation. The cycle shows how things are in a

(Continued on page 39)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 1)

The Fault In The Foundation Of Fundamentalism

Original Fundamentalism sprang from the sincerity of an earnest desire of multiple good men possessing a variety of ecclesiological persuasions to stand aggressively and actively in a united effort to battle what they genuinely (and very correctly) perceived as an attack upon "the faith once delivered to the saints." Observing the infiltration of theologians trained within German theological institutions in the insidious attacks upon the integrity of Scripture by the devotees of the higher criticism of Friedrich Schleiermacher, David Friedrich Strauss, and (among others) Ludwig Feuerbach, fearing the inculcation of the noxious anti-God teachings of Marx, Freud and Darwin (though some of the original Fundamentalists were theistic evolutionists), and seeing the favorable inclusion of overtly worldly philosophies within the leading publications of their own denominations, stalwart, stouthearted men united to oppose the enemy within and to battle the enemies without. They so feared that the apostasy of European Christianity would captivate and capture American Christians that they were *compelled* to engage the enemy. Interestingly, Fundamentalism originated in America and remains essentially an American development with British cooperation. Their concerns were definitely justified and some action unquestionably was warranted.

Prominent charismatic leaders were in fact ac-

(Continued on page 4)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 3)

tively promoting the tainted methodology of these internal apostates and those external enemies as favorable moves toward societal acceptance of a new Christianity without repentance or regeneration. By the subtle program of purposeful mutilation of doctrine and patterned corruption of Scripture, this modernistic, intellectual, and culturally appealing Christianity was effectively removing the offense of the cross and thereby gaining favor with the masses. This new gospel, destitute of grace, deficient of holiness, and devoid of the blood atonement, was inoffensive—even pleasing—to the moral depravity of post-war America and England. These men understood that the control of the structural frameworks of the mainline denominations—the colleges, universities, and seminaries, the publishing arms, the mission and social agencies, and the offices of leadership—was rapidly becoming infested gardens, whose restoration would require strenuous weeding. Since the infestation affected every mainline denomination simultaneously, concerned individuals, forgetting or ignoring the Biblical principles of waging spiritual warfare, turned to the arm of the flesh and sought strength in numbers and power in volume. Using the pragmatic adage, “The enemy of my enemy becomes my friend,” these sincerely exercised men, earnestly and perhaps unwittingly, agreed upon the principle of selective strategic surrender. Their concerns were spiritually justified; some action was warranted; however, their conclusion and the subsequent conduct that it dictated was biblically unwarranted.

(Continued on page 5)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 36)

In his statements about music and differentiation between core and circumference issues coupled with Dr. Rawlings' scorn toward the camp in Oklahoma for having rules, it appears that personal separation will be unimportant for them. This appears to be a primary target area of the theme, “Breaking Barriers!”

Careful evaluation by individual pastors and churches is needed as they consider whether to participate or not. Here are some questions for serious consideration.

a. Since the Bible is our rule for faith and practice, should we emphasize only doctrine (faith) as a basis for fellowship and exclude practice?

1. Should not our faith (doctrine) determine our practice?

2. Are not both equal in importance?

Belief always affects behavior, and conduct always reflects our creed.

b. How can a pastor avoid hypocrisy in this matter? In his local church, he stresses both doctrine and practice as important matters, but in joining up with the Independent Baptist Network, he must declare his practices as non-essential for the sake of unity.

It appears that the lowest standard will be sought. This is a repeat of Jeroboam's new religious practices for the Northern Kingdom. He sought men for his priesthood who would not have qualified scripturally in the days of Moses and Aaron.

3. There was a glaring absence in the historical presentation by Dr. Monroe concerning New Evangelicalism.

There is no question that this movement or philosophy has greatly impacted Fundamentalism. In the 1960's there were only three basic movements: Liberalism (Modernism, Neo-Orthodoxy), New Evangelicalism, and Fundamentalism. Today, there are 95 brands of Fundamentalism and most of them would fall into the camp of New Evangelicalism. Dr. Billy Graham bridged the gap between the conservatives and the liberals in his evangelistic crusades. Dr. Jerry Falwell bridges the gap between the New Evangelicals and some so-called

(Continued on page 38)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 35)

ceased to defend the faith.”

“We have split, split, split. It has cost us our influence.”

4. “We must discern what is core and circumference. There are some things I’ll die for, some I’ll fight over, and some I will fuss about.”
5. “Our priority is to become a movement (teamwork).”
“What is our common ground? One, it is the articles of faith; and two, it is our purpose.”
“No one church can fulfill the Great Commission. One Fellowship cannot fulfill the Great Commission.”
6. “We will not merge the Fellowships, but cooperate.”
7. “We have revised part of our bylaws.”

Bro. Manley, I shall now give you some observations for whatever they are worth.

Observations on the International Baptist Network

1. Why is such an organization needed? Dr. Bill Monroe says we can do more together than separately and that we need to be more influential.

Do we need another man-made organization to support financially?

If this organization will not be a merger of the BBF, WBF, and Southwide Baptist Fellowship, then what will be its function?

Monroe spent time telling us “why,” but nothing was said about “how” this Network will do what the Fellowships cannot do and what the local church cannot do. Frankly, it appears that Monroe is saying the local church has not and cannot fulfill the Great Commission. Thus, it needs help form the Network. There are many verses that support the existence of local churches, but where do we find any verses in the Bible that support the idea of an organized Fellowship and Network?

2. What will be the basis of participating in the Network? Dr. Monroe emphasized doctrine and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

(Continued on page 37)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 4)

Reader, may I request that you continue reading before you are ready to warm the tar and to rip the pillows. If, after reading, you determine that I have arrived at an unscriptural and therefore erroneous position, please write to offer a reasoned correction. Use the email [Jerald.L.Manley@gte.net] or the USPS [2200 West Michigan Avenue, Pensacola FL 32526]. I have a desire rightly to divide the word of God; and, while I believe I am correct in my understanding, I will gladly receive rectification. Sincere help is always appreciated by this preacher. Please read on and let me know if I need to print a retraction.

Facing this incoming tide of infidelity, in the name of a united front, mainline denominational giants agreed upon a resurrection and revision of Georg Calixius’s “consensus quinquesaecularis” and produced an innovative dual categorization for truth: “essential” and “non-essential.” Those doctrines deemed by them as “essential” were elevated and labeled “the fundamentals” and the leftovers were demoted and re-titled “denominational differences” and classified as the “non-essential.” These passionate warriors, in their zeal to defend the faith (at least the “essentials” of their doctrine) made what, fundamentally and essentially, was a “political decision.” These Fundamentalists, believing they were beleaguered men, agreed to the political expediency of cooperation and devised a formula so they might remove the internecine confrontation created by their *fraternal* differences. In the pursuit of the power of a coalition of multiplied voices raised in unity, truth was categorized and catalogued. This dissecting and dividing deceptively dismembered doctrine into a humanistic logical array of importance, resulting in a system that was well reasoned and finely structured but which sadly was built upon

(Continued on page 6)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 5)

a faulty premise. Any move to catalogue and to categorize truth into "essentials" and "non-essentials" is but the first step toward compromise. Once taken, that step sets the direction. That road of conciliation through concession is well traveled today. "The sin of majoring on minors" is among the most popular sermon texts with Contemporary Christian Music pastors and alleged Baptists presenting themselves as progressives, moderates, or non-denominationalists.

More than one source attributes this philosophy of dual classification to Augustine, even quoting him as having written, "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus autem caritas." [In essentials unity, in doubtful things liberty, but in all things, love.] The statement is variously cited as "In things essential (important), unity, in things non-essential (unimportant, doubtful, disputed), liberty, and in all things other (everything else), charity (love). Almost since its inception, Barton Stone's and Alexander Campbell's Church of Christ has used this slogan, and it has become the mantra of the Contemporary Fundamentalists (a.k.a. Progressives, Moderates). A debt is owed to Hans Rollmann, a Restoration (Church of Christ) scholar, who traced the history of this slogan. Though most often attributed to Richard Baxter or Charles Spurgeon by Baptists [though I recently read an article that wrongly ascribed the saying to Dr. Bob Jones Sr.], to St. Augustine by many Protestants and Catholics, or to Alexander Campbell by some in the Church of Christ Restoration Movement. The maxim comes to us as

(Continued on page 7)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 34)

spoke from Acts 3:1-11 with a message entitled "Fulfilling the Kingdom's Agenda." Using the story of Peter and John healing the lame man at the temple, he emphasized that we can do more together than by ourselves. He stated that the gospel of selfishness is a present attitude that displays itself in the following statement, "It is not our business." He said, "There is a horrid disfigurement [to Baptists] that churches can't come together.

Dr. John Rawlings opened the meeting on Monday night scanning the book of Amos in a Bible study approach, reading a verse and commenting. In the course of his message, he made some crude comments, a couple of which were about his sickly wife. He then told what the Rawlings Foundation was doing around the world and asked, with a tone of pride, "What are *you* doing?" There was a reference to some camp in Oklahoma that had a number of rules and regulations. It was evident that he disagreed with the camp's practice.

Dr. Bill Monroe was the last speaker. He opened with two references from the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 1:26, 28 were used to emphasize the discouragement by the brethren and Deuteronomy 32:30 emphasized the importance of teamwork: "one putting a thousand to flight and two putting ten thousand to flight." He introduced his message reading a historical review by W. A. Criswell, which dealt with the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy. From there, he talked about the Sociological Circle of Church growth in one of Elmer Town's books and how that concept connected with the Baptist Bible Fellowship. In the course of his message, Dr. Monroe made the following observations and statements.

1. "Music is so cultural" and "God has a wide musical palate."
2. He quoted Towns on the BBF. "The BBF will become the largest denomination if...
 - a. It does not split over personalities or schools.
 - b. It does not change emphasis of Sunday school evangelism to education.
 - c. It does not allow young men to grow.
 - d. It does not split over separation and Bible translation."
3. "We have turned on other Bible believing Baptists and

(Continued on page 36)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

*(Continued from page 33)**in various publications.—Pastor Manley*Baptist Pastor's Observations Concerning
The New International Baptist Network

"Breaking Barriers!" was the theme of the Texas Baptist Bible Fellowship Meeting, August 23-24, 2004, at the Southwood Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas.

In a promotional letter of invitation to pastors, Pastor Lloyd Taylor gave the theme as "Breaking Barriers Between Bible Believing Baptists." In that advertising communiqué, he listed the speakers as "Dr. John Rawlings, venerable Baptist leader, and the 90 year old Chairman of The Rawlings Foundation, Dr. Bill Monroe, Pastor of Florence Baptist Temple, Florence, SC, President of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, Inc. and President of the International Baptist Network; Dr. Douglas Brown, Pastor of Great Commission Baptist Church, Fort Worth, a predominantly African American congregation of 1500 present each Sunday morning that just broke ground on their new addition, a \$12, 000, 000.00 building project; and Rev, Jimmy Withers, Pastor of Aurora Baptist Church, Aurora, Texas."

The meeting registered 165 preachers consisting of pastors, staff workers, and missionaries. The two-day meeting was well attended with approximately 400 to 500 (including host church members and others) in the first service on Monday evening.

A contrast in the music throughout the meeting was very evident. The choir of Southwood Baptist Church opened the conference with several patriotic songs under the direction of Paul Duckett. The congregational music and the special music by Duckett were old fashioned and Christ honoring. Thereafter, the "flip side" of the gospel music renditions were presented with canned musical backgrounds and applauded. On several occasions, there was a standing ovation, which indicates praise to the performer rather than praise to the Lord.

As far as the preaching was concerned, Pastor Withers of the World Baptist Fellowship brought a great expository message on Elijah and the prophets of Baal. Dr. Douglas Brown

(Continued on page 35)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 6)

the sentiment borrowed from Georg Calixtus by Peter Meiderlin (writing as Rupertus Meldenius)—largely through the translation and publication by the Puritan Richard Baxter. The Latin citation as given above was apparently manufactured by Hoffman von Fallersleben, a Roman Catholic poet, in 1852 and attributed to Augustine to give it the creditability of ancient sainthood. After all, he could not cite his source as the *Lutheran* Peter Meiderlin!

Meldenius, according to Hoffman,

"raised his voice in the mid-1620 with a Latin book whose title translates as 'A Prayerful Admonition for Peace to the Theologians of the Augsburg Confession.' It is in this book that we find for the first time the saying also championed by the Restoration Movement, even if some of its intellectual roots reach back even farther into western religious and intellectual history."

Hoffman continues,

"While, in the words of Meldenius, 'concord strengthens weak things and discord demolishes great things,' he finds that the Scriptures urge humankind to practice charity in all of their endeavors. Does that mean that there is no need for doctrines? Certainly not. But only those doctrinal statements are necessary that center on salvation, follow unmistakably Scripture, have been formulated in universal confessional statements, and are considered true by the great majority of believing theologians. [*Consider the potential for debate allowed by this nebulous provision—Pastor Manley*] The insistence of belief in theological minutiae or non-essentials is in the mind of the author only designed to destroy Christianity itself. Here he invokes also a famous saying from the Stoic philosopher Seneca in vogue again since the Renaissance, in which he had warned of cramming the mind with unimportant things. 'We are ignorant,' Seneca writes, 'of essentials because we deal in non-essentials.'"

(Continued on page 8)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 7)

Meiderlin, in true Fundamentalist fashion, affirmed "salvific essentials while maintaining at the same time a responsible theological freedom." Hoffman then gives the exact quotation from Meiderlin:

"We would be in the best shape if we kept in essentials, Unity; in non-essentials, Liberty; and in both Charity." (Si nos servavimus in necessariis Unitatem, in non necessariis Libertatem, in utrisque Charitatem, optimo certe loco essent res nostrae).

Of course, the astute reader instantly observes that Von Fallersleben's fabricated Augustinian saying did not come from the Latin of Meiderlin. Von Fallersleben not only appropriated the name of Augustine, he made Augustine say what he wanted Augustine to say so that what Von Fallersleben wrote might have the greater weight of the authority of an antiquarian saint—a practice readily adapted by multiple Baptist preachers who portray their own thoughts as coming from the mouths of Bunyan, Spurgeon, Rice, Jones, or other *respected-but-always-departed* alleged legendary Mr. Big.

By whatever means the philosophy processed to establishment, the determination of "what is essential versus what is non-essential" is of human origin. To say that "only those doctrinal statements are necessary that center on salvation, follow unmistakably Scripture, have been formulated in universal confessional statements, and are considered true by the great majority of believing theologians" are essential is as wrong as to say, "the Pope declared it so" or "I decided it to be." Having ten thousand other Baptist preachers vote with me does not confer inspiration on the action.

(Continued on page 9)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 32)

to persecute the ana-Baptists. The second definition is "a member of any of several church denominations denying the universal authority of the Pope and affirming the Reformation principles of justification by faith alone, the priesthood of all believers, and the primacy of the Bible as the only source of revealed truth." Baptists were not participants of the Reformation.

3 Meriam Webster defines denomination as "a religious organization whose congregations are united in their adherence to its beliefs and practices." Baptists, other than strict Convention Baptists and those Association Baptist churches that enter into signed agreements, do not meet the definition. Each church is independent in government and in doctrine and practice. Baptists do not owe allegiance to a creed.

4 Indeed, the pressure to be a Fundamentalist was not a constraint to a de-emphasis of differences as much as it was a coercion to concentrate on agreements and required, among the Baptists, a planned departure from accentuating the heritage of Baptist. As a result, few Baptists living in the last 100 years have held any concept of either Baptist distinctives or Baptist history. The contemporary epidemic of Baptist churches marching to the non-denominational drum beat is proof positive of the pitiful training given in Baptist churches. Unfortunately, my experience suggests to me that not 1 of 100 professed Baptist preachers have read Orchard, Christian, Ford, Carroll, or even Armitage, let alone Benedict, Cathcart, or Backus. The failure of Baptist churches and institutions to teach the history of Baptists to Baptists will, of necessity, require a coming generation of Baptists to relearn that history by living through the same persecutions and sufferings as did their Baptist forefathers.

5 I use the plural because baptism is simultaneously an act of obedience by a believer and an act of obedience by a church.

6 I sat, by invitation, in one such reformulation conclave of self-supposed "evangelicals" where the proposal for fellowship and cooperation was moved as "the agreement to be the Person of Christ as we individually perceive Him to be."

7 I am also a pre-tribulation Rapturist and a pre-millennium Adventist, who is ardently pro-Semitic. Additionally, I am decidedly not an Armenian or Augustinian (a.k.a. Calvinist or, as slanderously mislabeled, Pauline), Moderate or Progressive, Contemporary or Charismatic, Inter- or Non-Denominational, Ecumenical or Catholic, Reformed or Seventh Day, Covenantal or Dispensational Protestant.

8 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:1,2)

9 I have often wondered if "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" are the true Fundamentals of the Faith. Consider the relationship of the following passages.

2 John

7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. 9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

Hebrews 6

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

10 Novel, according to Meriam-Webster, "applies to what is not only new but strange or unprecedented"; certainly, a most fitting description of those to whom I refer.

A SPECIAL REPORT

Pastor Bob Wallace (Regency Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas) provided this report and commentary. I pass it along because it presents information that differs from much of what I am reading

(Continued on page 34)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 31)

cooperation until in this generation it has become a web of collaboration. For example, the *Cooperative Evangelism* of Dr. Billy Graham (where modernists supported) has been remolded into the *Collaborative Evangelism* (where the world participates) of Doctors Warren, Hybels, Falwell, et al. Many, perhaps the majority, of those describing themselves as Fundamentalists in this generation are so far removed from the philosophy of the founding Fundamentalist as to be linked only by retaining the same name. One may accurately describe these evolved novel-fundamentalists as having the name but not the nature. Apparently, the only partial "fundamental" remaining for this popular contemporary Fundamentalism is a synthetic anemic pseudo-gospel promising a better life and requiring no cross to bear. The first generation Fundamentalists would find nothing in common with the services of a seeker-friendly, purpose-driven, Contemporary Christian Movement "worship center." The same is true for the surviving spiritual descendents of those first Fundamentalists.

As those who remain true to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls wait for the Rapture, they shall comprehend *by experience* what the LORD Jesus meant when He asked, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) Sadly, He is again being wounded in the house of those who claim to be His *friends*. (Zechariah 13:6)

—Pastor Manley

ENDNOTES

¹ As Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen, one of the prime movers in the formation of the modern conservative political movement, often reminded his companions on that journey, "politics is the art of compromise."

² Merriam Webster provides the first definition of Protestant as "any of a group of German princes and cities presenting a defense of freedom of conscience against an edict of the Diet of Spires in 1529 intended to suppress the Lutheran movement." The only thing the Diet of Spires unanimously agreed upon was

(Continued on page 33)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 8)

Scripture grants to no individual or conglomerate collection of individuals—no matter how educated or how esteemed—the authority to relegate any portion of truth to the dustbin of non-essentiality; therefore, I maintain that the system that the first Fundamentalists devised, no matter how noble or how logical, was a flawed scheme. Christ left no Vicar on earth, and He assigned to no assembly of divines or gathering of preachers the responsibility of adjudicating the proportional weight of any command. The charge from Heaven's Throne was and is to "preach the word"; that instruction did not include any sanction for any believer to minimize and to maximize truth into sundry segments of comparative or relative worth. Truth is a composite whole and not an omnium-gatherum. Truth is not an amalgamated compound, a miscellaneous collection of unconnected concepts loosely affixed to each other by the adhesive of commonality. Truth is a unity; truth is not even a union. When the Fundamentalists adopted the role of fractionators, they exceeded their authority.

Scripture does not grant such a prerogative to humanity—any humanity; Scripture does record, however, in Matthew 5 that the LORD Jesus directly addressed this specific issue, leaving no doubt as to whether He issued superior and inferior commandments.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these

(Continued on page 10)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED*(Continued from page 9)*

least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Some have inferred that the LORD Jesus actually left open the possibility that some commandments were greater and others are lesser commands when He spoke of "one of these least commandments." However, it is as earnestly understood (and more likely correctly explained) that the LORD Jesus was answering the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees who had developed a detailed system of commandments that ranked those commands in a logical order of importance. Regardless, the plain reading of the wording of the passage cannot give any aid or comfort to those who wish to adopt any artificial and synthetic classification, which cataloguing could only be scripturally described as both fictitious and spurious. The LORD Jesus extended no dispensation to set aside a single "one of these least commandments" or to teach others to ignore "one of these least commandments"; the only honest approach to the passage is to acknowledge that he warned against breaking or teaching anyone to break the least of His commands. Sound exegesis of His comment, therefore, would demand the exact and same respect and total obedience to the least as to the greatest.

Matthew 23 records a continuation of this same theme in His teachings. In this passage, the LORD Je-

*(Continued on page 11)***FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED***(Continued from page 30)*

ment of Kingdom business requires the propagation and the defense of much more than the Fundamentals. The Fundamentals are acknowledged by the legitimate definition of the term and by Fundamentalists to be only a portion of the message entrusted by the King to His stewards. Merely delivering a percentage of the message, however sizeable that fraction, is not full obedience; but it is instead fully disobedience.

When Baptists become exclusively Fundamentalists and ignore the rest of the doctrines of Scripture, they produce a generation of church members (1) who do not know their heritage or their doctrine and (2) who will soon sacrifice both for the mantle of non-denominationalism or even non-"churchism." The LORD Jesus did not establish or commission a network; the Chief Shepherd instituted His church and delegated to that church the responsibility to keep His commands, even to the least of them. The church that the LORD Jesus built endures, surviving even her misguided friends; but every fellowship, association, convention, institution, agency, -ism, and the various networks constructed to connect collections of them has fallen or will fall into heresy and apostasy. Human ingenuity will never conceive a better program than that which was designed and called into existence by the King of kings.

I have not written to impugn the intent of the first generation of Fundamentalist but to explain why succeeding generations of Fundamentalists have produced those who have expanded the net of

(Continued on page 32)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 29)

that the movement is formulated on the premise that it is right to do wrong in order to do right: the founders disregarded selected doctrines evaluated by the majority of recognized authorities to be of lesser importance and, therefore, "non-essential" in their pursuit of contending for the doctrines that were accepted by those same authorities as the central core or "essential" doctrines. Each succeeding generation of Fundamentalists has been infected with its own self-grown revisionists who have redefined the sliding scale of the Fundamentals. Certain selected Bible truths are considered sacrosanct while other truths of Scripture are sacrificed for the greater good. In essence, Fundamentalism is founded upon a system of venial disobedience and mortal unfaithfulness. To minimize a doctrine considered "fundamental" is recognized in Fundamentalism as sinful compromise; but to violate one of the "non-fundamentals" is acceptable, even commendable, under this scheme to preach less than "all the counsel of God" for the greater good of defending "all the counsel of God." This fundamental flaw in the reasoning of the founders renders the foundation faulty.

I believe that the Fundamentals should be defended, even to physical death. I also insist that those who believe in the fundamentals ought not to fellowship with those who deny the fundamentals, but should rebuke them, mark them, avoid them, separate from them, and, as need be, contend with them for the fundamentals. However, I am equally convinced that faithfulness to the King and fulfill-

(Continued on page 31)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 10)

sus commends the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees for obeying the lighter matters of the law, but condemns them because they "have omitted the weightier matters of the law."

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

To label, as did the LORD Jesus, these learned students of the Law as blind gnat-straining-camel-swallowing hypocrites is not to compliment, but to condemn them.

There is absolutely no basis in Scripture for any dissecting categorization of doctrine as lesser and greater or as lighter and weightier. The apostle Paul specifically opposed any such concept when he instructed Timothy (1 Timothy 5:21) to observe "these things" (Trace the content of "these things" in 3:14, 4:6, 4:11, 4:15, 5:7, 5:21, 6:2.) evenly and equally.

I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. The apostle also reminded (Acts 20:27) the elders from Ephesus that he had "not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." It was not within the apostolic call of Paul to practice an expedient policy of selective strategic surrender of even "one of these least commandments" and he reminds them that "in season, out of season" he had been faithful.

(Continued on page 12)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 11)

The LORD Jesus used a particularly descriptive metaphor in His parable recorded in Matthew 7. When referring to His "sayings," the LORD Jesus selected the symbolism of a rock.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

A rock divided produces a gravel pit, not a foundation. Sand, after all, is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a loose granular material that results from the disintegration of rocks." To disintegrate means [according to Merriam-Webster] as a transitive verb, "1. to break or decompose into constituent elements, parts, or small particles; 2: to destroy the unity or integrity of" or, as an intransitive verb, "1: to break or separate into constituent elements or parts; 2: to lose unity or integrity by or as if by breaking into parts." When truth is disintegrated, truth is destroyed. Truth cannot be decomposed into "constituent elements" and retain its strength. Truth is a unified unity. I wrote in February 2002, concerning the unity of Truth.

Unlike brass or wood, unvarnished truth always remains unchangeable and always retains its luster. It neither ages nor dulls and never deteriorates. Truth requires no sugared coating. Truth needs no sweetened covering. Truth necessitates no saccharine shell. A little bit of sugar, may "make the medicine go down," but any (and every) additive alters truth. Truth al-

(Continued on page 13)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 28)

("it is required") for protecting the integrity and the sanctity of that communication. His argument rests on the premise that when the LORD Jesus *delegated the message to His stewards that He did not include the authorization for those stewards to reword the message. The stewards of Christ are obligated to deliver the message precisely and completely as received* ("be found faithful").

Those who are lost (*all* unbelievers) are engaged in rebellious warfare against the King; they are individually and collectively at enmity with Him personally. The ambassador of the King cannot compromise his mission by renegotiating the terms of surrender. The ambassador is not a *mediator* charged to bring peace between the King and the King's enemies; the ambassador is a messenger obligated to convey the entirety of the word of the King. To assume the role of arbitrator is for the ambassador to commit treason and to become a rebel himself by placing himself positionally between the King and the King's enemies. The King's business is not accomplished by or through the compromise of his stewards. The kingdom is not well served by any steward who alters the commands of the King and no ambassador who violates or instructs others in the art of violating the least of the commandments of the King will receive a "well done" from the King.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

The underlying difficulty with Fundamentalism is

(Continued on page 30)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 27)

New Testament (in that I believe the LORD Jesus founded the church during His earthly sojourn before the crucifixion),

Primitive (in that I believe that there exists no higher authority than the local church),

Bible (in that I believe [1.] that God continues to have a purpose for Israel—not all the prophecies of the Old Testament have been fulfilled and [2.] that the Bible is the sole and final authority for all matters of faith and practice),

Christian (in that I believe we ought to be Christ-like in our lives),

Landmark, (in that I do believe these above listed ancient landmarks ought not to be moved and that every attempt to do so must be met with resistance),

Baptist (in that I believe in actively contending for the entirety of the faith once delivered to the saints).

AFTERWARD

Let no reader misunderstand: it is proper, indeed both necessary and righteous, to contend for those Fundamentals of the faith that are essential to salvation. It is equally indispensable, however, to contend simultaneously for the Fundamentals of the faith that are essential for faithful obedience. The apostle reminded the Corinthians that he and Apollos were stewards—those who have been entrusted with a treasure, in this instance “a message,” (“the mysteries of God”) and who will be held accountable

(Continued on page 29)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 12)

tered is error alleged. The laws of mathematics are not applicable in the realm of truth. Truth endures neither multiplication nor division. Truth never survives either subtraction or addition. Truth cannot not be factored or fractionalized.

Truth is never measured in percentages nor metered with qualifications. Truth has no disclaimers. Entirety wants nothing. Purity has neither surplus nor lack. Wholeness disappears with more or less. Perfection can accept no more and can lose not any. Truth is entire, pure, whole, and perfect. Any deviation in the slightest in even one of these qualities and that which laid claim to be truth may be unhesitatingly identified as but a counterfeit, a substitute, a sham, a fraud, a fake, a phony, an imitation.

Truth is truth—singular, complete, unique, exclusive, and absolute. Error is error even when allegedly salted with “an element of truth.” Truth has no elements, no components, no ingredients; truth is wholeness. Truth sliced is truth slaughtered. A particle of truth severed from the body of truth cannot survive the separation. Such dead particles cannot revive dead error. The eternal law is that “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” not “a little truth sanctifyeth the whole lump.” Evil and truth work with exactly opposite methodology. Evil begins small, spreads sporadically, finally contaminating all. Truth convicts and regenerates, transforming all. The philosophy that it is acceptable to tolerate error so that truth will finally triumph is faulty in its concept.

Truth is self-supporting, self-sustaining, and self-sufficient. Men may say, “The truth lies between,” but truth stands apart and alone. One or another cause or person “may not survive the truth,” but truth survives all exposure and thrives on openness. Freedom requires the constant vigilance of defense; but truth needs no help, no assistance, and no defense. Truth is eternal. Truth commands no protection, demands no support, and requires no maintenance. Truth stands; truth endures; truth is ‘whate’er betide.”

It is worthy of serious consideration to realize that the believer is not instructed by the word of God to “defend the faith.” The command is the exact opposite—not to defend, though surely not to surrender, but to actively engage error in conflict.

Jude

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. 4 For

(Continued on page 14)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED*(Continued from page 13)*

there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The believer is given a sword, ordered to put on the whole armor, and to "earnestly contend for the faith." The sword is for combat, for offense, for contending. A warrior whose mission in life is to defend his sword from attack has already lost the battle. The sword is not a defensive weapon; the sword does not require protection. Christians have become so concerned with the perceived need of "contending without being contentious" that they fear the offense of confrontation with the enemy and fail to engage the battle. A soldier unable to bear the sight of blood, whether his own or that of others, is useful only as a decoration. There is no place in the battle zone for decorative soldiers; there is, however, a strong demand for soldiers worthy of decoration. One does not get to parade grounds without passing through the battlegrounds. The point on the sword is not intended nor is it at all suitable for use as a knitting needle. It thrusts and parries, slices and dices, all quite well, but it does not stitch or pearl very well. The two-edged sword is a weapon and has no safe side.

The contemporary motivation to shape truth to make it appealing, to season truth to make it appetizing, and to style truth to make it accommodating is satanic in origin, carnal in delivery, and temporary in results. Conciliation is compromise whatever the apparent visible results. Compromise is the beggarly attempt to reduce the risk of exposure and to increase the possibility of acceptance. The first of these two excuses is cowardice and the second treason. No authority is delegated by the God Who gave the word for anyone to modify a single line of the communication entrusted: it was once delivered. To assume the possession of such right is presumptive arrogance unworthy of a messenger of the KING. Manipulation of the message by the messenger is manifestly malfeasance.

Using the plainest language possible, I believe that the sincere, earnest, stalwart, stouthearted men that comprised the first generation of Fundamentalists established their cooperation upon a faulty foundation. They established a ranking or grading system to classify doctrine into "fundamentals" or "essentials" and "non-

*(Continued on page 15)***FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED***(Continued from page 26)*

Southern (in that I am a descendent of southern heritage and reside in the Deep South),

American (in that I was born in the North and still live in the United States),

Orthodox (in that I hold to the long established lineage of Christian doctrine),

Evangelical (in that I believe all humanity has the need for salvation including the "heathen"),

Freewill (in that I believe it is not the will of the Godhead for any to perish and that God has given soul liberty to every soul),

Particular (in that I believe particular souls will be saved),

General (in that I believe that Christ Jesus died for all),

Regular (in that I believe that salvation is entirely a work of grace),

Conservative (in that I am slow to move toward a change),

Separatist (in that I believe Christians need to separate from the world, the flesh, and the devil—especially in religious matters),

Militant (in that I believe that Biblical Christianity is worthy of any fight),

Fundamental (in that I do indeed believe in the fundamentals of the faith),

Sovereignist (in that I believe Almighty is in full control of all creation),

Independent (in that I belong to no Convention, Association, or Fellowship),

(Continued on page 28)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 25)

ism makes the self-identification, "I am a Fundamentalist," nearly worthless as any guide to the actual doctrinal position of the individual making the claim. When one factors in the generic looseness in the use of the term by Christians *and* the secular world, the term "Fundamentalist" has little credibility to offer a definition of rightness. When descendants of Dr. John R. Rice (the author of Bobbed-Hair, Bossy Wives, and Women Preachers) label Liberty University as being *more* fundamentalist than The Sword of the LORD, every observant observer obviously observes the obvious observation that the word "fundamentalist" is a term with great effervescent fluidity. Defining who and what one believes requires far more than one term in the Twenty-First Century and those selected words of definition then require a precise definition.

In the course of the years, I have found that it is continually necessary to *expand* the identifiers employed, rather than discovering any leisure to *reduce* them in order to *narrow* the application of the term and not to allow it to be *expanded* into meaninglessness. Therefore, at the latest publication, I must classify myself (*with tongue only partially in my cheek*) as a TRADITIONAL SOUTHERN AMERICAN ORTHODOX EVANGELICAL FREWILL PARTICULAR GENERAL REGULAR CONSERVATIVE SEPARATIST MILITANT FUNDAMENTAL SOVEREIGNIST INDEPENDENT NEW TESTAMENT PRIMITIVE BIBLE CHRISTIAN LANDMARK BAPTIST.

*By definition, I am a unashamedly a
Traditional (in that I follow the patterns left
by my spiritual forefathers),*

(Continued on page 27)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 14)

fundamentals" or "non-essentials." They laid a foundation, which they had no Biblical permission to lay. I do not question the apprehension that stirred them. I do not doubt the sincerity that motivated them. My question, my concern, and my disagreement rest on the "foundation" that they laid. I long wrestled with this statement; it is not an expression of wisdom lightly to repudiate the endeavors of earnest, sincere, stalwart men—especially men expressing a desire to serve God. In spite of the love and the respect that I have for them individually and notwithstanding the mighty effort that they expended, I cannot endorse the doorway to compromise that they opened.

With a rapidly growing onslaught, Biblical truth was attacked from within their structural and organizational affiliations; the danger of spiritual traitors working within their denominational configurations was beyond grave. Their tangible possessions, obtained through generations of individual sacrifices, were being stolen—arrogantly appropriated by those who denied the very truths that had erected the edifices involved. As these indignant men observed their colleges, universities, and seminaries, the publishing arms, the mission and social agencies, and the offices of denominational leadership being used to propagate error, they determined to fight to retain their possessions and their investments. The primary battle was for physical control of material objects.

I am not discounting the spiritual issues involved; these were genuine concerns; but the war was waged

(Continued on page 16)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 15)

just as equally to hold the organizational and physical structures of the denominations involved and, perhaps, to maintain the prestige and security they implied. A quick survey of the various histories of the era confirms that this struggle was actually not to retain but to regain. By the time these sincere, stalwart, stouthearted men took up the verbal arms to battle the modernists, the enemies of truth were entrenched in such positions of power that they already controlled the institutions and the agencies of the various denominations. The fight for possession was lost in most quarters quickly and the Fundamentalists were compelled to establish new denominations and to reproduce the multiplied accompanying boards, agencies, and educational institutions. Not one denomination was salvaged. The Fundamentalists were pressured to leave by direct opposition or were compelled to leave by the force of their convictions. This struggle varied within the different denominations, with some departures coming early while others drag on for decades. In general terms, though the concerns began rising in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century, the Modernist [gradually shifting in identification to "liberal"] and Fundamentalist controversy within denominations extended from very early in the Twentieth Century though the 1980s, though the major estrangements were finished by the end of the 1950s.

While I do not define Baptists either as Protestants or as a denomination, convention Baptists traveled through the same struggles as did the mainline denominations. The American Baptist Con-

(Continued on page 17)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 24)

Orthodox redefined the orthodox doctrines to placate intellectualism.

The Contemporary Christian Movement is merely the latest neo-coterie of Fundamentalists claiming to walk in the lineage of the Fundamentalists and to believe the Fundamentals but who in direct contrast with the Fundamentalists practice, actively and openly, the denial of the separationist and militancy aspects entirely. In their concept of Fundamentalism—and my readers should make no mistake in this matter; the most cursory reading of their publications will evince that Bill Hybels, Rick Warren, Jerry Falwell, John Rawlings, and others of their brethren identify themselves as Fundamentalists in doctrine—the Moderates, Progressives, and Contemporary Christian Movement men validate no necessity of separation from any entities other than Darwinism, pro-choice advocates, and gay/lesbian activists (except to occasionally hire such as a ghost writer). The inclusion of the music and the philosophy of the world are not only acceptable in their revised definition of Fundamentalism; these deviations are desirable to these market driven merchants, even commendable, because they remove the horrible stigma of Fundamentalism, making it palatable to a new generation of wrongly described "seekers." The current effort to create an official out-in-the-open Baptist network (predicted in The Rise and Fall of Baptist Empires) is simply the latest revised edition of the reduced list of alleged unifying fundamental doctrines.

This ever-evolving Fundamentals of Fundamental-

(Continued on page 26)

*FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED**(Continued from page 23)*

ter men of their age, but only men nonetheless. Fundamentalism, in practice, was founded and it remains, in principle, a system of expediency.

The Fundamentalist foundation was faulty because it rested within the cement of an ecumenical compromise. The founding principle of Fundamentalism was a *limited* compromise grounded in a sincere united desire to oppose the machinations of modernism. With that premise of selective compromise accepted and established as valid and proper, the succeeding generations of Fundamentalists have regularly endured continuous struggles as those within the movement have continually moved the standard of recognition. From the beginning, Fundamentalism was a compromise—the only uncertainty in Fundamentalism was (and continues to be) the extent to which the compromise would evolve. The perpetual struggle among professing Fundamentalists is to redefine yet another “essential” as a “non-essential.”

Among the first to challenge the separationist and militancy aspects of the movement were those who identified themselves as “Evangelicals.” These individuals declared a belief in the “fundamentals” of the faith, but concurrently insisted that militant separation was “unloving” and that they were free to fellowship with and to cooperate with those who did not adhere to *all* of those Fundamentals. The New Evangelicals would later consider themselves free to cooperate and to fellowship with the very modernists that their Fundamentalists forefathers separated from and warred against. The Neo-

*(Continued on page 25)**FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED**(Continued from page 16)*

vention (the old Northern Baptist Convention) fell to modernism very early in the 20th Century with various groups of Baptists withdrawing in a rather steady stream. The Southern Baptist Convention had what seems to be the longest struggle with the modernist conflict [the “Liberals” of the 1950s and the “Moderates” of today] with the Fundamentalists [who moderated into “Conservatives”] giving continued evidence of potential flare-up. Within the various resulting Associations and Fellowships of those Baptists exiting the conventions or that were populated by Independents, similar battles have continued. Fellowshiping groups of Baptists seem to have a congenital tendency for a rupture erupting every decade or so.

The first Fundamentalists decisively lost the struggle for the control of the denominational structures. Without exception, they were compelled to leave their denominational homes. Some formed new denominations in compliance with their former affiliations, and other Fundamentalists chose to establish their ministries centered exclusively on the “fundamentals” to the exclusion of any doctrine or practice that might be interpreted as denominational, creating in effect non-denominational denominations. These latter Fundamentalists chose to avoid taking a position on the mode or timing of baptism, the security of the believer, any definitive statement on the timing of the return of Christ, and anything else that extended beyond the “fundamentals.” The entirety of their doctrinal position was this focusing only on the “fundamentals.”

(Continued on page 18)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 17)

All else was deemed denominational quibbling and, by consensus, worthy to be ignored.

While conferences and individuals had raised opposition to the rise of Modernism for the previous half century, the publication of twelve volumes of sermons and articles (first released in 1909 and became known as The Fundamentals) is generally marked as the firing of the first major shot in the war. Two wealthy laymen funded the first printing of the work and covered the cost of handling and mailing over 300,000 copies sent throughout the world. The titles and the affiliations of the writers make a valuable study. The study is informative in two ways: Firstly, in what is revealed as to limitation of the subjects considered fundamental issues worthy of contention and, Secondly, in the demonstration of the variation of the denominations of the men uniting in the struggle. In order to keep any semblance of union, the men (and one woman) who wrote the articles had to avoid all issues over which they would or might disagree. *[Please, take the time to read the endnotes.]* Primarily, the contentious doctrine would have been baptism; but other divisive issues were likewise avoided. The doctrines of eschatology are conspicuously indecisive in The Fundamentals. The inclusion of certain controversial figures is also intriguing. If you have read my articles on Charles Finney and his aberrations (What The Dead Man Wrote, July, August 2004), then you will have some understanding for what is involved when the second writer appearing in The Fundamentals was Finney devotee George Fredrick Wright of Ober-

(Continued on page 19)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 22)

same fashion, to choose to ignore a doctrine causes that doctrine to be minimized and eventually to be dismissed from any importance.

This sanctioned practice of the fundamental compromise of selected doctrines by the first Fundamentalists laid the foundation for the continued surrender of doctrines by later Fundamentalist generations. Compromise has been the one consistent trait of Fundamentalism. When the founding Fundamentalists extended equal recognition based on their innovative two-tiered system of essentials and non-essentials, they established the precedent, not for *non-denominational differences* cooperation, but for *non-essential doctrinal* cooperation. From that acceptance forward, the battle *within Fundamentalism* would become “which doctrine is essential” and therefore the continuing issue within Fundamentalism today remains “*who are the real Fundamentalists?*” Fundamentalists and Progressives are struggling within the Baptist Bible Fellowship, the World Baptist Fellowship, Southwide Baptist Fellowship and others at this hour. The shouting is centered on what are the “fundamentals” of doctrine—what are the basic, essential elements on which fellowship and cooperative labors may be acceptably engaged—*what exactly is the lowest common denominator of truth?* The foundation is simply not permanent; it continually changes, because the foundation of Fundamentalism is fluid. It could not rest on permanence—because it was not established on absolutes. It originated not in Scripture but in the hearts and minds of men—good men to be sure—likely the bet-

(Continued on page 24)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 21)

But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.). The issue is not open to discussion.

In pursuit of clarity, let it be understood that I am contending that if a person is trusting in his or her baptism to have any connection to securing his or her salvation then that person is not accepting or receiving the salvation provided in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Baptism had no part in the salvation of those who lived in the past, has no part in the salvation of those living in the present, and never will have any part in the salvation of those who shall live in the future. It is simply not an ingredient in salvation. Those who place any trust in baptism for removing original sin or personal sins are not trusting in the finished work of the LORD Jesus. They have received "another gospel"—a gospel of damnation, not the Gospel of salvation. For the Fundamentalist notable that so carefully instructed me to contend otherwise was for him to validate "another gospel" in the same way that the Galatians did, requiring the condemnation of the Apostle.

The same lack of differentiation involved those who held to salvation by grace alone and those who taught that a person was required to maintain good works in order to remain saved. Other doctrines were demoted in like fashion to "non-essentials" and de-emphasized to the level of "being ignored." That which is ignored is quickly forgotten. It is a maxim that we only remember that which we intentionally chose not to forget. Remembrance is an active and positive performance—it requires effort. In the

(Continued on page 23)

FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

(Continued from page 18)

lin College. The collection of contributors is revealing as to the depth of de-emphasis on the obvious divisive issues and the range of concessions that such a "harmony" required—consider that among those writing were Dispensational and Covenantal, theistic evolutional and strict creationists, premillenarian and post-millenarian, Keswick and Perfectionist advocates, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Plymouth Brethren, Northern Baptists, Southern Baptists, English Baptists, Congregationalists, Calvinist Methodists, and one woman of controversial reputation and questionable beliefs.

While contemporary independent Baptists have acquired the tendency to consider themselves as the *original* Fundamentalists, Baptists of any stripe were not the predominant contributors to *The Fundamentals*; Baptist writers were a distinct minority and largely represented by convention Baptists and not by unaffiliated, independent Baptists. Though the "patron saint" of many independent Baptists, J. Frank Norris used "The Fundamentalist" as the title for his publication, Norris was not in the first cast of Fundamentalists. Princeton graduates actually led the first generation of Fundamentalists. Presbyterians might run from the term today; but they were the lead dogs of the first pack. That may simply have resulted from the fact that they were the most highly educated Fundamentalist clergy and thus deemed most worthy of writing the defenses. Fundamental institutions of education, especially seminaries, were nearly non-existent in the first half of

(Continued on page 20)

*FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED**(Continued from page 19)*

the Twentieth Century. As the Fundamentalists realized they could not redeem the denominational schools, they began to open places of instruction, predominantly Bible institutes. The more successful of these concentrated exclusively on the "fundamentals" and avoided any emphasis on doctrine or practice that differed among the denominations of the Fundamentalists. This might well have been developed with a measure of expediency. Collecting a student body required a wide net and some find keeping them demanding an ever-widening one. The historical pattern of Bible colleges has been that of steadily surrendering an ever-increasing number of "non-essential" practices and doctrine.

As already indicated, most often, writers suggest that the criterion for the decision as to what originally constituted a "fundamental" was whether it was "essential for salvation." If this principle was the pattern, it was assuredly not followed. For instance, those who viewed baptism as "removing original sin" or "entering the covenant" were as accepted within Fundamentalism as were those who proclaimed baptism as being the acts of obedience to the command of Christ *and* the public identification of a believer with Christ and His people. Baptism is certainly not essential for salvation—but to grant equality of recognition to those who do teach that baptism *is* essential is wrong. In a conversation several years ago, one of the then notable leaders of the Fundamentalism of that day suggested that since baptism is not essential to salvation, should a person believe in the atonement of the blood of

*(Continued on page 21)**FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED**(Continued from page 20)*

Christ and yet mistakenly thought that his baptism helped in his salvation, then I should not make a fuss because "after all, he does believe in what is essential." The obvious acceptance of what is "*after all*" another Gospel never could register with the man. He refused to make the "purpose" of baptism an issue in the same way that he insisted that the "mode" of baptism was not an issue to salvation—and that was his exact example to prove this to me. While previous generations of believers had suffered, even unto death, by refusing to accept infant baptism—even in this very nation—the first generation of Fundamentalists and their descendents were eagerly yoking with descendents of those who had slaughtered their doctrinal forefathers.

A person will not enter heaven because he or she has been baptized, was sprinkled, had water poured on his/her head, or received none of the above. Water, administered in any fashion to a person, does not make the difference in heaven and hell for that individual. Faith does make the difference, and faith in water (sprinkled, poured, or burying) is not the same as faith in the LORD Jesus Christ. Those who teach that administration of the act of baptism to an individual (whether as an oblivious baby or as a consenting adult) is a requisite part of salvation are proclaiming "another gospel"—a gospel that is vastly different from the Gospel of Christ. Their doctrine alters grace by adding a work to grace thereby transmogrifying grace into work and work is not grace (Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.

(Continued on page 22)