FOUNDERS JOURNAL

FROM FOUNDERS MINISTRIES | SUMMER 2013 | ISSUE 93

CAN BAPTISTS THRIVE ON CONTRIVERSY?


The Founders Journal
Committed to historic Baptist principles
Issue 93
Summer 2013
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Contributors

Matthew Lyon is a student in the PhD program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

Dr Tom J. Nettles is Professor of Historical Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

Erik Smith is a student in the PhD program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

Cover Image by Ken Puls: Stone wall on battleground near Fredericksburg, VA

The Founders Journal

Issue 93: Summer 2013

Editor: Thomas K. Ascol

Associate Editor: Tom J. Nettles

Design Editor: Kenneth A. Puls

Contributing Editors: Bill Ascol, Timothy George, Fred Malone, Joe Nesom, Phil Newton, Don Whitney, Hal Wynn.

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Or contact us by phone at (239) 772-1400 or fax at (239) 772-1140.

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Can Baptists Thrive on Controversy?

Editorial Introduction

Tom J. Nettles

Controversies within Puritanism, and then Separatism, led to the sixteenth-century development of Baptist life. In the quest for a pure church, the New Testament practice and command of baptizing those that believed, made it clear that a church of visible saints could only be constituted on that basis. Those that reached that conviction endured years of hostility and persecution for their conscientious commitment to the biblical model. They could not compromise, however, on such a clearly revealed biblical doctrine and they preferred suffering to disobedience. That kind of tenacity about the inviolability of biblical truth has led to over four hundred years of controversies between Baptists and other groups, and internecine battles between Baptists. At the same time, a positive movement into the world with the gospel in the hope and confidence that gospel truth would convert sinners advanced. Whether ongoing controversy retarded or aided this movement could be a matter of interesting discussion. Historical and biblical evidence could be presented for both enhancement and detraction; the nature and the severity of the topics of controversy would likely yield different conclusions on a case by case discussion.

Surely Walter Shurden has caught something intrinsically true about the Baptist commitment to purity and its tendency to multiply investigations, tensions, controversy and divisions in his book *Not A Silent People*. Sometimes the issues were ethical, sometimes merely sociological, sometimes major theological differences, and sometimes less destructive differences. All of them, however, indicate an intensity about the nature of conviction that at least ostensibly supports the idea of church purity. Along the pilgrimage toward unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, how much diversity is consistent with the ability to maintain a commitment to "like faith and order?"

This edition of the *Founders Journal* looks at three times of intense controversy in Baptist life. Each controversy was of a different sort and called for resolutions of different kinds. Erik Smith, a student in the PhD program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary looks at the Campbell controversy of the first half of the nineteenth century. The implications of the theological differences between Campbell, his followers, and the confessionally consistent Baptists

led to the alienation of Campbell from Baptist fellowship. Though some attempts were made to bridge the differences and achieve reunification, the differences still appeared unsurpassable. The maintenance of Campbell's distinctive views simply was not Baptist.

The late nineteenth century witnessed the short but volatile controversy between Spurgeon and the Baptist Union. This led to the separation of Spurgeon from the Union within six months of the beginning of the controversy. For Spurgeon, as hopefully for Southern Baptists, it was impossible to achieve fellowship with those that denied Christ's essential deity, the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, the personality and necessary operations of the Holy Spirit, the eternality of the punishment of those not justified by faith in Christ, and the system of imputation in issues concerning sin and justification. One of these remains a source of disagreement among Southern Baptists and hopefully can be resolved with a thoroughly biblical and evangelical position. The principles that led to the separation of Spurgeon from his Baptist fellowship, however, were the result of a lifetime of the development of convictions. How Spurgeon reasoned concerning theological dispute is the subject of the second article. The material is taken from my upcoming biography of Spurgeon, *Living by Revealed Truth*.

In the early twentieth century, J. Franklin Norris, a young man of great talents and an apparent love for the missionary potential of the Southern Baptist Convention, rose to some prominence and celebration among his peers. Personality dynamics along with an opportunistic zeal found a fissure in the doctrinal soundness of Southern Baptists. Norris thrust himself into that crack in the wall with a desire both for attaining doctrinal purity but also personal notoriety. It was difficult to tell which was the most sincere zeal at times. This article by Matthew Lyon, also a PhD Student at SBTS, shows that the pre-ouster Norris felt that he could aid Southern Baptists both in missionary zeal and in the maintenance of doctrinal correctness. That his brethren did not view it in that way surely shocked and saddened him, but also hardened him in his tendency to the sensational manifestation of the heroic sufferer.

Hopefully a glance at these controversies of three different types can aid twenty-first century Southern Baptists in their desire for cooler as well as more critically accurate appraisals of differences. This should not mean any diminishing of the importance of truth and continued discussion about the doctrines upon which we differ, but should help define those areas of doctrine upon which agreement is essential if we are to remain united in one sacred effort for the propagation of the gospel.

Baptist Identity Crisis

The 19th-Century Response to the Rise of Campbellism

Erik Smith

When the followers of Alexander Campbell attempted to insert themselves into Baptist life in the 1820s, they were rebuffed. When they subsequently courted Baptists to join their ranks in their independent churches throughout the following decades, scores of Baptist ministers and Baptist newspaper editors rose up to decry such defections. The Campbellites asserted that their position was the true position of the "ancient church," who preached the "ancient gospel," and they appealed to Baptists to lay aside their denominational prejudices and embrace their movement. Exacerbating the tension was the apparent similarity between Baptists and Campbellites on many points that had previously united Baptists against other denominations. In light of this challenge, Baptists brought forth other elements of their doctrinal identity to distinguish themselves from those who seemed to be of like mind regarding many essential Baptist positions.

At what points did the Disciples differ from the Baptists? This conflict demonstrates that Baptists saw themselves in terms of historic orthodoxy, reformed evangelicalism, a two-fold confessionalism, all as necessary elements in a theologically-integrated ecclesiology.

Historical Context

Alexander Campbell was born September 12, 1788 in Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland. After immigrating to the United States in his early twenties, Campbell labored in ministry first among the Presbyterians and then among Baptists in Pennsylvania before moving to Bethany, Virginia. Campbell's remarkable influence along the frontier was due largely to his unique message of unity against the backdrop of the Second Great Awakening in the western states. Campbell, like many, had become frustrated by the rivalry among denominations in the wake of the revival, and he sought to restore the "ancient church" by preaching the "ancient gospel," free from the sectarian arrogance. Nathan Hatch observes, "Like many of his generation, Campbell believed that stripping away the accretions of theology and tradition would restore peace, harmony, and vitality to the Christian Church."[1] By 1830, Campbell's followers numbered over 22,000, and his publication, *The Millennial Harbinger*, reached readers across a wide swath of the United States. By the advent of the Civil War, Disciples or "Reformers," as they came to be called, numbered 190,000.[2]

Campbell vigorously opposed denominations and the party spirit that seemed to pervade the United States in the midst of the religious fervor following the Second Great Awakening. He instituted what was in his mind a movement of reform, aimed at uniting all Christians under the one original banner, free from the strictures of denominational control and influence, especially as embodied in creedal statements. Campbell saw himself as a great reformer in the line of those whom God raised up in the 16th century to combat Roman Catholicism. Campbell, however, felt that no sooner had Protestants freed themselves from the shackles of the Pope than

> a secret lust in the bosoms of Protestants for ecclesiastical power and patronage worked in the members of the Protestant Popes, who gradually assimilated the new church to the old. Creeds and manuals, synods and councils, soon shackled the minds of men, and the spirit of reformation gradually forsook the Protestant church, or was supplanted by the spirit of the world.[3]

In truth, the reform movement that Campbell inaugurated was not entirely new and did originate across the Atlantic; however, its roots stretched back only a century and only to Scotland.[4]

Roots in Sandemanianism

Campbell's father, Thomas, "was a Seceder minister in the Anti-Burgher branch" of Presbyterianism. Due to financial difficulties, the elder Campbell sailed for the United States in April of 1807. Alexander remained behind with his mother and siblings and, eventually attended the University of Glasgow where he befriended Greville Ewing, a university professor and follower of the Sandemanians. The founder of Sandemanianism was John Glas, a Scottish Presbyterian minister who objected to the Westminster Confession of Faith at a few particular points. Specifically, Glas argued for the separation of church and state and that the true church was to be composed only of those who had experienced a genuine work of grace. Above all, he resolved that he should "take to himself no other rule but the word of God."[5] By 1725, Glas had formed his own religious societies of only regenerate persons, a move which resulted in his expulsion from the Kirk of Scotland in 1730. Undeterred, Glas and his followers (named Sandemanians due to the influence of his son-in-law, Robert Sandeman) established their own independent congregations. Within a few decades, the Sandemanians had further splintered, dividing over a host of issues including the ordinances, ministerial compensation, the nature of the Sabbath, and ecclesiology. Nevertheless, they remained united in their antagonism toward any formal confession or doctrinal standard, the trait that became their unifying principle.[6]

Under the influence of Ewing, Campbell became enthusiastic with Sandemanian ideals. Several shifts in Campbell's thinking can be traced to his association with Ewing, such as a reduction of faith to the exercise of the intellect,[7] the diminished role of the Holy Spirit in conversion, the nature of true church as comprising only believers, and the selection and role of

officers in the church. Campbell even adopted much of the vocabulary of the Sandemanians, employing terms like "ancient gospel," and "ancient church" to describe the ideal which he sought. Like Glas, he felt disdain for the "popular preachers" and held tenaciously to the maxim, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where they are silent, we are silent."[8]

Retreat from Presbyterianism

Upon arriving in the United States in 1809, Alexander Campbell joined his father in Pennsylvania and found him in the same frame of mind regarding the Presbyterian form of church government and its adherence to creeds. Thomas Campbell was censured by the Presbytery of Chartiers in 1809 for schismatic practices and teachings, and, seeing that he stood little chance of being exonerated by the Associate Synod of North America, he formally resigned his position within the presbytery and constituted his own congregational church with Alexander.[9]

The birth of Alexander's daughter in 1811 sealed his break with the Presbyterians. Campbell concluded that infant baptism was unbiblical and that baptism was to be administered only to believers. Convincing the majority of his congregation to follow suit, they were immersed by a nearby Baptist minister, and they constituted themselves afresh, excluding those who would not conform. His attempt to institute the pure church and create unity was thus initiated through separation and disjunction.[10]

Rivalry with Baptists

Though he now practiced baptism by immersion, there were signs that Campbell's tenure among Baptists would be short-lived. Campbell's church at Brush Run applied for admission to the Redstone Baptist Association in Pennsylvania, and they were accepted into fellowship despite the protest of some ministers who questioned Campbell's views on baptism and his refusal to accept the Philadelphia Confession, the standard of the Association.[11]

While preaching through regions of Kentucky, Campbell became a prominent debater with Presbyterians over the mode of baptism. His skill in debate won him wide acclaim, but it soon became obvious to those most familiar with his arguments that he was teaching what amounted to baptismal regeneration, namely that baptism was for the remission of sins. Campbell's theological system also involved features that prompted hostility from Baptists, such as the denial that regeneration must precede faith. Campbell began disseminating his views in his own paper, *The Christian Baptist*, in what many saw as a usurpation of the label. By 1830, numerous associations in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois had weighed in and excluded churches espousing Campbellite theology.[12] When it was clear the title was no longer expedient, Campbell subsequently ceased its publication and instituted *The Millennial Harbinger*.[13]

Campbell would continue writing and preaching up to his death on March 4, 1866. Due to their geographic proximity and the similarity of their practice of immersion, the primary rivals of the Campbellites were the Baptists. Exactly where and how they differed was itself a matter of controversy.

Campbell's Theological Commitments

Because Campbell was committed to the eschewing of any formal creeds, determining his precise theological position on any given doctrine or practice was decidedly difficult. Baptists who engaged Campbellite theology were quick to note this frustrating feature of the Reformers' movement, and they were frequently charged with misrepresenting Campbellite theology. The primary locus of Campbell's teachings were restricted to *The Millennial Harbinger*, which over the course of time would publish seemingly contradictory statements on a particular issue.[14] Campbell did, however, crystallize his teaching in his work, *The Christian System*, originally published in 1839. In *The Christian System*, Campbell articulates what he believed the Bible taught regarding doctrines such as the fall of man, the essence of saving faith, immersion, conversion, regeneration, etc.

According to Campbell, mankind was in a state of fallenness. Man's chief problem, however, was not that he was dead in his sins, but rather that he now had a bent toward sinfulness. For Campbell, the remedy for man's fallen state is found ontologically in the sacrificial death of Christ, yet the way in which this remedy is applied to the individual sinner is through his rationality.

Campbell argued that "faith in Christ is the effect of belief," which itself is the mental assent of certain facts.[15] Upon a person's profession of faith and repentance from sin, he becomes an appropriate candidate for baptism. According to Campbell, baptism "has no abstract efficacy. Without previous faith in the blood of Christ, and deep and unfeigned repentance before God, neither immersion in water, nor any other action, can secure to us the blessings of peace and pardon; it can merit nothing." He continues, "Still, to the believing penitent it is the means of receiving a formal, distinct, and specific absolution, or release from guilt."[16] For Campbell, the conversion of a sinner is "the change which is consummated by immersion," and he argues that regeneration is not to be confused with the process of conversion.[17]

Regeneration itself is moral and physical, and it is effected in a man when he realizes by the impression of the Word upon his heart that God loves him in spite of his sinfulness, and he is thus moved to love God in return. Hence, Campbell asserts, "The grand principle, or means which God has adopted for the accomplishment of this moral regeneration, is the full demonstration and proof of a single proposition *addressed to the reason of man* [emphasis added]. This sublime proposition is, that God is Love."[18] Campbell continues, "The change of heart and of character, which constitutes moral regeneration, is the legitimate impression of the facts or things which God has wrought."[19]

J. B. Jeter was the first to issue a formal response to the teachings of Campbell in the form of a full monograph, *Campbellism Exposed*, published in 1855. Jeter's work was widely read by those who interacted with the Reformers, and it was steadfastly denounced by the Disciples as misconstruing the theology of Campbell. Campbell himself vowed a rebuttal, but instead the task fell to his young and promising protégé, Moses E. Lard. Lard's response was more detailed than Campbell's original systematic exposition, and for Baptist detractors, Lard's work stood as the best encapsulation of the views of Alexander Campbell, if not the entire Reformers' movement.

The Baptist Response – Defining an Identity

The Baptist response to Campbellism did not depend upon the refutations of a few individuals. In fact, the first opposition to Campbell occurred in his earliest days as an immersionist in Pennsylvania. Furthermore, opposition to his theological positions was already vocal and rigorous in regions as far west as Illinois by 1830, not to mention the regions of Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia and Tennessee that were the heart of Campbellism.[20]

Baptists were well known for their disputations with Methodists and Presbyterians over matters of distinction, like the mode of baptism and the nature of the church. The response to the Campbellites, however, was of a different character altogether because Baptists agreed with Campbellites on many of these so-called distinctives, yet they vigorously opposed them on more substantial matters. Baptists also relentlessly opposed Campbell's followers for perceived usurpation of their own identity, namely the identity of being a true *Baptist*. Hence, the confrontation forced Baptists not only to define issues like believers' baptism, but the larger framework of theology whereby Campbellites were necessarily excluded from their fold.[21]

Orthodoxy

The foundational issue for Baptists was clearly orthodoxy. It was not uncommon for many Baptist rebuttals of Campbellite positions to begin with the concession that the Reformers were orthodox, as respecting the great doctrines of the Trinity and the person of Christ. Such a concession reveals implicitly that to be Baptist first required other, more basic commitments to the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

The reason for stringently examining the views of the Campbellites with respect to doctrines like justification, sanctification, regeneration, baptism, etc., is because the Disciples met the threshold for what was necessary to be considered "Christian." There are few occasions of published debates between Baptists and Mormons, Unitarians, or other groups that failed to subscribe to essential orthodox positions.

One historical feature of this agreement over issues of orthodoxy is the attempt at ecclesiastical union between Baptists and Disciples in some locales, including Virginia and Ohio.

The original call for an investigation into the terms of union in Virginia was initiated by W. F. Broaddus, a prominent Baptist leader in the state, published in a January editorial of *The Religious Herald*.[22] In Ohio, the overtures came from the side of the Disciples, who went so far as to issue a statement highlighting perceived areas of agreement between the two camps. A delegation of Disciples delivered their statement to the Baptist state convention meeting in Columbus. Among the brief statements were the following assertions of orthodoxy:

> 1. The divine authenticity an [sic] authority of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a revelation from God to man.
>
> 2. The divine authority and sufficiency of the New Testament as a revelation of salvation through Jesus Christ, and as a rule of faith and practice for Christians.
>
> 3. The revelation of God therein in the threefold manifestation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the great work of human redemption.
>
> 4. The divinity of Jesus as the Son of God, and his Messianic offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, to enlighten us by his teachings, to redeem us by his sin-offering, to rule over us by his kingly authority, and guide us to eternal life.
>
> 5. The mission of the Holy Spirit, to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to abide with the saved as a divine Comforter—the earnest of the heavenly inheritance.[23]

Such statements were encouraging to many Baptists, for they showed that despite their reticence toward confessions, Disciples were somewhat willing to employ theological language in order to build bridges with other Christians. Clearly the article upon which Baptists shared the most with the Reformers was their high view of Scripture.

Not everyone within the Baptist fold gave the Disciples the benefit of the doubt regarding their orthodoxy, however. In an open letter published by *The Western Recorder*, A. H. Strong questioned the proposed fraternization of Baptists and Campbellites in Ohio. Strong references this general statement of faith offered by the Disciples at the meeting in Columbus, but finds it deficient.

> I desire, also, before going further in this direction, to have most serious attention given to the articles of faith presented by these brethren, lest the mere sound of orthodoxy be mistaken for the substance. So far am I from assenting to the opinion that upon the presentation of just such articles alone, any Baptist council would recognize a church or ordain a minister, that I see in almost every one of these articles ambiguities which I should wish most carefully explained before accepting those who offered them as sound of belief. Not to mention minor criticism, I see in the third article no intimation that these brethren are not Sabellians, believers in a mere trinity of divine manifestations, instead of a trinity of eternal distinctions,

> immanent in the divine nature. For aught I can see, one might profess this third article as his belief and still deny that either the Son or the Holy Spirit were in any proper sense persons of the Godhead. I see in the fourth article no clear recognition of the essential and proper Deity of Jesus, nor any expression which a Unitarian might not adopt. I see in the fifth article neither a declaration of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, nor any intimation that pre-baptismal love is the work of the Spirit in the soul.[24]

Even if one grants that the Disciples were actually orthodox in their Christology and pneumatology, too many differences remained for any such union to be genuinely possible. These differences were with respect to those doctrines and beliefs one might classify as "evangelical."

Evangelicalism

For Baptists, orthodoxy could not be sufficient for ecclesiogical or denominational union. J. M. Dudley notes that in spite of the supposed harmony on issues of orthodoxy, the areas of difference render the prospect of ecclesiological unity virtually impossible.[25] As previously noted, the Baptist distinctive of baptism of believers only by means of immersion was in some senses shared by Campbellites. However, a perusal of the periodicals of the day reveals intense debates between Baptists and Disciples over the ordinance. What could possibly divide two camps in such a hostile manner over an issue upon which they seemingly agreed? The answer is the proper subject of baptism; specifically, what qualifies a person to be a candidate for Christian baptism? While both groups would answer repentance and faith, the definitions of these terms offered by both sides differed dramatically. The reason for this chasm was the difference in soteriology.

The beginning of the debate frequently centered upon the extent or character of man's fallen nature.[26] This was the starting point of Baptist soteriology; to ascertain the necessary elements of salvation, one must first deduce the condition from which man must be delivered. J. M. Peck, editor of *The Western Baptist*, asserts the following as the model "which is generally maintained by intelligent Baptists both in England, and the United States:"

> The mind of a sinner before conversion is opposed to God—it is a carnal mind—at enmity against God. The sinner does not merely mistake about God and the gospel method of salvation. He does not merely labor under the influence of ignorance. He is not merely deficient in the knowledge of divine things. His *heart* is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. His inability consists in a wicked heart, and this is shown forth in disobedient conduct. For this wicked heart he is wholly to blame…[27]

The total depravity of man was not merely an abstract doctrine, but a foundational truth upon which the scheme of regeneration rested. The reason mankind required a total salvation is because he was totally, not merely intellectually, ruined. Peck further illustrates this relationship:

> But the sinner will not turn when he is exhorted. His heart is *opposed* to God—he loves sin—and goes on though he knows it will ruin him. Hence the *necessity* of the Holy Spirit to change his heart—to form the image of Christ within him. And the Holy Spirit does change the sinner's heart, and work within him to *will* and to *do* the good pleasure of God.[28]

Hence, the depravity of man, if denied, removes the need for any true work of regeneration by the Spirit. Since the Campbellites made this denial, the resulting doctrines were thus the logical conclusion and necessary outworking of rejecting total depravity, as we shall see.

Moses Lard defined faith as "the simple conviction that what the bible says is true."[29] To have faith is to believe, merely with mental assent, that God exists, that His law condemns sinners, and that Jesus Christ is the proper Savior for man. R. M. Dudley, the editor of *The Western Recorder*, takes exception to this definition, arguing that this is merely historical faith, the same faith held by the demons and by Satan himself, and it is therefore insufficient to save anyone. Furthermore, Lard relegates repentance to an act merely of the will and one which follows faith. Dudley challenges this assertion, noting that the Scripture prescribes both faith and repentance in order to be saved. Dudley further rebuts that repentance is wrought in the heart of a sinner *prior* to his exercising of faith, just as a sick person must be brought to awareness of his disease before he will seek out a physician.[30] Lard's view is similar to other Campbellites, such as one Dr. Hopson. The following summary of Hopson's view of faith and repentance demonstrates the process of salvation in Campbellite theology from start to finish:

> [This] truth when believed and obeyed makes men free from the bondage of sin and introduces them into the family of God as adopted children. The mind of man is composed of three parts—the *intellect* or the understanding, the *sensibilities* and the *will*. Spiritual truth, like all other truth, in order to be believed must be presented to the intellect and must be accompanied by such evidence as is sufficient to convince the understanding. Every step in the process of reaching the conclusion arrived at is intellectual; and if the result is the acceptance of the proposition as true, that judgment of the mind is *belief*, or *faith*, which two terms are of the same import, since they represent the same Greek word. The proposition to be *believed* by one who would be saved is, "Jesus is the Christ the Son of God." This is presented by the Holy Spirit to the intellect; and it will be believed or disbelieved as it may seem to be sustained or unsustained by the evidence adduced in its support. When the truth of the proposition has been accepted, then the *will* is operated upon by the Spirit through the *word*, commanding the believer to *reform*, or to change his purpose; and when the will resolves to make the change required, then the newly formed purpose is to be carried into execution by obedience to the command, *be immersed*.[31]

As this summary shows, the role of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners was, for Campbellites, one of presenting propositional truth to the mind of sinners. The Spirit exercised no real activity, but was only present within the truth. There is no wonder, then, that Baptists attacked Campbellite theology on the grounds that it undermined the doctrine of regeneration and minimized the person and work of the Holy Spirit. A. P. Williams attacks Campbellites precisely at this point. He summarizes the views of Lard, "He does not believe that the Spirit *operates*. He believes that the *truth* operates *because it is of the Spirit*. He believes that the *power* by which it operates is *now in it*. And that the Holy Spirit can not increase this power without infringing the freedom of the human will." What follows is a quote from Lard: "An influence more intense than that of Divine truth, and above it, would of necessity infringe the freedom of the human will, and hence can not be admitted to be present in conversion." To this, Williams replies, "Now, I ask, can the man who wrote the above sentence believe that the Holy Spirit *now operates* in conversion? I can not think that he does."[32]

This entire scheme of man's limited depravity and the rational nature of conversion opened the Campbellites to the charge of rationalism. In his critique of Moses Lard, Jeter demonstrates how certain tenets within Campbellism devolve into rationalism. First, they reduce total depravity to mere peccability, nothing more than a liability to sin and a personal infirmity. Secondly, though they do not formally reject the agency of the Spirit in conversion, they restrict His influence to only that which is upon the mind of the sinner through propositional truths. In other words, there is no experience of being brought to life or regenerated by the Spirit. "A man, according to the system, becomes a Christian, by his own unaided powers, without prayer, precisely as he would become an Odd Fellow or a Son of Temperance, except that in the latter case he would be moved by uninspired and the former by inspired arguments… Conversion, instead of being a Divine change, comprehending a new heart—a new life—a partaking of the Divine nature—is a reformation originating simply in the force of truth and ending in immersion."[33] Hence, if the essence of saving faith is reduced merely to assent to propositional truth, and if regeneration is simply a moral process whereby man's heart changes to love God naturally because he apprehends with his mind that God loves him first, then the charge of rationalism is indeed a fitting one. Such a religion is devoid of any true spiritual character.

The most noxious doctrine of the Reformers was their perversion of the design of baptism. According to Baptists, the Campbellite view amounted to baptismal regeneration.[34] Ironically, Some Baptists were willing to express more charity toward those who held a different mode of baptism than they were toward the Reformers who perverted its design. S. Baker seeks to demonstrate that immersion cannot be the cause of regeneration by offering as proof the examples of men such as Calvin, Edwards, and Baxter. Though these men were never immersed, yet no one acquainted with their works would ever question if they were indeed regenerated.[35]

Equally dangerous is the idea that baptism provides the remission of sins. In "Remission of Sins Through Faith in Christ," Joseph Weaver sets forth the Baptist position that remission of sins is possible only through the atonement of Christ as He personally suffered for the sins of His people. Remission is granted to those who are united to Christ in faith. It is not, therefore,

granted on the basis of human repentance or baptism, but only upon faith.[36] Compare this with the Campbellite assertion, "That faith, repentance, and immersion are necessary to the remission of sins, and the remission is guaranteed on no other conditions."[37]

Modisett emphasized the danger of the Campbellite doctrine by highlighting its similarity to the system of the Mormons. "Now, is it not true, that in the fundamental doctrine of remission of sins, and final salvation of men, the boasted Reformation, and the infamous system of Mormonism are identically one and the same, in holding and teaching that immersion in water is essential to remission of sins, and final salvation?"[38]

J. W. Rust was glad to see the acrimony between Disciples and Baptists in Ohio abating, and he was encouraged by the aforementioned short doctrinal statement of Disciples, intending to highlight points of agreement between the two groups. Nevertheless, he opines that union between the two would never be possible as long as their theological identities remained as they were. Specifically, he challenged the Disciples on the evangelical points:

> There is something very plausible on the surface of the above proposed platform of common faith [i.e. the statement previously referenced], but what lies beneath the surface! We would ask our Ohio friends of the "Current Reformation" if they believe in the personal presence and direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of man in what is called regeneration, or do they still cling to their former view that the Word is all sufficient and that all the power known in the Gospel consists in arguments addressed to the understanding, and in persuasions addressed to the heart. We would ask them if they still hold to their former view that baptism is necessary to the remission of sins, and no matter how strong and firm may be a man's faith in Christ as his Saviour, he is not in a state of salvation until baptized. Now upon these points there is a radical difference between Baptists and Reformers…
>
> When Baptists cease to believe and preach regeneration by the Spirit of God, justification by faith in Christ—"without deeds of law,"—or when the Reformers cease opposing these views and become willing to accept them, let the subject of union be agitated.

Confessionalism

The oft-repeated Campbellite slogan, "No Creed but the Bible," at first perhaps sounds like a Baptist ideal. Indeed, many Baptists invoked this very phrase for their own purposes when distinguishing themselves from Presbyterians and other denominations. The freedom to adhere to the Bible alone above all ecclesiastical structures is part of the Baptist heritage. Despite this apparent similarity, however, Baptists interpreted this freedom differently than did the Disciples.

The freedom from oppression of a creed was not, for Baptists, a cause to impugn all confessional statements as "creedalism."

The antipathy toward confessional statements can be traced to the Reform movement's Sandemanian roots. Moreover, it found expression in Campbell's separation first from the Presbyterians and then from the Baptists. Lard denigrated a creed as "a mere compound by human fingers of truths extracted from the Bible, metaphysics extracted from Plato, speculations extracted from Calvin, and the ecclesiastic corsets of the party in whose interest it is made."[39]

The bravado of such sentiments is remarkable when one considers that Campbell himself did publish a statement of faith. Campbell refused to cede any ground to his antagonists who accused him of hypocrisy, and he labored to distinguish between a creed in an ecclesiastical sense and what was simply a "doctrinal basis" of alliance. He fancied that his statement of faith occupied the latter category only. In response to his claim, Baptists were ready to defend their own practice as never rising above this very action in the first place. "The things which Mr. Campbell here declares to be no creed, and affirms so solemnly cannot be a creed—'resolutions, and records, and exhibits, written and printed'—are precisely all the creed which the Baptists have had, and upon which he has been constantly showering the envenomed shafts of his denunciation from the very dawn of his reformation to this present writing!"[40]

Commenting on the self-defeating nature of eschewing all man-made statements of faith, an editorial in *The Western Recorder* scoffs, "I venture the assertion that Mr. Lard, as unquestionably as any one else, *has* a creed. He *believes*, I presume, that sins are remitted in baptism; that, without baptism, there is no remission—hence, no salvation. But if he *does* believe these, they are so many *items* in *his* creed; and if he were to make a full list, *this* would constitute his *entire* creed."[41]

In reality, Moses Lard's theological statements held an almost creedal position among Campbellites, if not informally so. Upon the publication of Lard's response to Jeter's critique of Campbell, A. P. Williams further noted, "As Mr. Lard's book comes out with the indorsement [sic] of Mr. Campbell, we may justly conclude that it is regarded by him as a clear and successful exposition of his teachings. And as Mr. Campbell so regards it, of course all his followers so regard it."[42] On this point, Jeter wryly notes that though the Reformers claimed to abhor central authority or authoritarianism, they wholeheartedly followed Campbell wherever he led. "They are held together by the magic of a name, and by a leader whose authority they have indignantly denied, and implicitly followed."[43] For Campbellism to claim it held no creed was simply false.

Baptists were sympathetic to the ideal of holding to Scripture alone as the final authority for faith and practice. This did not, however, preclude for them any use of confessions, either personally or corporately. In his aforementioned letter, A. H. Strong asserts the common Baptist practice of withholding fellowship from other churches or ministers until a proper confession is agreed upon. He asserts that this is the practice of "any Baptist" body.[44]

Corporate confession was not the only point at which Baptists disagreed with Disciples; the role of personal confession was noticeably absent from Campbellite practice. Both Disciples and Baptists repudiated the practice of infant baptism, arguing that the ordinance was reserved only

for those who had placed personal faith in Christ. Aside from the differences in what this faith entailed, the largest difference related to baptism was that Baptists required a personal confession of faith on the part of the one who was to be baptized. The candidate for baptism was expected to relate to the congregation a personal testimony of an experience of inward grace, frequently called a "Christian experience." Without this articulation of both the general truths of the gospel as well as how these truths had come to bear upon the individual's soul, he could not be baptized. The Disciples, on the other hand, repudiated this scheme altogether. Because they relegated saving faith to be only mental assent, the only testimony required by a person who was to be baptized was that he or she believed the facts of the gospel to be abstractly true.[45]

Conclusion

By the late 1860s, many were calling for peace between the two groups. There was sufficient ground for cooperation, if not full union, some argued. In 1866 Baptists and Disciples of Virginia convened a meeting in Richmond in order to explore the feasibility of such a union. The proximity of their positions on Scripture, baptism, and the identity of the church led both sides to discuss the prospect of open fellowship. In anticipation of this dialogue, *The Millennial Harbinger* affectionately characterized Baptists as "earnest advocates for civil and religious liberty; for the independence of churches; and for a rigid adherence to the teachings and institutions of the New Testament."[46] In spite of their many similarities regarding these distinctives, however, the representatives determined, "our differences were such as to prevent ecclesiastical union and inter-communion."[47] These differences were no doubt the substance which made Baptists, *Baptists*.

Several implications can be drawn from the preceding analysis:

First, Baptists did not respond to the Campbellite insurgency by arguing merely over distinctives. The debate was not centered around the mode of baptism or the autonomy of the local church or religious liberty. On these issues, Baptists found the Disciples to be their natural allies. Instead, the response addressed more fundamental concerns such as the work of the Holy Spirit, the nature of regeneration, and the process of sanctification. For modern historians or theologians to emphasize mere distinctives as what defines Baptist-ness is quite short-sighted.

Second, the idea that Baptists are at their core a people who emphasize religious liberty or the priesthood of all believers to the neglect of statements of coherent truth found in confessions is misplaced. Consider the following quote:

> The ground of "agreeing to differ," is, notwithstanding all assertions to the contrary, the only possible ground of Christian union. No one can prize such union more than I do; but there is something still higher than union —in comparison with which mere formal union is not to be named—and this is freedom—freedom to exercise your Christian reason in the light of the Holy Scripture, and to think not as any other person thinks, or any

> collection of persons who may call themselves the Church think, but as the Divine Spirit may enlighten and guide you. Christians have differed in all ages, and they will continue to differ as to all matters, whether of creed or government, into which the dividing edge of the intellect enters. They have only ceased to differ when they have ceased to think. Quietude of opinion has always been an omen of evil, and not of good for the Church.[48]

These are words championed by the Disciples, but could easily be mistaken for the "Moderate" position on Baptist identity.[49] The appeal to the liberty of the conscience was not the ground upon which Baptists built their identity when faced with the encroachment of Campbellism. How, then, could it possibly serve as the means by which a cohesive or coherent Baptist identity is constructed? Furthermore, on what basis could any Baptist congregation or association exclude a Campbellite church if the fundamental guiding principle is the competency of the soul in matters of religious conviction?

Third, Campbellism arose largely in reaction to the religious environment of the early 19th century in the United States. Just as Alexander Campbell developed his theology as a reaction to the bickering and turf wars of American Christian denominations, Baptists found within their historic identity—perhaps enhanced and particularized—specific ideas to apply to the conflict with Campbellism. Baptist identity has multiple flexible applications. Just as the early church adopted new statements of faith with additional doctrinal nuances to combat theological crises as they arose, so too, Baptists and other denominations are in each generation forced to meet challenges regarding their respective identities. If this be the case, how do Baptists maintain an uncompromised sense of identity as they seek to work in harmony for the purpose of the evangelization of the world? Is agreement over the urgency and necessity of this task alone sufficient enough in itself to unite Baptists to the noble cause, or must there be a unity over more foundational matters in order to compel Baptists to continue walking together? Furthermore, is the loss of this deeper unity an intrinsic redefinition of Baptists?

When the early church acted to combat heresy by reformulating their creeds, they did not jettison their prior statements. They never reformulated their actual identity, but instead built upon the existing foundation new levels of understanding in an attempt to articulate more clearly what they had always believed. As for the Baptists faced with these questions in the 19th century, they stood together on the foundations of orthodoxy, evangelical truth, a theologically-integrated ecclesiology, and a robust confessionalism. May Baptists today learn from our forebears in this regard.

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[1] Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 163.

[2] Martin Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1985), 197–198.

[3] Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System: In Reference to the Union of Christians, And a Restoration of Primitive Christianity, As Plead In the Current Reformation* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing Co., 1901, 5th ed. Originally published 1839) vii.

[4] Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1991), 275; Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land*, 197. Marty notes that Campbell's desires for unity did not prevent him from expressing his feelings of antipathy toward other denominations. Marty captures Campbell's declaration that if someone wanted to be saved, he would send that person to a Muslim before a Methodist circuit rider (*Pilgrims*, 174).

[5] Whitsitt, *Origin of the Disciples*, 2.

[6] Whitsitt, *Origin of the Disciples*, 6–15.

[7] Whitsitt records that while Campbell did eventually make this shift regarding the nature of faith, it was not until after arriving in America that he accepted this persuasion. The seeds were undoubtedly sown, however, while under Ewing's tutelage. *Origin of the Disciples*, 73–74.

[8] Whitsitt, *Origin of the Disciples*, 18–20, 55–68.

[9] W. K. Pendleton, "Death of Alexander Campbell," *Millennial Harbinger*, March, 1866: 123–124; see also Whitsitt, *Origin of the Disciples*, 70–72.

[10] Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land*, 197; Torbet, *History of the Baptists*, 270–271.

[11] Torbet, *History of the Baptists*, 271.

[12] J. M. Peck, "Kentucky Associations vs. Campbellites," *The Western Baptist*, October, 1830, vol. 1, no. 3: 12.

[13] Torbet, *History of the Baptists*, 271–273.

[14] J. B. Jeter, "Introduction," in A. P. Williams, *Campbellism Exposed in an Examination of Lard's Review of Jeter* (Nashville, TN: Baptist Publishing House, 1866), viii–x.

[15] Campbell, *The Christian System*, 37.

[16] Campbell, *The Christian System*, 42.

[17] Campbell, *The Christian System*, 44–45.

[18] Campbell, *The Christian System*, 220.

[19] Campbell, *The Christian System*, 222.

[20] Torbet, *History of the Baptists*, 271.

[21] Torbet declares unequivocally that Baptists were the aggressors in the debate, seeking to clarify their own positions against those whom they perceived as insidiously using their appellation. *History of the Baptists*, 274.

[22] W. F. Broaddus, "Union of Baptists and Disciples," *The Religious Herald*, January 4, 1866. The overwhelming response to Broaddus' suggestion was positive, and by March the two sides had agreed to convene April 24 in Richmond in expectation of a friendly discussion and a fruitful outcome (W. F. Broaddus, "Union of Baptists and Disciples," *Religious Herald*, March 1, 1866).

[23] Quoted in J. W. Rust, "The Baptists and Reformers of Ohio," *The Western Recorder*, November 12, 1870.

[24] Augustus H. Strong, "Proposed Campbellite Fraternization," *The Western Recorder*, February 4, 1871, Vol. 37, no. 12.

[25] R. M. Dudley "The Points of Agreement and Disagreement Between Baptists and Reformers," *The Western Recorder*, November 19, 1870, vol. 37, no. 13.

[26] J. M. D. contributes a 12-part series in *The Western Recorder* from March 18 to August 19, 1871 entitled, "Campbellism Accused, Tried, and Proved Guilty," in which he examines the Campbellite scheme of soteriology and finds it wanting. He begins, quite tellingly, with the doctrine of total depravity. He asserts that depravity is a *cause*, not an effect. Hence, "If man were not depraved, he would never sin" (August 19, 1871).

[27] J. M. Peck, "The Work of the Spirit," *The Western Baptist*, January, 1831: 30.

[28] J. M. Peck, "The Work of the Spirit," *The Western Baptist*, January, 1831: 30–31.

[29] Moses Lard, quoted in "The Faith of the Campbellites," *The Western Recorder*, July 11, 1868.

[30] R. M. Dudley, "Reply to Mr. Lard," *The Western Recorder*, November 26, 1870.

[31] R. M. Dudley, "The Points of Agreement and Disagreement Between Baptists and Reformers, Part II" *The Western Recorder*, November 24, 1870.

[32] A. P. Williams, *Campbellism Exposed in an Examination of Lard's Review of Jeter* (Nashville, TN: Baptist Publishing House, 1866), 154. For a thorough defense of regeneration, see J. P. "Regeneration," *The Christian Index*, December 22, 1836: 793.

[33] Jeter, "Introduction," in *Campbellism Exposed*, xi.

[34] In contrast to these charges, J. M. Cox devotes four articles in *The Western Recorder* to an examination of the Reformers' view of baptism, and he concludes that what Campbell actually teaches is not baptismal regeneration, but baptismal *justification*. "Design of Christian Baptism," parts I–IV, *The Western Recorder*, June 13, 1869; June 19, 1869; June 26, 1869; July 3, 1869.

[35] S. Baker, "Baptismal Regeneration Unscriptural," *The Western Recorder*, May 15, 1869.

[36] Joseph M. Weaver, "Remission of Sins Through Faith in Christ," *The Western Recorder*, March 13, 1869.

[37] Moses Lard, "The Faith of the Campbellites," *The Western Recorder*, July 11, 1868.

[38] M. M. Modisett, "Origins of the Baptist and that of the Reformation Contrasted," *The Western Recorder*, July 2, 1870.

[39] Moses E. Lard, "No Creed But the Bible," *The Apostolic Times*, April 1869.

[40] Editor, "The Reformation in Favor of Creeds," *The Western Baptist Review*, December, 1846. See also, "A Creed May Be No Creed in 'An Ecclesiastic Sense,'" *The Western Baptist Review*, November, 1846.

[41] Philos, "The Apostolic Times," *The Western Recorder*, May 25, 1969.

[42] A. P. Williams, *Campbellism Exposed*, 20.

[43] J. B. Jeter, "Introduction" in *Campbellism Exposed*, xii.

[44] Strong, "Proposed Campbellite Fraternization," *The Western Recorder*, February 4, 1871.

[45] Jeter, "Introduction," in *Campbellism Exposed*, xi.

[46] R. R. "Union of Christians," *The Millennial Harbinger*, March, 1866: 97.

[47] J. B. Jeter, "Convention of Baptists and Disciples," *The Millennial Harbinger*, May 1866: 224.

[48] An unnamed address delivered by Principal Tulloch to St. Mary's College, St. Andrews; quoted in "Anti-Creed Movement," *The Millennial Harbinger*, January 1866: 30.

[49] For this emphasis on soul competency, see Fisher Humphreys, *The Way We Were* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2002); Walter Shurden, *Going for the Jugular* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996); Bill Leonard, *Baptist Ways: A History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2003). Those who champion the notion of freedom ought to look not to Baptists as their forbears, but to the Disciples of Christ.

Spurgeon's Theory of Theological Controversy

Tom J. Nettles

> I have received a measure of pity because I am in opposition to so many; but the pity may be spared, or handed over to those on the other side. Years ago, when I preached a sermon upon Baptismal Regeneration, my venerable friend, Dr. Steane, said to me, "You have got into hot water." I replied, "No; I do not feel the water to be hot. The truth is far otherwise. I am cool enough; I am only the stoker, and other folks are in the hot water, which I am doing my best to make so hot that they will be glad to get out of it." We do not wish to fight; but if we do, we hope that the pity will be needed by those with whom we contend.[1]

"Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine," so Ishmael confessed in the quest for Moby Dick. Spurgeon clearly saw the white whale of destructive error tear the spiritual limbs from many a seeker and dare an assault on the integrity and rule of God himself. No area of Christian truth had been without its detractors and all revolt and rebellion seemed renewed in his lifetime. It was his thorough satisfaction with the living waters of revealed truth that made his feud with error quenchless indeed.

Apt and Ready for Convictional Controversy

Though Spurgeon's most intense concentration of mental energy and spiritual devotion was expressed in his commitment to preaching the gospel for the salvation of sinners, his lengthy and complex involvement in theological controversy was not far behind and was vitally connected to his first love of gospel preaching. Given the situation of truth unchallenged, Spurgeon could say, "To win a soul from going down into the pit is a more glorious achievement than to be crowned in the arena of theological controversy as *Doctor Sufficientissimus*."[2] And though one should not go around with his fist doubled up and with a theological revolver in the leg of his trousers, he must nevertheless "be prepared to fight, and always have your sword buckled on your thigh, but wear a scabbard."[3] Sometimes, as he later admonished, the scabbard must be thrown away.

If men preached ever so powerfully with natural gifts and yet had no saving message what good was any pretended kind of evangelism or how would they ever "win a soul from going down into the pit?" Christ invested churches with a saving gospel message and commissioned them to preach it with no warrant to alter that message. Its ministers were ambassadors, not legislators. The only lawgiver and king is Christ and his mandate is in Scripture alone. The minister is a man under authority and has no right to compromise either message or practice by introducing ideas from his own brain or from another source of religious tradition. Every system, therefore, that altered the shape of the gospel or that questioned the utter veracity of Scripture as divinely revealed truth was an enemy to the souls of men, to the glory of God, and to Spurgeon.

One cannot be true, Spurgeon believed, unless one were willing to make controversy on every challenge to true religion. "When the gage of battle is thrown down," he told the Baptist Missionary Society, "I am not the man to refuse to take it up."[4] The unsheathed sword gleamed and the scabbard posed no temptation when vital truth suffered assault. He was not willing to do this for any kind of trouble at all, however, and preferred peace and would seek a high degree of toleration within the clearly marked sphere of central gospel verities. He wrote, "I had rather run a mile any day than quarrel, and that is saying a good deal, for miles are long to legs which have the rheumatism."[5]

Though W. Y. Fullerton judged that "Mr. Spurgeon was too earnest, too intent on the eternal meaning of things, too sure of his own standing to be a good controversialist,"[6] one must take seriously that Spurgeon purposefully named his monthly magazine, not *The Trowel*, but, *The Sword and the Trowel*. His intent was to do battle. His earnestness, rather than weakening, intensified his qualifications. He was after something beyond himself, beyond the mere appearance of vanquishing a foe, and beyond the awe of men; he was after the glory of God in the defense of his truth. If this were not his intent, he chose very poor words for his preface to the first volume of the monthly magazine when he wrote, "Foes have felt the sword far more than they would care to confess, and friends have seen the work of the trowel on the walls of Zion to their joy and rejoicing."[7]

For his 1880 Almanack, Spurgeon wrote a piece bristling with a theological militancy indicative of deep-seated concerns. "When invasion threatened in olden times, they beat the drums and summoned all good citizens to the defence of their country." Only the feeble and cowardly held back. Hearths and homes are dear and "rouse the patriot's fighting spirit." No less should be expected when the war is spiritual and we "know that truth is assailed, [and] the glory of God is the object of attack." Using the weapons of the word and all-prayer, no enemy shall pass unchallenged. "Ritualism and Rationalism, a double enemy, have come in upon us," and not only fight from without but now infiltrate our churches. Sensationalism and prideful academics join forces to impugn the old fashioned gospel as stale. "Let us, therefore, set our faces like flints against all adulteration of the pure word, [and] all bedizenment of simple worship. If we give them an inch they will take an ell." Prefer the charge of bigotry than the reality of guilt before God for giving way to Popery and infidelity. "It is as much our duty, under God," Spurgeon acknowledged in a familiar and oft-repeated refrain, "to conserve the truth as to convert sinners."

He reinforced the conviction with the stinging comment, "It is idle to talk about missions to this and that while the eternal truth is disregarded, [and] the essential doctrines are frittered away." Generosity cannot be set in opposition to that which is just and the circumference cannot expand if the center disintegrates. "The Lord make his people more zealous for the faith once delivered to the saints."[8]

In spite of what some resisted admitting and others viewed as regrettable, at least one American friend saw Spurgeon's courage in controversy as a compelling quality. Rejecting the picture of Spurgeon as the "goody goody sort of man," J. D. Fulton, a Brooklyn pastor, viewed Spurgeon as his "ally in proclaiming Christ as the Saviour of the lost, in fighting Romanism, in defending the Bible as essential to the life of liberty, in lifting the warning signal of danger concerning 'The Downgrade' and the so-called 'New Theology,' and in defending at every cost what he thought truth."[9]

Distinctive Spheres of Engagement

Spurgeon's controversies fall into three major types. Controversy at the first level came at the point of immediate conflict over scriptural teaching. This involved a clash of messages and a clash of confessions. Spurgeon had much to say in this area and spread his remarks over a wide field including persons, denominations, and movements. The second level of conflict emerged with those that held a confessional position ostensibly, but felt themselves justified in functioning in opposition to it. Sometimes this was because their theology was better than the confession, and led Spurgeon to admonish them to leave their church and place themselves at the behest of divine provision. Others ministered outside the parameters of, or in opposition to, their confessions because they believed less and worse than the confession proclaimed. For these he felt special alarm and was particularly disdainful of their hypocrisy. A third type of controversy focused on the theological differences that he had with other publications, including periodicals and books. For the most part this type involved a single interaction but on occasions resulted in prolonged, and sometimes bitter, insulting exchanges.

We look briefly at the third and first and then give a bit longer attention to the second.

Ongoing Strife with Periodicals

The numbers of periodicals that Spurgeon read was massive, and that he took issue from time to time with their viewpoints, politically, theologically, socially, or personally should come as no surprise. It was all in the interest of clarifying truth, or making those that gained the public's attention more careful in their presentation. He had suffered much at the hands of pundits and cartoonists, and at times had benefitted from them, but he always shuddered at misrepresentation whether to his denigration or his advantage, whether a deflation or a puff. The intense interest in

everything Spurgeon made it impossible for him to respond to everything, but certain types called for rapid and unwavering confrontation.

When the *Westminster Review* reported, "among other falsehoods and misrepresentations," that some of his own deacons described him as "a regular pope," Spurgeon called it "an unmitigated lie, for which there has never existed a shadow of foundation." He challenged the paper to produce a single name and address and he would respond with all the names and addresses of the deacons so that the reporter could either verify the statement or "admit himself to have uttered a gratuitous falsehood."[10] When his friends Arthur Mursell and William Landels lectured before his college men, Spurgeon wryly observed, "It is most remarkable that, while the *Westminster Review* was announcing these brethren as our opponent, they were actually of their own free will serving us as friends." Mursell's lecture, in fact, took a particularly spurgeonic texture as he laid "such scathing sarcasm upon the modern schools of thought, and such a defence of the old orthodox faith, as we have seldom, if ever, heard" and he hoped that they would never forget it.[11] In reviewing a book of interesting incidents in Baptist history by J. J. Goadby, Spurgeon remarked, "If this book does not interest a reader, we give him up; he must surely be as ignorant as the writer in the last *Westminster Review*, who evidently knew more about pewter pots that Baptists."[12]

One publication with which Spurgeon had an ongoing battle for more than two decades was *The Christian World*, the product of an entrepreneurial publisher named James Clark. He had begun this paper in 1857 as an unsectarian and evangelical newspaper, a "general intelligencer" for broadly evangelical thinkers in England. Spurgeon seems first to have paid close attention to *The Christian World* in 1866. The lead review for that year in *The Sword and the Trowel* gave a sterling recommendation from Spurgeon. He said that the editor "is manly in his utterances, and decided in his teachings, keeping back no truth because of its angularity or unpopularity." This newly minted periodical avoided the malady of non-denominational publications in becoming "namby-pamby, truckling, timorous, and anything-arian." He continued the recommendation of the editor by saying, "His leading articles are admirable, his selection judicious, and his news fresh and varied." He recommended everything except "the religions novels, and if we should ever be able to screw up our grim judgment round to allow us to recommend works of fiction, we should most certainly put the tales in the *Christian World* in a very high place." He urged his friends to seek the extension of the influence of a "paper so excellent" for it certainly commanded his "constant and increasing confidence."[13]

Within six months, Spurgeon's confidence began to decrease. By June, Spurgeon's correspondents had disturbed his mind about the theological ambience of the religious periodical. He felt embarrassed that he had not noticed certain theological leanings and had given such an enthusiastic welcome. The mitigating circumstance featured the editor as "a gentleman whom we highly esteem, a man of great ability and generous spirit." In addition, "his paper, for its freshness of news, and its power of writing, deserves every encomium, while its aid to all sorts of practical work, in the cause of religion and education, commands our gratitude." Lately he had noticed, however, "from numerous letters and personal remarks… there is a

growing want of confidence in the theology of the paper in certain directions." He concurred. "Theologically," he judged, "it does seem to us that of late the articles in the paper are generally loose and frequently dangerous." He gave such a notice, not to interfere with the perfect freedom of the editor in the conscientious promulgation of his own views, but to dissociate his influence from the "promulgation and palliation of what we feel to be very serious error."[14] When his correspondents began to write to him complaining about the "the heterodoxy of the *Christian World* newspaper," he responded that "no one is more grieved at the fact than we are, but we have not even the remotest share in the conduct of the paper, or any sort of connection with it." Though he had always wished the paper well, he was "sorry that it takes the course it has."[15]

Future days would prove the instincts of Spurgeon true. An obituary of the publisher, James Clarke, described him in terms exactly suited to irritate and alarm Spurgeon. "His breadth and boldness continually caused the weaker brethren to tremble. To admit into 'News of the Churches' the headings 'Unitarian' and 'New-Church,' was sure proof that he was on the 'down-grade.' Many were scandalized at the latitude afforded alike to Annihilationists and Universalists to advocate their heterodox views."[16] This reference is a scarcely subtle poke at Spurgeon as one of the "weaker brethren."

Primary sources for illustrating his point throughout the Downgrade Controversy came from his perennial nemesis *The Christian World* magazine. Spurgeon described his relation to this magazine when he wrote, "We view matters from a point of view which is precisely the opposite of *The Christian World*." When he quoted it, as he did frequently, in confirmation of his own observations, he referred to the paper as "our antagonistic cotemporary."[17] In exposing the doctrinal slide among so-called evangelicals, Spurgeon pointed to *The Christian World* as the periodical to which was "largely due the prevalence of this mischief."

Confessional Clashes

Conscientiously-held theological divergence led to clashes. Often these were short lived and established a standing relationship on confessional differences. At their best, when doctrinal differences were small, these brief battles brought mutual respect for faithfulness while contending for the truth in its purity. Shots across the bow on particular doctrinal points would punctuate Spurgeon's writings and preaching when he felt that reiteration of a theological idea in opposition to error was necessary. When these differences concerned matters that did not attack the doctrines of Scripture, God, Christ or salvation, Spurgeon sought ways in which to express his unity on these most central issues.

For example, Bishop Ryle was always good on experimental Christianity, the importance and craft of preaching, and the central issues of the gospel though he functioned under a cloud, in Spurgeon's view, of episcopacy. When he preached the gospel, Ryle was right; when he played the bishop, Ryle could expect spurgeonic lampoons. His book *Simplicity in Preaching* "out-Ryles anything we have ever read for raciness and direct home-thrusting power." Spurgeon saw so

much power and wisdom in it that he recommended that every student of preaching should memorize it. "Dr. Ryle," Spurgeon admitted, at least on this point, "has not been spoiled even by being made a bishop!"[18] Even beyond Ryle's gifts in preaching, Spurgeon would acknowledge, "While with all her faults he loves the Church of England still, he loves the souls of men much more, and most of all the gospel of their salvation." Ryle's experience of the gospel had made him great by its gentleness and earnest by its threats and promises. Spurgeon commended his intensity in appeal to sinners and denoted his evangelicalism even apart from a statement of the leading doctrines. "The practical claims of the gospel upon true believers are here most scripturally and lovingly enforced," Spurgeon wrote of Ryle's book *Practical Religion*, "and at the same time the self-deceived and unconcerned are called upon to see how much they also need the atoning blood."[19]

Spurgeon could have been describing his own message. Concerning a cordial meeting of devotees of different denominations in Southampton, 27 October 1881, after Spurgeon had preached, he reported, "It was a singular sight to see at these services men of all grades and creeds, and even more remarkable to observe with what kindliness they received the preacher of the Word." He observed softening, candor towards long-despised truth, friendly discussion, and, more important, "spiritual communion both in conversation and prayer." In a statement of great ecumenical breadth, Spurgeon proclaimed, "The life of God in the souls of believers triumphs over even important difference of ceremonial and doctrine. In honestly dealing with each other in the spirit of love to Christ we shall, by the Holy Ghost's guidance, find the way to mutual edification and enlightenment, and so to real unity."[20] Societies formed for the purpose of achieving unity will do less than "congresses, and conferences, and meetings," in which opportunity is given for genuine spiritual fellowship built on shared experience and commonly held truth. Such meetings, Spurgeon believed, would increase knowledge and common regard for those differing in less central matters. Pointing out differences among such brethren was not unnecessary and had its appropriate place, but the large field of genuine camaraderie in revealed truth far transcended the stubborn differences.

Controversies that involved major confessional differences in vital areas evoked ongoing resistance on the part of Spurgeon and prompted his most exquisite displays of sarcasm and close analysis. Roman Catholicism and certain aspects of Anglicanism were major opponents in this type of conventional controversial engagement. Arminianism provided another chief position to which Spurgeon took explicit exception in its distinctive theological ideas. With many Arminians he managed warm and mutually respectful relationships, but he consistently resisted their defining peculiarities as erroneous while he commended them for their defense of biblical inspiration, their true zeal for souls, their urgency for conversion, and their proclamation of forgiveness on the basis of nothing less that the cross of Christ. Hyper-Calvinists he often scolded for their development of leading doctrines into an oppressive metaphysical system that produced serious omissions in their practice. Frequently, Spurgeon gave passing rhetorical references to the theological misperceptions behind those practical idiosyncrasies. In reviewing a work on the tabernacle by Robert Sears, Spurgeon called Sears "one of those thoroughly sound Suffolk

Baptists, of the old school, of whom we should wish to see many more." Sears was a "staunch old Calvinist, firm in the faith, but without the gall which generally goes with high doctrine."[21]

Controversies over Confessional Infidelity

For those, however, that were untrue to their public confessional commitments he reserved a peculiarly tragic outlook. These were "Ministers Sailing Under False Colours."[22] Spurgeon knew ministers in the Reformed churches on the Continent who had endeavored to retain their "offices and their emoluments" while blaspheming the atonement and denying the deity of Christ. They deny the inspiration of Scripture "yet remain in churches whose professed basis is the inspiration of the Bible."[23]

Much of his scorn on this issue fell, not on heretical divergence from an orthodox confession, but on orthodox evangelicals that functioned under the authority of a sacramental ritual. Ministers well-entrenched in the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith put into the mouths of babes, in accordance with the required rites of the church, a profession of their faith in Christ and their union with the church when those ministers knew that no such thing existed. He found the same thing true with evangelical Anglicans, an issue to be developed below.

These latter violated conscience, while the former violated justice. Spurgeon argued strongly for the civil right of every person to hold whatever theology he felt correct and to use all his energies to propagate it. Repression of conscience in these matters is an opprobrious and disgraceful business. At the same time, however, for a man to maintain his office who has denied a confession he has pledged to uphold has "all the elements of the lowest kind of knavery." To claim such as a legitimate spiritual liberty reeks of reverse oppression, violation of conscience, and persecution; Spurgeon indicated nothing but the sternest abhorrence for the "license which like a parasite feeds thereon." So obvious was the unreasonableness and absurdity of one's claiming this as his right, that Spurgeon barely had patience to expose it. "The whine concerning persecution is effeminate cant," he responded.[24] "Treachery," Spurgeon boiled, "is never more treacherous than when it leads a man to stab at a doctrine which he has solemnly engaged to uphold, and for the maintenance of which he receives a livelihood."[25] One who has made such a change must offer a resignation from the body whose faith he can no longer maintain nor nourish.

The question arises as to whether a standard of doctrine should be required at all. Preaching on the Bible at Exeter Hall in March of 1855, Spurgeon had affirmed the centrality of the doctrines of grace as standards of theological truth that should be believed if one were to believe the Gospel, when he began considering the wording at the beginning of the Athanasian Creed. He halted from such a start as this—"Whoever should be saved, before all things it is necessary that he should hold the Catholic faith, which faith is this." Then Spurgeon stopped and said, "When I got so far, I should stop, because I should not know what to write." He professed to believe "the Catholic faith of the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible." As far as

making any other determination beyond that, Spurgeon asserted, "It is not for me to draw up creeds. But I ask you to search the Scriptures, for this is the Word of Life."[26] He demurred at the ostentation of placing an ecumenical creed at the level of absolute authority on a par with Scripture, but he did not resist the necessity of making clear condensations of biblical truth as a confession of what one believed and as a guideline for loyal ministry. Only a race of triflers would agree to have a minster unbound by any set of standards. Should churches throw away all creeds, Spurgeon's argument would have no relevance, he admitted, "for where there is no compact there can be no breach of it."[27] This situation would have immediate and painful relevance seventeen years subsequent to the writing of this article, as it would be at the heart of the Downgrade Controversy. For the moment, however, Spurgeon only pointed out that churches do have creeds and doctrinal expectations. "Protest by all means against creeds and catechisms," Spurgeon urged the conscientious non-subscriber, "but if you sign them, or gain or preserve a position by appearing to uphold them, wonder not if your morality be regarded as questionable."[28]

If a minister is found to be inconsistent with the standards, what should be done? Spurgeon had a succinct and reasonable approach to the problem.

> They should have a patient hearing that they may have opportunity to explain, and if it be possible to their consciences, may sincerely conform; but if the divergence be proven, they must with all the courtesy consistent with decision be made to know that their resignation is expected, or their expulsion must follow. The church which does not do this has only one course before it consistent with righteousness; if it be convinced that the standards are in error and the preacher right, it ought at all hazards to amend its standards, and if necessary to erase every letter of its creed, so as to form itself on a model consistent with the public teaching which it elects, or with the latitude which it prefers. However much of evil might come of it, such a course, would be unimpeachably consistent, so consistent indeed that we fear few ordinary mortals will be able to pursue it; but the alternative of maintaining a hollow compact, based on a lie, is as degrading to manliness as to Christianity.[29]

Within this same category, Spurgeon placed those that he denominated "Advanced Thinkers." These lurked within all denominations during the latter half of the nineteenth-century, according to Spurgeon, and every Christian in all denominations must be wary of them. Spurgeon had nothing but disdain for such puffed-up creatures. He hated their arrogance, their dishonesty, and their destructiveness. Their arrogance made them look upon themselves as the cultured intellectuals of the day. "Let half a word of protest be uttered by a man who believes firmly in something, and holds by a defined doctrine, and the thunders of liberality bellow forth against the bigot."[30] Some have given an honest look at the supposed fresh air of nineteenth century intellectual superiority and have found it a mere revamping of "old, worn-out heresies" passed off as deep thinking. The avant-garde, nevertheless, look with arrogant pity on those that

still adhere to benighted creeds of the past. They consider themselves manly and courageous to be willing to preach their creedless message in churches founded on the doctrines that they assail. Spurgeon did not find this a point of manliness; if they would put themselves out and refuse to eat the bread of the orthodox they might be entitled to a verdict of manly honesty, but their retention of privilege shows that they fight, "not with the broad sword of honest men, but with the cloak and dagger of assassins."[31]

Spurgeon gave positive marks to James White who delivered a series of nine lectures that surely helped settle their listeners in the faith. White's presentation stood in contrast to the many Congregational churches where orthodoxy would be a novelty and emptiness a sparkling fascination. Spurgeon, relieving the sober tension with a playful representation, had heard recently of "Rev. Empty Brainbox" who had resigned his Independent church in Sleepyton. The newly at-large minister reasoned that he had "outgrown the creed of the Congregational body, and felt the necessity of greater liberty than he could obtain among the Independents." Spurgeon was incredulous at the covetous grasp for more freedom. "What on earth could he want?" The creed had long been meaningless for he knew Congregationalists who believed anything and "some who believe nothing." The limits of creed "would seem to have vanished into thin air." In truth, Mr. Empty Brainbox simply had nothing to say; the cupboard was bare. "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?"[32]

This aggressive assertion of the right of freedom is vicious and aims at total annihilation of Christian truth. True liberality, they contend, means that one should be sure of nothing. Opinions, not truths, we utter, and "therefore, cultivated ministers should be left free to trample on the most cherished beliefs, to insult conviction" and to teach anything as directed by their own cultured and enlightened thought. No more sacred duty for the enlightened minister may be conceived than that of sneering at the man of a creed. Spurgeon cynically observed the sense of duty exhibited in their imperative of entering the synagogue of confessional bigots under cover of adherence to outmoded doctrines in order to inveigh against them in the very midst of the darkened foes of enlightenment. These arrogant, dishonest men make it their duty to destroy the faith of others from the very pulpits consecrated to defend what they assail. If anyone bothers to object to this intrusion and oust the intruder, the charges of illiberality begin to fly and the ejected infidel becomes the object of sympathy and defense by the secular press. "Our pity," Spurgeon protested, "is reserved to the honest people who have the pain and trouble of ejecting the disturber: with the ejected one, we have no sympathy; he had no business there, and, had he been a true man, he would not have desired to remain, nor would he even have submitted to do so had he been solicited."[33]

Spurgeon objected to the charge from such broad-minded spirits that he and others of his confessional ilk were lacking in liberality. Their accusation would be true, Spurgeon admitted, if the matter between them was one of mere opinion. But Spurgeon had invented none of his doctrine; he received it from the witness of the church to the truth as contained in the historic creeds which were but witnesses to the deposit of truth given in Scripture. While he did not consider himself a believer in "stereotyped phraseology" nor a promoter of "stagnant

uniformity," he found removing the landmarks and throwing down the ramparts a sure method to produce doctrinal chaos. In short, he was a steward and a steward must be found faithful, not innovative or filled with liberality in the matter. A liberal spirit toward the matter of stewardship is nothing short of infidelity, even treason, to the master whose charge we keep. One may not negotiate with any of the truths given to us as a matter of trust; "it is rebellion, black as the sin of witchcraft, for a man to know the law, and talk of conceding the point."[34] To give a man poison under the guise of being liberal minded about chemistry or anatomy is still murder. "No fiction do we write," Spurgeon testified, "as we bear record of those we have known, who first forsook the good old paths of doctrine, then the ways of evangelic usefulness, and then the enclosures of morality."[35]

Spurgeon had advice and an observation for the proponents of the "Advanced Thought" that unshackled the intellect and gave such liberality of spirit.

> Let our opponents cease, if they can, to sneer at Puritans whose learning and piety were incomparably superior to their own; and, let them remember that the names, which have adorned the school of orthodoxy, are illustrious enough to render scorn of their opinions, rather a mark of imbecility than of intellect. To differ is one thing, but to despise is another. If they will not be right, at least, let them be civil: if they prefer to be neither, let them not imagine that the whole world is gone after them. Their forces are not so potent as they dream, the old faith is rooted deep in the minds of tens of thousands, and it will renew its youth, when the present phase of error shall be only a memory, and barely that.[36]

In the Preface to the 1871 *Sword*, contextualizing his confidence that the old faith is rooted deep in the minds of tens of thousands, Spurgeon summarized his concerns for the theological direction of the churches which caused him "alarm and much distress." He pointed to a "craving for novelty, a weariness of the once honored truth." Sickened by the churches' coquetting with Infidelity and toying with Ritualism, Spurgeon confessed that he did know which of the two lovers to despise the more. "They are both arrant knaves and seducers, and those whose hearts are true to the Lord Jesus will utterly detest them." But such warnings, and such detestation, gained for the one that resisted their enchantment the epithets of "unenlightened, bigoted, and out of date." That did not bother Spurgeon, and he would not be slow to warn for he was convinced that there was nothing new in theology but that which was false, and even that was as old as the serpent himself. "Our sword will never rust for lack of enemies to smite; they multiply like the race which sprang of the dragon's teeth." Should the time come, and he believed it would soon, restating his optimism of the month before, when a recoil from advanced thought would ensue, and the faithful would be "pestered with hypocrites as now we are with heresies."[37]

Two decades would prove that Spurgeon's confidence in how deeply rooted the old faith was in the churches was ill placed. The influence of the liberal spirits would increase in both content and spirit of toleration within his own Baptist denomination so that he, rather than they, would be severed, if not in fact ejected, from the fellowship of those whose heritage he defended. He

would not pretend fellowship with those with whom he disagreed upon vital points of truth. If they would not leave, or could not be dismissed, he would sever from them by dismissing himself. When his act of personal dissociation from the unholy alliance replaced the act of disfellowshipping, the theological progressives, even though they could not stomach his theology, found his action insulting. He responded that "to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not alone our liberty, but our duty." Having done so, he wished to be left free. "Those who are so exceedingly liberal, large-hearted, and broad might be so good as to allow us to forego the charms of their society without coming under the full violence of their wrath."[38]

Spurgeon's response to the surprisingly relentless advance of "advanced thought" in his own denomination led Kruppa to observe, "It was Spurgeon's tragedy that he lived long enough to witness the comfortable intellectual assumptions of evangelicalism disrupted by the twin challenges of science and higher criticism. He saw his task as one of resistance rather than reconciliation, and he devoted his last energies to a fruitless crusade against modernism."[39] While it is true that he devoted his last energies to this crusade, one can see clearly that he devoted not only his last energies but his early energies. And he would never have admitted that his fight was fruitless; he maintained his own witness and faithfulness unimpaired and that, combined with his confidence that truth would descend from the scaffold to live, was fruit enough for him.

The decision to fight, however, according to Kruppa, "has impaired his reputation with posterity, for the future belonged to his opponents. He failed to stem the tide against the future, and his life ended on a note of defeat," but nevertheless, a defeat without surrender. One could not have expected him to make any other decision or to care about his reputation with a posterity committed to heresy. He did not change his theological persuasion nor his posture toward theological modernists. Spurgeon knew, and so practiced, that constant vigilance was as much a necessity as a virtue in protecting the purity of the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

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[1] Charles H. Spurgeon, *An All Round Ministry* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1960 [1978 paperback reprint]), 395.

[2] Charles H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, 4 volumes in one (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1990) 1: 83.

[3] Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, 2:43f.

[4] W.Y. Fullerton, *Charles Haddon Spurgeon: A Biography* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1920), 303.

[5] *The Sword and the Trowel*, April 1881, 160.

[6] Fullerton, *A Biography*, 303.

[7] S&T, Preface to 1865.

[8] From a handwritten document in Archives at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

[9] Justin D. Fulton, *Charles H. Spurgeon, Our Ally* (Chicago, IL: H. J. Smith & Co., 1892), ix.

[10] S&T, January 1872, 46.

[11] S&T, December 1871, 571.

[12] S&T, November 1871, 531.

[13] S&T, January 1866, 43.

[14] S&T, June 1866, 286.

[15] S&T, October 1871, 478.

[16] *Typo*, 26 May 1888, 37. This was a religious magazine published in New Zealand.

[17] S&T, January 1889, 40.

[18] S&T, November 1883, 604.

[19] S&T, August 1879, 393.

[20] S&T December 1881, 626.

[21] S&T, December 1875, 583.

[22] S&T, February 1870, 69.

[23] S&T, February 1870, 70.

[24] S&T, February 1870 ,72.

[25] S&T, February 1870, 70.

[26] SS 1:37 (sermon delivered March 18, 1855).

[27] S&T, February 1870, 71.

[28] S&T, February 1870, 72.

[29] S&T, February 1870, 73.

[30] S&T, November 1871, 495.

[31] S&T, November 1871, 496.

[32] S&T, May 1874, 235.

[33] S&T, November 1871, 498.

[34] S&T, November 1871, 498.

[35] S&T, November 1871, 499.

[36] S&T, November 1871, 500.

[37] S&T Preface, 1871.

[38] S&T, "Attempts at the Impossible," December 1888, 620.

[39] Patricia Stallings Kruppa, *Charles Haddon Spurgeon: A Preachers Progress* (New York, NY: Columbia University, 1968), 478

News

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J. Frank Norris: No Independent

Matthew Lyon

J. Frank Norris was the harshest critic of the Southern Baptist Convention for many decades. However, this article will show that until his exclusion in 1924 Norris showed himself to be a consistent supporter of the denomination. Though he would boldly criticize anything he perceived to be in error, he did so as a defender of true Southern Baptist life. This will be shown using his self-expression in two phases of his life, first as editor of *The Baptist Standard* and secondly as editor of *The Searchlight*. Though it can be argued that in fact he had a divisive intent, this article points to the image Norris wished to cultivate.

Early Norris as Denominational Supporter

J. Frank Norris began his remarkable climb to fame in the heart of Southern Baptist territory, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Though he would be famous in the second half of his life as a "man of the people" and would deliberately cater to the working class listener, his time at Southern Seminary gave a different impression. He arrived in Louisville from Baylor in 1903 and entered the three year Master of Theology program. His brilliant mind was revealed when he not only completed the degree in two years but did so at the top of his class.[1] This potential was recognized by both McKinney Baptist Church, which called him as pastor in 1905, and *The Baptist Standard*, which hired him as President and Business Manager.[2]

Editor of *The Baptist Standard*

Upon arrival at the prominent Texas denominational paper, Norris showed little of his later audacity, but immediately made his lifelong connection with the people of the Convention. He declared, "In a very real sense *The Baptist Standard* is the property of the Baptists of Texas. The managers and stockholders do not consider it as personal property, but as a trust to be guarded and executed in the best interests of the cause of our common Lord."[3] Norris' commitment to the people of the Convention was evident to his colleagues as well. J. B. Gambrell, superintendent of state missions for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, wrote of him:

"Pastor J. F. Norris, the new business manager, is young, cultured, has a good outlook, is active, has a business turn, and is committed to the whole program of the Baptists in Texas and throughout the South."[4] Though it seems surprising that the man later labeled as the "Texas Tornado" would here be described as "cultured," it displayed the ability of Norris to tailor his image for a specific purpose.

Norris' affinity with the members of the Southern Baptist Convention found encouragement in the moral character of J. B. Gambrell, a man he greatly admired. Norris would later say that Gambrell "was never known to be in the wrong side of any moral or righteous question,"[5] a remarkable statement coming from Norris. Shortly after Norris' arrival at *The Standard*, he published an article by Gambrell entitled "Some Observations Concerning Denominational Loyalty." Within it Gambrell asserted "Denominational loyalty goes directly to matters doctrinal… Think of an army of 250,000 Baptists in Texas, everyone loyal and true to every interest of each church, and all standing for all they are worth for every interest of the denomination."[6] Here we see Norris' perspective laid out clearly: loyalty to doctrine, church and the denomination. These would be the guiding lights in the future of Norris' career and were evident, though subdued, in his time as editor of The Baptist Standard. He saw himself as the champion of both the truth and the people. While announcing the purposes and character of the paper, he pronounced that "the denominational paper is the greatest defender of moral and civic righteousness," and "We are determined that the Baptists of Texas—the greatest people beneath the stars—shall have the greatest and most up-to-date paper published."[7] As the head of *The Standard* Norris saw his commitment to the truth of the Scriptures as synonymous with his service to the Southern Baptist Convention. He saw no disjunction between serving the Lord and serving the Baptists of Texas. He clearly delineated this commitment to the good of the Convention, maintaining that "*The Standard* supports with equal fairness and fidelity every phase of our denominational work" while also averring that "*The Standard* is an exponent of the orthodox principles established by the Lord himself."[8]

Norris' fervor for the Baptist cause, along with his skill and ambition, soon landed him the job of editor, when J. M. Dawson left for the pastorate. From this position Norris would express himself from the editorial page and soon signs of his personal philosophy emerged. Aside from concerted efforts against the demon rum and general devotional items, Norris began to focus on what he, and others, perceived to be a troubling matter in the Southern Baptist Convention—centralization. As a denominational supporter, he was careful to define what he meant by the term. He said that while Baptists polity was against centralization of *authority*, it "demands centralization of forces."[9] He cited the great central locations of Baptist influence: Louisville, Atlanta, and Richmond, and asserted that without such groupings of efforts the cause of evangelism and Baptist effectiveness would crumble. The Convention should spend its efforts in a manner that would be the most productive. Continual division and localized focus might foster an ideal of independence, but such contentions would be foolish. That mentality contains the absurd implication that no failure of stewardship would occur if "Pastor Truett should spend his time in Screech Owl Bend, with a population of one hundred, rather than in Dallas, with a population of one hundred thousand."[10] Norris, for all his independence and ambition, was

dedicated to the furtherance of the Baptist cause, and he defended the legitimacy and necessity of centralized co-operation.

The coin, however, has another side. While Norris gave ardent support to the denomination, he fostered an uncompromising commitment to Baptist principles of liberty and church autonomy. These principles were being tested by the growth of the Baptists. After one particular Convention he remarked, "The Convention has grown to unmanageable proportions. It is a question which will tax the wisdom of Southern Baptists as to whether these millions of Baptists scattered over so wide a territory can continue to do business in the most expeditious and economical way. Let it be remembered that conventions and all such other organizations are wholly matters of convenience."[11] Though Norris was excited that the Baptists were growing he wisely saw the problems that could arise from such success and thus reasserted baptistic ecclesiology. Nonetheless, he was cautious about any future splits. When *The Christian Index* suggested that the Convention will part ways, Norris warned against "any unnecessary anxiety about the future of the 'Trans-Mississippi Baptists.'" He reiterated that "Conventions and all similar bodies are mere matters of convenience, not sentiment."[12] At this point Norris was fully committed to the direction of the denomination while still maintaining restrictions based on church autonomy.

During this same year, 1908, Norris showed an equal concern with Convention orthodoxy. He continued fostering the complementarian aspects of denominational unity and witness with adherence to sound doctrine. He editorialized, in a foreshadowing of his turn to Fundamentalism, on the growth of heresy. Norris stressed that "changes in the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, changes which modified its innermost character and made it something else, came almost entirely unobserved and without arousing protest." The earliest doctrinal alteration rode piggy-back on "a tendency toward centralization."[13] Norris saw the early church as a democracy, where everyone was heard equally. For him this was the true New Testament church, and thus the Baptist model. Once the bishops and hierarchies were introduced, heresy ensued. Though this would be his later concern when the Convention leadership would oppose him, he saw no evidence of deviation at this time. His report on the 1909 Convention proudly declared: "There was a strong emphasis on doctrine throughout the Convention, especially was this true in connection to the Seminary. The doubting ones would have been greatly encouraged if they had been permitted to feel the heavy undercurrent back to the fundamentals."[14] Norris felt that the Convention, though grown large and unwieldy, was also growing more conservative. He noted this encouraging trend in a sermon of Lens Broughton, whose bluntness had been a cause for caution. Broughton, in a message before the Convention, proclaimed "it was easy to fight the sins of the English and took little courage to oppose gambling in Wall Street, but it took courage to oppose it at our own doors." For Norris, Broughton simply affirmed his own bold battle against these vices, and he was overjoyed to report that "When he said this the Convention broke over all rules of propriety and everything akin to it, and gave its approval in long prolonged and loud applause."[15] Norris, the champion of righteousness and the people, saw himself completely at home in this environment. He comfortably supported the denomination, and while

noting possible problems, felt that he shared a vision of orthodoxy, Baptist distinctives, and zeal for truth with the majority of the Southern Baptists.

From Editor to Pastor

Norris' confrontational approach would strain this commonality in the future, but for now it propelled him farther into prominence. Norris soon became the controlling figure behind *The Baptist Standard*, both financially and editorially. Upon his resignation he stated that he "possessed full authority of *The Standard*, having a majority of the stocks, I congratulate myself and the brethren that no greater number of mistakes have been committed."[16] His ability impelled both the paper and himself forward, and he was asked to serve as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, Texas. This was a prominent position and fitted Norris' style more than the editor of a paper. He still had his hand on the Baptist pulse and stated "The First Church, Fort Worth, presents a tremendous denominational responsibility now."[17] Though this "responsibility" soon became "personal opportunity," he did have concerns for the health of the Convention. He said that his move to Ft. Worth was "conditioned upon the proper disposal of *The Standard*."[18] Norris sold his stock in the paper to a group of men which included George W. Truett and J. B. Gambrell, who would become the editor. Showing his democratic character, he remarked, "The one man control… has been true throughout *The Standard's* history. This has caused great anxiety. All have agreed that an enterprise so vital to every denominational interest should not be suspended on the course and life of one man."[19] Though Norris was committed to the people he almost certainly did not feel any anxiety over his own control of the paper. This propensity to control would be exhibited throughout his life.[20] Despite this personal ambition he was glad to see the power of the paper be spread about the people he served. Upon assuming the pastorate at Ft. Worth he demonstrated his continual support of the paper and the denomination by leading a campaign among the city churches to raise $200,000 for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.[21]

At the close of this period, we find Norris as a vocal promoter of the Southern Baptist Convention. Though he was mildly concerned for the large, centralized direction of the organization, he saw a conservative and wholly Baptistic direction from the churches within. At this time, the ardent preacher and warrior against vice and heresy found an ideal place in one of the prominent pulpits of the Texas Baptist Convention.

Later Norris as Denominational Reformer

Between the years of Norris' resignation from *The Baptist Standard* and his initiating a church paper, initially called *The Fence Rail*, in 1917, he had slowly found both fame and infamy. Sometime around 1910 he experienced a dramatic change in preaching and leadership,[22] which probably freed him from his previous restriction of Southern Baptist urbanity. He proceeded to

remake his church into a working-class congregation, while he became a sensationalist preacher. Gradually, but surely, he emerged as the "Texas Tornado."

In the first month of publication for his new church paper, *The Fence Rail*,[23] Norris declared "The pastor is going to start a warfare in dead earnest against all forms of wickedness…no favors will be shown and none will be asked. Better call in the 'denominational bishops' to muzzle somebody."[24] Here we see a Norris far removed from the "cultured" editor of a prominent Southern Baptist paper. With a church that had outpaced First Baptist, Dallas, Norris was ready to step up his sensational campaign against whatever evil or error he could find.

Norris' bold stand had already drawn much criticism from other pastors and Southern Baptists. One such objection is recorded in the title of an article in *The Searchlight*: "The First Baptist Don't [sic] Give to Missions."[25] One might expect that this is an indication of Norris' departure from denominational support, but he soundly rejected this notion. He boldly emphasized: "The First Baptist Church is in deepest sympathy with all our benevolent and missionary enterprises. From our great seminary to the remotest mission station we are in one accord."[26] To prove his point, Norris produced numerous examples where he and his church outgave another prominent Forth Worth Convention church, even going as far as to list the exact amounts. There is no doubt that, though he expressed disdain when "some 'denominational bishops' popped the whip,"[27] Norris was fully and financially behind the SBC.

While Norris may have been behind the Texas Baptists he was also building relationships with other future fundamentalists. He held a Bible conference in 1917 that included prominent names such as R. A. Torrey, A. C. Dixon, Arno Gabelien, W. B. Riley, and G. Campbell Morgan. Though some did not care for his aggressive style, his popular support and phenomenal church growth made him a man of influence in the South. He would continue with men such as W. B. Riley for many years to come, and the two would be pivotal in creating the Fundamentalist movement.

In 1919 the Southern Baptist Convention began the $75 Million Campaign, ushering in a great deal of distress for the denomination. This provided the perfect opportunity to criticize. At its inception, however, Norris supported the effort. He devoted a front page article explaining and calling for support. He even argued for its biblical foundation. "The Great Commission is a command from our Lord to send the gospel to every creature. That is the heart and meaning of this campaign. The First Baptist Church will get in the campaign and every member in it."[28] Though destined to be the largest thorn in the side of the Convention leadership, early in the campaign Norris displayed his typical loyalty to the Southern Baptists. Even after church financial hardships made it difficult to meet the number that the denomination had given to First Baptist, Norris still displayed support: "it is earnestly desired that every member shall get in and make a liberal and sacrificial gift to the cause of world-wide missions, for that is what this campaign means."[29]

For about two years Norris focused his efforts against various social and religious ills, such as gambling and Roman Catholicism. In 1921, however, he caught wind of modernism within the South. A professor at Southern Methodist University, John A. Rice, had written a book

advocating higher criticism. In an age where the battle between Fundamentalists and Modernists was heating up, Norris saw his chance to enter the battle like his friend to the north, W. B. Riley. Norris openly criticized both Rice, and the Methodists criticized Norris' involvement in turn. Norris responded with a quaint illustration: "A man might be foolish enough to desire to get a bad case of smallpox. He can go and get the disease and have his face pock-marked for life. But the day he gets smallpox and insists on walking about the streets of Fort Worth and coming into my congregation, then his smallpox becomes my smallpox."[30] Norris felt that any purportedly conservative institution that strayed from the orthodox path should be called to account by other conservative pastors. He cited the story of Cain and declared "It is our business to attend to each other's business."[31] Norris was right about the direction of John A. Rice, but his self-appointed license to monitor other conservatives did not sit well with his denomination.

This soiree into the Methodist's theological business only confirmed a tendency already observed by his fellows Baptists. Earlier in the year he had rejected the use of the denominational Sunday School curriculum. Criticizing its structure and certain scriptural interpretations, he substituted it for a "Bible-only" format.[32] Here we find the beginning of sorrows for the relationship between Norris and the Convention. Norris piously declared that "The First Baptist Church without any effort to influence any other church…exercised its inalienable and Heaven given right to discontinue the use of all man-made literature and to take the Bible only as its textbook."[33] Clearly Norris intended to send a message with this statement that flexed his denominational and independent muscles. He felt the encircling pressure from a Convention that was seeking to fulfill it responsibilities and he resented the intrusion. Though he initially stated that he did not wish to influence any other churches, by the end of the article he did just that: "They say that only First Baptist can do it…I do not think so. Any church, however large or small…has sense enough to study the Word of God."[34] Norris made a statement that was clearly heard by the leadership.

Champion of Orthodoxy, Hound of Heresy

With the pressure already building between a financially-pressed denominational rock and a successful, zealous Norris hard place, doctrinal deviations arose within the Convention. Of course, the first person to broadcast this news, much to the dismay of more denominationally oriented men, was Norris. In 1921, *The Searchlight* revealed that the Professor of Sociology at Baylor University, G. S. Dow, had published a book with evolutionist teachings. Norris declared that it was done under the auspices of the President, S. P. Brooks. After he uncovered that Dow had been teaching these ideas for 15 years, he placed equal blame upon Brooks. Realizing that he was going against denominational leadership, he personified the everyday Baptist: "The fact that I am just an ordinary, country Baptist preacher does not deprive me of the privilege of asking a few questions. There are no big folks and folks among us Baptists. We are all just folks."[35] Norris

had struck two chords at once: the modernism inside the convention, and the denominational control that had begun to overshadow the church.

After *The Searchlight* broke the news, the Convention leadership was forced to act. Because the South had little sympathy for modernism, a man like Dow could not continue openly in such a prominent post as Baylor. Less than three months after the story, Norris crowed from the front page of *The Searchlight*, "Professor G. S. Dow Resigns, Decision to Quit Follows Attack Led by Rev J. Frank Norris."[36] Norris was victorious and encouraged by his influence. He knew, perhaps better than his critics, that the common people of Texas enjoyed both his sensational style and his investigation skills. Norris saw himself as a true Baptist, unhindered by hierarchy, given to the truth, the church, and the Southern Baptists. Flush with victory he looked for his next victim.

He did not have to look far. The ambitious $75 Million Campaign was in dire straits and the denomination was hard pressed for solutions. This was the perfect opportunity for Norris. Though he supported the campaign, he had begun to resent the high-handed tactics the leadership was using to attain the funds. He was also going through a building campaign that was difficult for his middle-class congregation to fund. Even in the beginning of the campaign, while encouraging his people to give, he expressed displeasure. He informed his people "We have been asked to give $100,000 dollars in the next five years…This is a heavy amount under the circumstances…We owe more money than all the other Baptists of Tarrant County put together and yet we have been asked to give nearly one-fifth of the amount of Tarrant County."[37] Norris' initial enthusiasm had been dimmed by his own financial burden, and while he did not have a reason to oppose the campaign, it was apparent he was not fully on board with the Convention's decisions.

The $75 Million Campaign was a clear illustration of the divide that was created by the denominational leaders, and exposed by Norris. With the pressures of debt and overextension, the Convention had to put pressure on the churches to fulfill their pledges. Norris realized early that this outside influence was negative, and that it would lead to problems. He was wise enough to see the potential of unchecked optimism in the beginning and he set in place a more conservative approach at First Baptist: "We have been asked to give $100,000 for the next five years for world-wide missions. Without a doubt we are able to give it. We will not sign up any card as many are doing, but we will follow a better method of making cash offerings."[38] By the summer of 1921 it was obvious to Norris that this plan was not followed by the rest of the Convention. To make matters worse Norris accused the leadership of fiscal problems and that they were being concealed. "The Northern Baptist is millions in debt. The Southern Baptists are in the same financial predicament. We have a very strange situation here in our midst where the Board refuses to allow a contributor to see the books."[39] By accusing the Board of financial mismanagement Norris once again placed himself as the champion of truth and the people. He was shrewd enough to understand that the diversions of the Convention were signs of a real problem, and it reinforced his fear of centralized, denominational control. This division between people and hierarchy gave Norris room to praise the giving of the people in the campaign while simultaneously criticizing the Convention leadership. Six months after he sensed a cover-up

Norris again expressed optimism. "The reports are encouraging. It was and is a great campaign. It is a pity you hear so much about hard times. The men in charge of the campaign should have more faith and say less about hard times."[40] Norris saw no inconsistency in his seemingly ambivalent pronunciations. He had always supported the campaign, and declared that it was tied to the Great Commission. The problem was not the idea but the management. Because a small, elite group of men, working behind closed doors and closed books, were pressuring autonomous churches while also mismanaging the funds, Norris felt validated in his conflicting positions.

Despite Norris' sharp critique of the denominational leadership throughout the years of 1920–21 he fully participated in support for the overall Convention. Because his dynamic personality combined with his exploding church, there was still room in the brotherhood for the most controversial Southern Baptist in Texas. In March he hosted the Texas State Sunday School Convention, where he proudly announced, "There will be 5,000 delegates to this convention. They are coming to visit our Sunday School. We want to cut the 3 out that day [average Sunday School attendance was at 3,000+] have 4 in its place. Not 3,000 plus, but 4,000 plus in Sunday School."[41] With numbers like that Norris felt secure in his place within the Texas Baptist Convention. He was proud to be a Southern Baptist, despite its failings. And many of the Southern Baptists welcomed such a dynamic and forthright preacher. In 1920 he took a tour of Europe with the Baptist giants E. Y. Mullins and J. B. Gambrell. He was invited to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to recount his trip, and was warmly received. Introduced by a member of the faculty with "Dr. Norris needs no introduction here, we know him, we love him," Norris proceeded utterly to captivate the audience: "It was a study of ecclesiastical psychology to note the expressions on the faces of the more than six hundred students of theology as they watched every motion and gesture and accent of the man who is planning to enlarge an auditorium that already seats 5,000 people to accommodate the Fort Worth people who sit under his ministry. They just sat there and dreamed of the day when they, too, would have 'the largest Sunday School in the world' and thrill audiences with their pathos and humor."[42] Norris reveled in his position as the most successful and "Baptistic" Baptist in Texas.

Even after he attacked the leadership for their tacit approval of Dow and the management of the $75 Million Campaign, he wished to seem a team player. He responded to criticism from his local Baptist association "There are those who are trying to make it appear as if we are attacking the denomination, simply because we exposed the infidelity that is [word unclear here] in Baylor University."[43] Norris never wished to be seen as anti-Convention, but rather as a true Southern Baptist who revealed and opposed outside encroachments of modernism and un-scriptural practices. He still desired to be seen as a leader in the denomination and petitioned for the State Convention to meet in Fort Worth in 1922. He maintained, "The convention stands for Evangelism and world-wide missions. On these great New Testament Commandments the First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, is in most hearty agreement with the convention…we have a great Baptist brotherhood in Fort Worth."[44] Norris even praised the Convention meeting of that year with lofty terms: "The Baptist General Convention of Texas is the greatest deliberative religious body of its kind on earth." Then in even more remarkable words he stated "Never was there a convention more noted for its leadership."[45] He even noted that his local affiliation, the Tarrant

County Baptist Association had grown even stronger. In no uncertain terms he declared, "It is easy to say, as a matter of habit, that each session is greater than the preceding one, but the session held last week was the greatest in the history of the association."[46] Norris loved the denomination, and he wished to be perceived as its supporter.

Despite, or perhaps because of this love, Norris was quick to point out any faults he identified. Immediately following the words of praise for the state convention and its leaders he spent column after column berating the denomination for allowing Dow to continue at Baylor. He said that when he revealed the infidelity at Southern Methodist University, all the Baptist leaders rejoiced, but when the "searchlight" was turned to Baylor opinions changed. Using his appeal as a "common preacher" he remarked,

> But it all depends on whose ox is gored. I had planned to turn on the light on the same infidelity at Baptist schools for I know no infidelity after the flesh and am no respecter of false teaching , whether it comes wearing the livery of Baptists, Methodists or anyone else. I am against snakes of all breeds….I greatly sympathized and now greatly sympathize with some of our leaders who evidently wanted to feed the Baptist snake a little more milk when some of the rest of us wanted to give him the ax just behind the head.[47]

Norris applied the same treatment to the Tarrant County Association, beginning with words of praise then obliquely criticized them for failing in two areas, church autonomy, and tolerating modernism. He coyly said "So long as we recognize the rights and privileges of the local churches that long will we, and can we, co-operate…no church…is to be controlled, 'advised' or 'assessed' by any power, organization or any other human institution whatsoever."[48]

Despite Norris' praise, this sort of constant and sharp criticism was driving the convention away from him. He forced the issue of modernism at the schools by presenting documents indicating a conspiracy to conceal the matter at Baylor and was rewarded when the Convention sent out a committee to investigate.[49] As Norris endeavored to be more and more thorough in his search for the truth, he continued up the ladder of the denominational hierarchy, accusing L. R. Scarborough of participation. He questioned why Scarborough knew of Dow's book for over a year but made no move to reveal it. He also asked why the financial cover-up was not revealed by Scarborough and Groner. Such accusations began to pressure an already beleaguered Convention.[50] With the $75 Million Campaign struggling and the denominational leaders in financial high waters, a man like Norris was creating unwelcome trouble, though the vast majority of the Convention agreed with his position. Norris recognized the pressure he was placing on the leadership and also the way they were distancing themselves from him. Rather than allow this to turn him he reveled in the attention. He proudly asserted, "J. Frank Norris has too much sense to let the issue be sidetracked by paying any attention to the misrepresentation of the First Baptist Church or himself. Both the pastor and the church thrive under criticism."[51] Norris loved to be the center of attention, even negative attention, and he continued to pursue tactics that would keep him there.

Rejection by the Southern Baptists

1922–23 proved to be a deciding year in the relationship between Norris and the Southern Baptists. He was censured by the State Convention for his "wholesale method of the indiscriminate and destructive criticism of Baptist work and workers."[52] At its annual meeting his local Tarrant County Association refused to seat him, which in turn led to his removal from the State Convention. Though these were dramatic events, effectively barring Norris from fellowshipping with Southern Baptists, almost no indication is given in *The Searchlight*. Perhaps he felt that it was a temporary setback, or perhaps he was wounded by the exclusion. Realizing the seriousness of the problem he wrote to Scarborough and was readmitted.[53] Whether from Norris' greater willingness to co-operate or simply a conciliatory overture, Secretary Groner invited him to preach in a Spring Mission Campaign. Groner wrote, "We would like mighty well to use you for a number of engagements at big regional conferences during our spring campaign…. Our Executive Committee of sixteen, in session this Friday, upon my recommendation, voted to make this request of you."[54] Norris clearly wanted to portray that he was being approached by the denomination, probably to show that they had come over to his side. He accepted the offer, but soon enough proved that his silence could not be bought.

By the fall the truce was ended, and when Norris discovered another case of denominational control and modernism at Baylor he rang out the head line: "Dr. Brooks Expels Rev. Dale Crowley for Exposing Evolution in Baylor." The subtitle had heavy overtones concerning the "machine": "Mr. Crowley Refused Hearing before the Faculty."[55] Having refused to "co-operate" Norris came under attack from the denomination again. Basking in the controversy, he printed:

> "We Will Fix Norris at the Coming Convention": Thus wrote one of the leaders a few days ago to an honored brother in Texas. But the funny thing about it is that they have "fixed Norris" for the past two years. But he won't stay fixed.[56]

Norris goes on to express his contempt for the politics of the "machine" asserting that "The funny thing is, nobody ever heard of 'fixing Norris' until Norris went to fixing evolution in Baylor two years ago." Norris was solidly convinced that he was in the right, and that he had the conservative Baptist people on his side. Already knowing that he would be brought before the Convention because of his "un-cooperation" Norris was confident that if he had a hearing "I will have my grip full, and will welcome the resolution."[57]

Norris did go to the Convention and despite his best efforts his opponents managed to refuse his seat and to amend the constitution so as to make it almost impossible for him to be readmitted.[58] Thus ended Norris' involvement in the Convention. Again his report after the convention did not speak to his dismissal but rather ran an extravagant headline reading, "Great Rejoicing! 100% of Baylor Faculty Sign Creedal Statement Which is 100% For Fundamentalism: Glorious Triumph after Three Years Bitter Warfare of the Bible Versus Evolution."[59] Despite

receiving a devastating blow Norris refused to admit defeat and implied that he had won his battle with modernism. Norris did not address the issue directly for some time.

It seems reasonable to say that his life-long attachment to the Convention would make such a parting extremely difficult. Evidence of such feelings was apparent in his attempt to attend the 1925 Convention as a delegate. He assured his readers that "Yes, 'Norris' is going to the Convention as a Delegate."[60] He spent much effort afterwards to vindicate his decision and argue for his proper place within the denomination. In what surely must have been a pathetic scene, however, he was rejected by his fellow Baptists.

Conclusion

If Norris was so attached to the Southern Baptist Convention, why did he pursue a course that would lead to such an abrupt dismissal? The best answer seems to be that Norris underestimated the power of the denomination and the negative effect he had on its leaders. Often he wrote of the brotherly love he had for his opponents. He penned, "One hundred years from now when we all get to heaven, we will all have a big laugh, the brethren and I,"[61] and "One of the best things [at the annual Convention], if not the best, is the association and happy fellowship with men and women from every part of the battle field."[62] Norris failed to realize the stakes at which he was playing, for he had a large and growing ministry that was unaffected by denominational politics, whereas the men he attacked were tied to the welfare of the Convention. Thus, though he enjoyed popular support, and was with the majority on his doctrinal issues, he was too threatening to an organization that was struggling under potential financial ruin. It is reasonable to assume that Norris was surprised that the denomination he had given his life, money and ministry to defend and promote had turned its back on him over issues where he knew he was right. His most vitriolic days would not come until after his dismissal. Until 1926 he portrayed himself as a common, country preacher, fighting for truth and authentic Baptist co-operation. His warmth for the brethren is conveyed in a headline he ran after the ordeal was over: "Doctors Scarborough and Norris Clasp Hands across Pulpit at Travis Avenue Dedication."[63]

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[3] Norris, "Editorial," *The Baptist Standard* (April 18, 1907).

[4] J. B. Gambrell, "The Growing of a Great Religious Paper," *The Baptist Standard*, vol. 19, no. 17.

[5] J. Frank Norris, "Know Ye Not that there Is a Prince and a Great Man Fallen in Israel Today?" *The Searchlight*, vol. 3, no. 31.

[6] Gambrell, "Some Observations Concerning Denominational Loyalty," *The Baptist Standard*, vol. 19, no. 29.

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[11] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (May, 1908).

[12] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (July 9, 1908).

[13] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (Aug. 20, 1908).

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[15] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (May, 1909).

[16] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (Oct 21, 1909).

[17] Norris, *The Baptist Standard* (Oct 21, 1909).

[18] Norris, "Sale and Destiny of the Standard," *The Baptist Standard* (Nov 4, 1909).

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[24] Norris, "Items of Interest," *The Fence Rail* (January 26, 1917).

[25] Norris, "The First Baptist Don't Give to Missions," *The Searchlight* (March, 1917).

[26] Norris, "The First Baptist Don't Give to Missions," *The Searchlight* (March, 1917).

[27] Norris, "The First Baptist Don't Give to Missions," *The Searchlight* (March, 1917).

[28] Norris, "Seventy-Five Million Dollar Campaign," *The Searchlight* (September 25, 1919).

[29] Norris, "The $75,000,000 Campaign," *The Searchlight* (Oct, 1919).

[30] Norris, "The Inspiration of the Scriptures," *The Searchlight* (May 12, 1921).

[31] Norris, "The Inspiration of the Scriptures," *The Searchlight* (May 12, 1921).

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[33] Norris, "Shall The First Baptist Church Study the Bible?" *The Searchlight* (Feb. 10, 1921).

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[35] Norris, "Prof. Dow and Baylor University," *The Searchlight* (Nov. 11, 1921).

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[45] Norris, "The Greatest Convention in Twenty Years," *The Searchlight* (December 9, 1921).

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[50] Norris, "Denominational Nightmare," *The Searchlight* (March 24, 1922).

[51] Norris, "Two Main Issues Admitted But Not Settled," *The Searchlight* (October 27, 1922).

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[53] McGlone, *The Preaching of J. Frank Norris*, 63.

[54] Norris, "Executive Board Asks for the Pastor's Service" *The Searchlight* (Jan 18, 1924).

[55] Norris, "Dr. Brooks Expels Rev. Dale Crowley for Exposing Evolution in Baylor," *The Searchlight* (October 31, 1924).

[56] Norris, "'We Will Fix Norris' at the Coming Convention," *The Searchlight* (October 26, 1924).

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[58] McGlone, *The Preaching of J. Frank Norris*, 64.

[59] Norris, "Great Rejoicing! 100% of Baylor Faculty Sign Creedal Statement Which is 100% For Fundamentalism," *The Searchlight* (November 28, 1924).

[60] Norris, "Yes, 'Norris' is going to the Convention as a Delegate," *The Searchlight* (April 24, 1925).

[61] Norris, "'We Will Fix Norris' at the Coming Convention," *The Searchlight* (October 26, 1924).

[62] Norris, "The Greatest Convention in Twenty Years," *The Searchlight* (December 9, 1921).

[63] Norris, "Doctors Scarborough and Norris Clasp Hands across Pulpit at Travis Avenue Dedication," *The Searchlight* (March 27, 1925).