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THE REVIEW

Seeking Divine Intervention

By Dr. Charles L. Dear, Moderator IBFNA

There is a growing number among us who think that we may be on the brink of World War III, that national pride and arrogance among world leaders have brought us to a point in history from which there is no retreat from massive self-destruction and loss. The news paints a grim picture for those who are persuaded that all the media hype is certainty and who are accepting of their efforts to undermine the hope that true believers have in Christ. To be mistakenly persuaded that we must face some of the coming Great Tribulation before we are taken home to heaven is no help. So what must believers do in the face of all the turmoil and doubt?

First, we need to be settled in the reality of our salvation, our confidence that we are in God's hands and that He is in control of everything. Like difficult times before our day, this is a time of winnowing, when those who are just fellow-travelers rather than true believers will reveal their true character by their doubt and disbelief in the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Word of God. There were those among the children of Israel who, facing the hardships of wandering in the wilderness, whimsically thought better of their hardships in Egypt. They persuaded themselves that it was not so bad there after all, and besides there were the "good things" they fondly remembered: "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic" (Num. 11:5). There were things that temporarily tickle the taste buds and excite the senses but could hardly begin to compensate for the despair and sufferings endured for centuries in slavery.

Likewise, today there are those who sadly slip back into the pit from whence they have been dug and who undermine the clear testimony of the gospel that the church must bear to a corrupt and broken world of unbelief. It is far better for us to be admonished by the Apostle Paul from I Cor. 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Paul's conclusion is drawn from the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, which sees beyond this veil of tears and looks forward with great anticipation of being with the Lord for all eternity. That will be an eternity with a new body, where we will be in fellowship with all those who have gone before us, including the patriarchs like Abraham (Matt. 8:11), who was confident in the promises of God and faithful to the end (Heb. 11:13).



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The challenging times in which we live should compel us to strive more than ever to bring the gospel to the hearts of people who are being destroyed in profound ignorance of biblical truth and in the constant brainwashing of hedonism, perversion, and self-worship. It is an insidious modern form of slavery and deceit being sold as freedom and enlightenment to those who cannot, or will not, recognize the destruction that awaits them later, when all the bills come due. Unbelief has always insisted that you can reap better than what you sow.

In the face of uncertain times, God's people need a revival of prayer. Looking back over the years, prayer meeting has always seemed like the step-child of the local church. Somewhere between the conviction of our own self-sufficiency and the "inconvenience" of another church service in the middle of our week, we have convinced ourselves that it does not need to be taken all that seriously, certainly not as seriously as Sunday, the Lord's Day.

Taking those objections and other logistical problems seriously (like "How can everybody pray at prayer meeting?"), it would seem that some of us decided to substitute a mid-week service for it, being something more akin to the worship services on Sunday, but without the expectation of active participation of attendees leading out-loud in prayer.

Perhaps we should go back to Sunday services and ask what role prayer plays in the entire service? Make no mistake, one of the signs of change is when the role of prayer in worship is diminished or dis-

missed altogether. Its removal/limitation in worship is yet another step away from the supernatural, a turning of our attention further away from God and more toward man.

While prayer is something to be exercised every day by believers, how much more should it be a part of our collective worship beyond just the pastor's invocation and benediction? Perhaps a reason why our people do not pray through the week is because they do not see a strong emphasis on the power of prayer in the church.

Throughout Scripture we find that when times were overwhelming, when defeat at the hands of the enemy seemed inescapable, when the Lord's hand of chastening was hard upon His people, when all hope seemed lost, the correct response of God's people was always prayer. God heard the cries of His people in Egypt (Exod. 3:7-8). He heard Hezekiah's confession: "O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (2 Chron. 20:12).

Today, we are no less challenged to be people of prayer, who look for the supernatural work of God to intervene in our lives and in our world as He has promised: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

A Ministry to Encourage

By Dr. Clay Nuttall

Through the years that the IBFNA has been in existence, I have only missed a couple of the annual conferences. My chemotherapy regiment is schedule over the top of this year's conference in Maine, so I am left with no choice in the matter. You probably do have a choice, and I would like to encourage you to think carefully before you make a decision.

Participation in the Fellowship has been a great source of strength for me. The good friendships we have developed are only an example of the bless-

ings. Some of these friends we only see once a year, but they have become a permanent part of our lives.

I never have gone to a conference when I did not learn something of value from the messages. Hopefully, what little input I have had did bring blessing to others. There have been times when other members of the IBFNA have provided advice and on occasion funds to support our ministry in the Middle East. One does not have to read very far into

the Bible text to find out that fellowship is essential to our spiritual health.

So I extend thanks to our many friends in the IBFNA for all you have provided for us, and I en-

courage you to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in this year's conference. Who knows what next year will hold for each of us in the Lord's gracious providence?

A Brief History of Fundamentalism – Part Six

By Pastor Kevin Hobi

In the 1996 May-June issue of the *Faith Pulpit*, Dr. Robert Delnay wrote about a process of spiritual decay that can affect "Third Generation Christians." He counseled that the process could be arrested in two ways. First, he said we need a vital and substantial walk with God that teaches our children by example that the faith once delivered to the saints is worthy of the best our lives have to offer. We should be less concerned about whether or not they are having fun or are comfortably affluent.

Second, he said that we need to teach our young people history: "those who would arrest the process will have to do a serious ministry of teaching history. If the coming generation does not know the past, it will have little basis on which to appraise or preserve anything." This brief survey of the history of fundamentalism has endeavored to contribute to meeting this need. I write with the prayer that my sons and daughter and others like them will read and be edified in the Lord to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Part One of this series noted that fundamentalism reacted to liberal Protestantism the way Protestantism did to Roman Catholicism (February 2015). Evolutionary dogma infected biblical studies, and Finney pragmatism led to a social gospel. These denials of the faith called for a response.

Mainline fundamentalism (1880-1930) was the first response of godly Protestants (Part Two; May 2015). After some early advances, this battle from within the corrupted denominational structures failed when public opinion shifted, because its success depended too heavily on political maneuvers. A few voices, the proto-separatists, called for and practiced a response that was on the one hand costlier, but also on the other more in line with scriptural obedience (Part Three; February 2016).

Separatist fundamentalism (1930-present) was the second response to the problem of modernism in mainline Protestant denominations (Part Four; December 2016). The 1930's was a period in which large segments of biblical orthodoxy agreed on the answer to a question raised by the *Moody Bible Institute Monthly* at the beginning of that decade: "Has the time come for Fundamentalists to promptly and literally obey the emphatic commandment given to believers in 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11; and 2 John 9-11?" Across multiple denominations, the answer of orthodox men became "yes."

New evangelicalism (1940-present) chose a different answer (Part Five; March 2017). They repudiated the "come-out-ism" of separatist fundamentalism, seeking greater influence in academia and the popular culture. Over time, the bargain for influence became spiritually expensive. The young evangelicals called for greater acceptance of liberalism and worldliness, and charismaticism has loosened much of the movement from its *sola scriptura* moorings.

This final article in our survey of the history of fundamentalism deals with a phenomenon created by the tension between separatist fundamentalism and new evangelicalism. The separatist fundamentalist and the new evangelical disagree both in principle and in application in regard to the Bible doctrine of separation. The question of whether that disagreement also requires the separatist fundamentalist to separate from new evangelicals has produced consequential disagreements within separatist fundamentalism.

An Issue From the Start

This question faced separatist fundamentalists from the beginnings of their movement. Not every orthodox leader blessed of the Lord became a faithful separatist in the 1930's, and those who did so were

faced immediately with the question of whether their co-laborers could involve otherwise orthodox men who were not in agreement with them on separation.

As early as 1937, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church gave way to the Bible Presbyterian Church over differing applications of both personal and ecclesial separation (see the 10-part series by Brad Gsell in *Redeeming the Time*, Winter 2014 – Winter 2017). The decision to disallow churches in fellowship with the Northern Baptist Convention took time for the founders of the GARBC. And in 1942 the National Association of Evangelicals was formed in lieu of the American Council of Christian Churches, in part because its leaders recognized that orthodox men still remained in the Federal Council of Churches. They desired to include them, while the ACCC did not. This tension is discernable prior to the NAE's full-throated repudiation of separatism and embrace of new evangelicalism.

The New Label

This difficulty faced by separatist fundamentalists obtained a label in the 1970s with the arrival of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority. Separatist fundamentalists and new evangelicals have always been politically active. Markku Ruotsila insightfully argues that the political conservatism of Carl McIntire's ACCC gave birth to our nation's religious right. He calls McIntire "the Barry Goldwater of the Christian right" [*Fighting Fundamentalists: Carl McIntire and the Politicization of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 292]. What changed with Falwell was not a new political involvement, but rather a new willingness to join with new evangelicals and their compromised alliances with unbelief in the effort, what the Falwell ally, Francis Schaeffer, would call co-belligerence.

Time magazine called the new approach "New Fundamentalism" (1970-present): "Falwell is leading a church movement increasingly known as the New Fundamentalism. It seeks to shed the reputation for bigotry and cultural narrowness without giving an inch on the Bible issues. Falwell wants to build spiritual alliances with as many of the moderate Evangelicals as possible" [Richard N. Ostling, "Religion: Jerry Falwell's Crusade," 2 September 1985]. Ostling notes two goals of new fundamentalism: (1) a desire to shed the fundamentalist's reputation, and (2) a desire to build spiritual alliances with non-fundamental evangelicals.

The goals that the editors of *Time* magazine noted from afar are today a source of close-to-home heartache for many separatist fundamentalists who have seen brothers succumb to this temptation. Recent history has seen the Independent Fundamental Churches of America give way to the Ohio Bible Fellowship, the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches give way to the Independent Baptist Fellowship of North America, and the Bible Presbyterian Church give way to the Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church.

Some have sensed that this problem lay at the root of the closings of once-important fundamental institutions, such as Northland University, Clearwater Christian College, Pillsbury Bible College, Tennessee Temple University, and Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary. Locally and abroad, the problem of new fundamentalism puts a strain on sister-church relationships within separatist fundamentalism that we need wisdom from above to address.

Some Attributes

In order to address effectively the problem of new fundamentalism, we need to understand its attributes. On the one hand, new fundamentalism is still distinguishable from new evangelicalism. Unlike the new evangelical, the new fundamentalist will not repudiate "come-out-ism" when it comes to the importance of separation from theological heterodoxy. If he does so, he is a new evangelical, not a new fundamentalist.

In addition, the new fundamentalist ordinarily maintains an appreciation for the importance of a cessationism that protects God's people from the influence of today's charismatic movement. The new fundamentalist is less tempted by theological innovations acceptable to broad evangelicalism, like inclusivism, the denial of a literal hell, the denial of inerrancy, theistic evolution, and seeker sensibility.

On the other hand, new fundamentalism is distinguishable from first-generation separatist fundamentalism as well. This is where its problems lie. That these problems are often found among second- or third-generation fundamentalists is itself one of these differences. None can fault a man for being raised within the protections of a flourishing separatist fundamentalism. That is a blessing from the Lord. Still, where separation has cost little, it can be in danger of being valued less.

There is not space here for a detailed history on the founding of the BPC, the OBF, or the IBFNA. Nor can we cover in detail what went wrong with the Moral Majority or document why some fundamental institutions of higher learning have closed. But as I have read and lived some of that history, four differences between new fundamentalism and separatist fundamentalism seem important.

Evangelical Convergence

It is the desire of the new fundamentalist to work with otherwise orthodox men who do not agree with them in regard to the doctrine of separation. *Time* magazine noted this about the Moral Majority: "Falwell wants to build spiritual alliances with as many of the moderate Evangelicals as possible." What that means theologically is that the Bible doctrine of separation is not worth separating over for these men.

Alternatively, maintaining what Dr. Kevin Bauder called "separation over separation" safely distances the separatist fundamentalist from the new evangelical [see Kevin T. Bauder et al., *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 38-40; and note the response of Dr. Mohler, the new evangelical, on p. 55]. Many unwilling to separate over separation claim to be avoiding "second degree separation." Gospel-centered coalitions led by conservative new evangelicals are popular among new fundamentalists in spite of their overt embrace of the fathers of new evangelicalism who repudiated biblical separation generations ago.

Militancy Against Militancy

The second distinguishable difference between new fundamentalism and separatist fundamentalism is that new fundamentalism is critical of the militancy of separatist fundamentalism. This concern the new fundamentalist has in common with the new evangelical. The March 1934 issue of the *Voice*, the official organ of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, included an article titled, "Today's Crying Need," by the former Congregationalist, William McCarrell, pastor of the Cicero Bible Church, IL. In it this first-generation separatist fundamentalist defined the crying need of his day in militant terms:

Today's crying need is aggressive fundamentalism. Believing that present-day uncertainty,

doubt and unbelief expressed from many pulpits and tolerated by many denominations warns of fearful fruitage in the lives of coming generations and also that it is the primary cause of present-day doubt, confusion and lack of spiritual conviction and standards, the Independent Fundamental Churches of America follows a two-fold course:

FIRST: It joyfully serves as shock troops, an advance guard, that aggressively leads orthodox forces in attack on citadels of unbelief and infidelity that hide under the misnomer of Modernism...Apostasy forces saved ones to occupy positions of either compromise, traitorous silence, sinful neutrality, or aggressive attack.

SECONDLY: The I.F.C.A. encourages return of the true Church to the constructive life and methods which characterized the Apostolic Church...The Church born at Pentecost triumphed over religious deadness, worldliness, unbelief, apostasy, persecution and sin...One of its most effective weapons was separation from apostasy as regards service, money, and name. The very name *Church* signifies separation.

In 1963 the National Executive Committee of the IFCA decided to remove this kind of militancy from the *Voice* magazine. It was no longer viewed as the crying need of the day. That criticism of militancy was the beginning of a new fundamentalism in the association that a few of the regional fellowships sought to correct without success. Instead, these voices found their leaders to be very militant about the end of militancy in their Association. The Ohio Regional eventually withdrew from the IFCA to form the Ohio Bible Fellowship in 1968.

The "Hyper-Fundamentalist" Charge

Historically, the separatist fundamentalist never needed the label *hyper-fundamentalist*. That term was the new fundamentalist's label for organizations like the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, which in June of 1978 passed a resolution against the danger of pseudo-fundamentalism, calling it "new evangelicalism in embryonic form." The target of that resolution, Jerry Falwell, responded with the label *hyper-fundamentalist*:

Since Hyper-Fundamentalists have spoken out loud and long, it would be easy to assume

that they possess great strength and influence. Despite their claim to be the only true Fundamentalists, they represent little more than a tangential element of Fundamentalism. There are thousands of pastors who do not agree with their conclusions. It was these pastors by the thousands who rallied together to combine their influence during the last election. Most studies of the Fundamentalist Movement are woefully lacking in any real appreciation of the great independent pastors such as Jack Hyles, Lee Roberson, John Rawlings, Harold Henniger, Truman Dollar, A. V. Henderson, Bob Gray, Bob and Raymond Barber, and many more. The Baptist Bible Fellowship, the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, the World Baptist Fellowship, and others are totally left out of most surveys of contemporary Fundamentalism. While we appreciate the concern of the extreme Fundamentalists over keeping the Church on the right track, we must not allow them to categorize and label everyone to death. The real fundamentalist majority must lead the movement in the 1980s and thereby prevent the tendency to react to the extreme right." [Ed Dobson, Ed Hindson, and Jerry Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 132-133.]

Interestingly, some separatist fundamentalists of our day have adopted the term *hyper-fundamentalist* to refer to the KJV-only problem and other problems within separatist fundamentalism. Useful or not, it is ironic that some of the most problematic examples of separatist fundamentalism in this regard were actually Falwell's new-fundamentalist supporters a generation ago.

Cultural Accommodation

While most new fundamentalists have resisted commendably the position of KJV-only advocates, many have been less successful resisting the influence of cultural accommodation in their ministries. New evangelicals have taught the amorality of musical scores, and many new fundamentalists have found their arguments persuasive. Again, space considerations will not allow a full treatment of this topic, but failures to draw a line that differentiates between the clean and the unclean when it comes to music and other forms of communication, like dress

standards, are accommodations to the world's culture that separatist fundamentalists were clearer on.

Within new fundamentalism that historic clarity is sometimes viewed to be legalistic tradition, mere applications fraught with human error, or an over-emphasis on the outward appearance. The recreational use of alcohol helped divide Bible Presbyterians from Orthodox Presbyterians in the 1930s, and separatist fundamentalists still find a new fundamentalist's willingness to compromise in this area of personal separation disappointing and dangerous.

The Challenge

The challenge created by new fundamentalism is a difficult one for the separatist fundamentalist to address. Perhaps the example of our Lord can help. Jesus seems to find a similar spirit in Peter, when Peter rejects His suggestion that He was to die on the cross. He calls Peter *Satan* and tells him to get behind Him (Matt. 16:23). Jesus explained, "Thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." That must have been unimaginably difficult for Peter to hear, yet Jesus still cared for and loved him as His disciple.

Peter received that same care from a fellow-apostle as well. Paul rebuked him to his face when he stood condemned for denying the gospel by association. Peter refused to eat with Gentiles when Jews who were mistaken on the gospel showed up in Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14). Dr. Steve Pettit, in a BJU chapel message, rightly pointed out that had Peter not repented of his error, the relationship between him and Paul would have been drastically different than it was. Peter did repent, and he and Paul served Christ faithfully in appreciation of one another's ministry.

We can glean many lessons from the history of new fundamentalism. We can look back and conclude that the FBFI had it correct when it predicted that many of its expressions were new evangelicalism in embryonic form. The same is undoubtedly true today.

Nevertheless, as we consider the frailty of Peter and remember that the same is true of ourselves, another lesson from the history of new fundamentalism must be that separatist fundamentalists need to be willing to correct one another and to take that correction from one another. It is important that, when the danger signs of new fundamentalism begin to arise

in a ministry or Fellowship, care is taken to lovingly communicate correction. It is in the multitude of counselors that we find safety (Prov. 15:22), and we are called to be our brothers' faithful keepers who reject the disassociating attitude of Cain.

At times new fundamentalism existed in the hearts of leaders who were unwilling to take that correction. The records of the founding of the OBF and the IBFNA detail the political heavy-handedness of this kind of carnal reaction to correction. It is never spiritually healthy to be unwilling to discuss a matter of principle with a concerned brother in the Lord. Willingness to discuss a matter with teachable humility is the better part of wisdom from above. That discussion can become heated, as were those between Peter and his Lord, and Peter and Paul, but still they are needed.

How often does each of us fail to savor the things of God rather than the things of men? Certainly, we

are at least as frail as the great apostolic leader, owning the same need for help that Peter knew. Are we willing to receive that help when new fundamentalism arises in our hearts and ministries?

When we are tempted to converge with otherwise good men who do not believe and practice separation in a biblical way, will we heed the brother who warns us of the danger? When we want to tone down the militancy of our cause, will we remember what Jesus called the Pharisees or what Paul called the Judaizers and endeavor to be more Christ-like and Pauline? When a critical spirit sees hyper-fundamentalism in our godly heritage, will we check ourselves with a thankful appreciation for those who have gone before us? When cultural accommodation tempts us, will we draw bold thick lines that put a difference between the clean and the unclean? To the degree we say we will, we shall protect ourselves, the brothers we love, and the ministries entrusted to our care from the error of new fundamentalism.



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