

Regular Baptist Review



"A Perspective of Historic Baptist Principles"

Dr. Richard A. Harris, Editor

Summer 1988

After-Thoughts From Anaheim

Dr. Richard A. Harris

The weather was beautiful. The facilities were excellent. The fellowship was sweet, but something was obviously missing. It wasn't so much what was said or what was done. It was what wasn't said and wasn't done that left us empty.

Self-preservation now seems to be the order of the day. It becomes the basis for every action and the justification for every political move. Our Saviour said, *"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it,"* but when we act in faith and risk our all in obedience to Him, *"whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."* (Matthew 16:25)

There's no question. The GARBC is hurting. Though eleven churches sought to be identified with us, fifteen desired not to be affiliated or were dissolved. Financially, we are hurting. People don't usually support organizations; they support causes, and we have seemingly lost ours. The "esprit de corps" is no longer there. The aggressive clarion call to action is missing.

Resistance against any attempt to raise a strong standard and call for return to our original purpose was clearly noticeable. For example, there was an unwillingness to identify the "building of bridges" between Western Baptist Bible College and the Conservative Baptists for what it really is.

Secondly, there was hesitancy by the Council to identify our literature items as our "official position." It was thus brought up by a messenger

and then voted on as "representative" of our stand.

There was also a motion placed on the floor by a Council member condemning the practice of recommending men for nomination to the Council. The openness and discussion that has been the distinctive of Baptist history slowly but imperceptibly is changing to the stifling of expression. It is not just helpful but imperative to know where a man stands before voting him into a position of leadership and responsibility.

There were other indications of resistance to a return to militancy, but probably none so evident as the

content and character of the preaching. In all honesty, we love these men, and their messages were Scriptural. The question was, "Were they relevant?" As pastors, we lead our people in an age when they are overwhelmed by Ecumenism, cults, degeneracy, compromise, humanism, etc. We need men of discernment who will grapple with the issues and give us *"understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do."* (1 Chronicles 12:32) Abraham Lincoln once said, *"To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards out of men."* See "AFTER-THOUGHTS" page 2

Observing The Council Of Eighteen

Rev. E. Allen Griffith

It was my privilege to serve as an observer to the Council of Eighteen when it met on Friday, June 24, 1988, in Anaheim.

The meeting was long, starting at 8:30 a.m. and continuing until after 11:00 p.m. with appropriate breaks for lunch and dinner. Early on there was discussion about seating observers and agency representatives. I was surprised and disappointed to find out that every approved agency was invited to send a representative to the Council session, but a local church was forbidden to do the same.

The argument was that there would not be enough room if 1600 churches each sent their pastor. The truth is it would be great if our

churches had that much interest. As it was only two churches tried to send their pastors. Of approximately 30 observers to the Council, perhaps only a third were actually pastors. They were welcome only because they were sent by state groups.

Two other matters of major concern were addressed during the meeting. The Education Committee reported on its review of Northwest Baptist Seminary and Western Baptist College. Northwest was given approval, but questions were raised about Western having 6 faculty members in CBA churches and 1 trustee in a CBA church. The Committee moved to approve Western for one year, and allow the Committee to See "OBSERVING" page 2

"AFTER-THOUGHTS" Conclusion

As United Airlines carried my wife and me nearly 3,000 miles back across our great Nation, my mind went back many years ago to a white country church in Covington, PA. It was there as a young preacher, Bob Ketcham challenged my soul. I remember the handkerchief on his shoulder, the tears on his cheeks, and the catch in his voice. I left that Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptists Meeting with fire in my soul; ready to attack Hell with a squirt gun, preach the Word with conviction, expose the Devil and His deceptions, and build a New Testament Baptist Church for the glory of God.

Now, however, Anaheim left us empty. I thought of the words of Isaac Watts:

*"Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace
To help me on to God?"*

Our call is still: **"Regular Baptists for Revival."** ■



"As a GARBC agency man and Council member, let me tell you what a great job you are doing in approving us."

"OBSERVING" Conclusion

work with them to "resolve" the CBA issue.

All but two of the Council members seemed to agree that working with Conservative Baptists was a problem. Unfortunately, Western does not see it as too great a problem, since in response to the motion, their representative read items of CBA literature to defend the CBA as a sound organization. One report was that the entire board of Western will review the matter and make a decision.

What if Western decides to retain its CBA people? One Council member asked the Education Committee, if passing a one-year, conditional approval implied further and more severe action, should Western keep its present policy of having CBA people on the faculty and board. One Committee member replied that

the motion would not necessarily require further action no matter what Western did. I wondered what game we were playing!

Another area of concern was the handling of proposed resolutions. One resolution was offered on the blood of Christ. It was stunning when the Council rejected it, because it could be received as a repudiation of John MacArthur and might offend some of our California brethren. It finally was presented to the Conference messengers by the chairman of the Resolutions Committee, after certain of the brethren prepared to offer it from the floor.

A similar situation arose regarding our GARBC literature items. Discussion had evidently preceded the June meeting about a resolution to acknowledge the literature items as accurate amplifications and com-

mentaries on the position of the Association. In speaking against the motion, one Council member described the literature pieces as old, outdated and in need of rewriting. The Council rejected the motion.

It finally came to the floor of the Conference from the Resolution Committee, but again only after some brethren determined to bring it to the floor themselves. You can order the final form of these resolutions. They are Resolution #5, "The GARBC Literature Items", and Resolution #6, "The Blood of Christ".

There were many other items of business brought before the Council, but these reveal the attitudes and current direction of our fellowship.

Every pastor should have been in Anaheim. However, they would not have been allowed in the Council Meeting anyway. ■

Building Baptist Bridges - Part II

Dr. L. Duane Brown

Will Western Baptist College continue its compromising alliance with Conservative Baptists?

The last issue of the *Regular Baptist Review* pointed out the crisis in the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, which Western Baptist College had caused. The College had on its faculty one part-time and six full-time teachers, who are members of Conservative Baptist Churches (One of these faculty members was a former President of the CBA) Also, at least one trustee was a member of a CBA church.

In Anaheim, the Education Committee of the Council of 18 was divided over the seriousness of this Western Baptist College alliance. The decision of the Council of 18 on June 24 concluded that Western Baptist College be approved for one year while the Education Committee works with it to "resolve" the issue of the CBA. No specifics, no probation, no conditions were stated on how to "resolve" this problem.

Dr. John Balyo, President of the College, *defended the CBA*, calling it a sound and separated organization. He even read its doctrinal statement to the Council. He stated in his report to the Education Committee, that the CBA rejected inclusivism, because they had adopted the so-called "Portland Manifesto" in 1953. It is difficult to comprehend that one of our distinguished leaders would advocate alliance with the CBA!

What Dr. Balyo did *not* say was the following:

1. In 1962 the CBA had voted to change its stand on separation by deleting this phrase from its constitution (the portion in italics was deleted: "To provide a fellowship of churches and individuals upon a thoroughly Biblical and historically Baptist basis, *unmixed with liberals and liberalism and those who are content to walk in fellowship with unbelief and inclusivism.*" How can the CBA be separatist when

it rejects its original purpose?

2. The so-called "Portland Manifesto," which was adopted in 1953 requiring its leaders to be separate from inclusivism, **was rejected** by the CBA in 1963! Dr. Balyo's thesis that the CBA is a separatist organization just will not be supported by the CBA's own actions.
3. The CBA is listed by the **National Association of Evangelicals** in its membership list. The NAE is nothing close to a separatist body or position.
4. CBA pastors and churches generally support the ecumenical evangelism of Billy Graham. A former CBA president wrote in a letter to *Christianity Today*, "Actually our CBA men have been among the most active workers, and the churches have been the most loyal in participation and attendance (at Graham's meetings)."
5. Dr. George Dollar (*The History of Fundamentalism*) wrote this about the CBA, "Because of complete capitulation to new-evangelical attitudes and methods, no serious dissension affects the Conservative Baptists now, and they openly support the strong voices of New-Evangelicalism such as Graham, Campus Crusade, Evangelism-in-Depth, and such new-evangelical schools as Denver Seminary, Fuller Seminary, Wheaton College, Gordon College, and Barrington College."
6. Dr. David O. Beal (*In Pursuit of Purity*) said, "In Atlantic City in 1963 the CBA and its agencies formally repudiated the separatist policy of the Portland Manifesto once for all, and set out officially on its continually new-evangelical course."

Further, Dr. Balyo warned the Council of 18 that if the Council insisted that Western Baptist College break off its alliances with the CBA, he would not do it, and

there was no point in the Council of 18 to proceed with that requirement for approval!

Let us see one year from now whether Western Baptist College will sever its compromising policies, or whether the Council of 18 will capitulate on the grounds of survival, friendship, or doctrinal change. After all, the Council of 18 by a solid majority **voted against** accepting the 15 literature items as the "official position" or as "accurate amplifications and commentaries on the position of the GARBC" at the Council meeting on June 24.

The GARBC is in real disarray, when it cannot put on paper what it believes. Fortunately, when the Council learned that a resolution on the literature items would be presented on the floor at the business session, the Council reversed itself on June 28 and recommended the resolution supporting the literature items. What the Council of 18 will do next year is anyone's guess! How can compromise be "resolved"?

Dr. Paul Tassell exclaimed in the Council meeting, that the Association has not changed! Dr. Tassell did not speak out against the compromising alliance of Western Baptist College. However in 1979, Dr. Tassell wrote to another one of the approved colleges, scolding them because one of their faculty had joined a CBA church! Dr. Tassell said *then* in 1979 these words about the CBA, "Since the Conservative Baptist Association has been unwilling through the years to take the Scriptural position of our GARBC in the area of ecclesiastical separation, it seems that _____'s defense of the CBA and his membership in a CBA church are going to prove terribly embarrassing..." Something surely has changed in ten years!

Where is the trumpet blast (I Cor. 14:8) of the GARBC against Ecumenicalism, New-Evangelicalism, conventionism, and for purity of doctrine, fellowship, and service? The GARBC has become apathetic, anemic, and neutralized. Our only hope is REVIVAL. ■

Just Two Decades Age

Dr. Richard A. Harris

Under the date of May 1, 1960, Dr. G. Archer Weniger released a document entitled, **The Conservative Baptist Association-Separatist Movement**. It was intended to demonstrate the CBA is a separatist movement. In all fairness to Dr. Weniger, he later repudiated the CBA, admitted it was not separatist and withdrew.

At the time, however, an answer was prepared in the GARBC Home Office and circulated to the churches. It was twenty pages long, and extra copies were available at \$.25 each. The following quotations are from that article which was presumably written by our National Representative at the time, Dr. Robert Ketcham.

"From the day the Conservative Baptist Association was formed we have tried to point out to our own group and to our friends in the CBA, that it is this dual membership which would give them heartache in the years ahead. Well, here Dr. Weniger tells the world that the heartache is there and the cause for it is this dual membership. In spite of it, however, the real separatist group within the CBA have been unable to remove its provisions from the constitution. This is why we are not too impressed with Dr. Weniger's present attempt to present the CBA as a thorough-going separatist movement. We note that in his twenty illustrations which he presents to prove that they are separatists, he carefully avoids the citation of any statement or

action by any of these boards, agencies, or individuals which would contradict his thesis.

*We note that Dr. Weniger is much concerned and aroused because the CBA seminaries and agencies have men on their boards who have not separated from the American Baptist Convention. Why should some of the CBA men be so strenuous in their opposition to this, when the CBA itself allows both **men and churches** to be members of the Association who have not thus separated? If the parent organization itself allows a mixed membership, why shouldn't their agencies be allowed the same privilege?*

It is this dual membership provision which, as we tried to point out fifteen years ago, has been and still is the greatest cause for the internal troubles of the CBA."

Attached to that article was another entitled **Is The GARBC Unfriendly to the CBA?** It began with this sentence: *"It is not possible to demonstrate and prove that the GARBC, as such, has been or is now unfriendly to the CBA."*

At the end of that article was a paragraph which is appropriate for today. Dr. Gabriel Guedj, who is mentioned was a pastor in Fresno, California who never did lead his church out of the American Baptist Convention. The event mentioned occurred in the late 40's.

"Following the Atlantic City meeting of the Conservatives, Dr. Gabriel

Guedj wrote the then National Representative of the GARBC, Dr. H. O. Van Gilder, calling attention to the fact that the proposed constitution of the Conservatives would set up an association of churches which themselves must be fundamental, but which would not be required to withdraw from the Northern Baptist Convention or any other group. He wanted to know if the GARBC leaders would recommend to its churches affiliation with it, and would it take a poll of its churches on the matter "in order that we (the Conservatives) might know on this matter the minds of the churches as well as of the leaders." Since the GARBC was basically set up on a complete separatist conviction and policy, why should it now take a poll of its churches to find out if they wanted to desert that position? Naturally such a poll was not taken, and for this the GARBC has been called non-cooperative and unfriendly. Apparently there seems to be a disposition in some quarters to interpret as "unfriendly" any act of the GARBC which seeks to protect and maintain its separatist position, no matter how tactfully and kindly such position is taken. The record of the GARBC, as such, herein contained, and which can be amplified and supplemented by other records on file, does not support the charge of unfriendliness which is frequently and insistently leveled at the GARBC." ■

If you appreciate the **REGULAR BAPTIST REVIEW**, may we suggest you send a love gift of \$5.00 or more to help cover costs of publication and postage. Send it to:

Regular Baptists for Revival
754 E. Rockhill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

You are free to copy this issue or send for quantities at: 25 @ \$7.00, 100 @ \$25.00 plus shipping.

Plan to Attend . . .

REGULAR BAPTISTS FOR REVIVAL CONFERENCE



Monday & Tuesday,
October 31st & November 1st, 1988

Stony Point Baptist Church
Kansas City, Kansas
Rev. Robert Houchin, Host Pastor

(913) 299-4774

The Way It Is With Watchdogs

Rev. Earl J. Bercot

Once upon a time in a high crime neighborhood, some people decided to erect a secure structure to protect their precious and valuable belongings. They had experienced break-ins and vandalism in the neighborhood and decided to take action. To assist them in protecting their goods, they procured watchdogs. Word got around and for years there was very little trouble.

When the next generation came along, all was passed down to them. To many that did not work for or purchase the valuable, they seemed more like sentimental old relics or even junk. The burglars knew better. If those folks had taken the time and effort to build the structure and surround it with watchdogs - those items must be worth quite a lot.

The burglars chose their night and made their move. The watchdogs put up a howl, barking as loud as they

could.

"What is making all that racket," growled many as they were disturbed from a peaceful slumber. Several of the neighbors gathered on the street. "Why, it's those crazy old watchdogs barking their fool heads off," commented one.

"Listen, everyone, that building is very secure. There is no need to worry about it," said another.

Those old dogs - they are nothing but troublemakers and rabblers, grunted a third. "Why those old mangy critters will bark at anything - just to hear themselves bark."

"I'll tell you what," intoned a man, "in the morning, let's go over and round up them mutts and get rid of them. I do not want to be disturbed again!"

It sounded good, so they all agreed. In the morning they all

arrived at the security structure and stood there motionless. The gate was knocked down, the building's main door was standing open, and sure enough all of the valuables had been stolen.

"We've been robbed!" they all screamed, and so they had.

"Hey, said one looking around, "where are all the watchdogs?"

Well, those watchdogs were not anywhere to be found. Those old dogs had left. Barking as loud as they could, no one had arrived, except the burglars. After the burglars departed with all the precious belongings, there was nothing left to guard, so they walked away.

I guess that is just the way it is with precious valuables, burglars, people that do not want to be awakened, and old, barking watchdogs. ■

Copied from

The GARBC Blue Ribbon Committee
on
Church Planting and Church Growth
JUNE, 1988

THE PRESENT CONDITION:

Much time could be spent detailing the decline of our Fellowship. Others have already gathered the data to very adequately confront us with our situation. It can be reviewed, however, in the following five phrases. The GARBC seems to be generally experiencing:

A SHRINKING PRESENCE - The GARBC has not been growing in either numbers or impact. Theological journals, Christian news magazines, and certainly the secular media seems to ignore us. Is the GARBC still a force to be reckoned with? Is either the Christian or secular world still listening?

A STAGNANT PROGRAM - Causes that do not experience growth in participation or spirit tend to become less dynamic and more sedentary. When a conservative mind-set develops in methodology, fewer risks and "steps of faith" are taken. Thus the status-quo becomes the standard in programming and creativity is stifled.

AN AGING POPULATION - Churches and movements seem to experience "mid-life crisis" just as people do. When the congregational leaders do not practice Titus 2:1-8 and conscientiously prioritize evangelistic outreach and discipling, churches settle into a "comfort zone" requiring less energy, and do not maintain aggressive ministries. The youth then do not pick up the vision.

A CALLOUSED PEOPLE - The more opportunities a man misses and the more times he says "no" to the direction of the Lord, the easier it becomes to do so. If people, pastors, and churches have continuously turned away from church planting/growth needs and opportunities, it is no wonder the GARBC conscience is so difficult to prick.

A DISCOURAGED PASTORATE - The pressure of trying to lead aging congregations who have little enthusiasm, and oiling the machinery of stagnant programs for a questionable cause, tends to develop discouraged pastors. Consequently placid men float, zealous men burn out, and the leadership gap becomes great.

THE NEED:

A PURPOSE - The members, pastors, churches, mission agencies, colleges, seminaries, and publishing houses need a fresh vision for what can be done. Victories can be won through the ministry of the GARBC. One of the purposes has been, should be, and can be that of evangelism, church planting, and church growth. Biblical success in this area would do much to liven our Fellowship and provide a fresh sense of direction.

A PROGRAM TO FOLLOW - Without a specific plan for action, little is accomplished. Consequently there is a need for a detailed plan of attack. This program should involve people from the youth in the pew to the Council of Eighteen. More specific actions will be discussed later in this paper.

A PEOPLE - An analysis of the present prevailing spiritual and practical condition of the GARBC would indicate the need for revival. Any solutions for the downward slide must involve church people, pastors, colleges and seminaries, mission agencies, the Council of Eighteen, and this Blue Ribbon Committee.

Bethel Baptist Church
Regular Baptists for Revival
754 E. Rockhill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Perkasie, Pa.
Permit No. 89

