

Regular Baptist Review



"A Perspective of Historic Regular Baptist Principles"

Dr. Richard A. Harris, Editor

Summer 1989

ASSOCIATION STANDS FIRM

Dr. Richard A. Harris

In spite of confusing circumstances, the pastors and messengers of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches meeting in Columbus, Ohio would not be turned aside from their historic purpose. A majority of 669 messengers to 515 voted to instruct the Council of Eighteen to encourage our agencies to maintain a distinct course from any involvement with the Conservative Baptist Association of America.

This was despite widespread lack of knowledge regarding the details of the historical differences that divide us from them. For some years now, there has been very little emphasis on these details, but if all the facts were known, the numbers might have been even greater in favor of the motion. The message is clear. The majority of messengers want to retain our clear distinctiveness as an Association. Many of us, have a deep desire to preserve and maintain our magnificent heritage.

At a pre-conference Council of Eighteen Meeting, a split vote had been taken to approve Western Baptist Bible College for this year. A motion was then placed on the Council floor to instruct "the Education Committee to work with Western toward the eventual removal of all Conservative Baptists as faculty, administrative staff, and board members." This was rejected, again by a split vote of the Council.

A similar motion was placed on the Association floor by Dr. L. Duane Brown. It was approved by the messengers in contrast to how the Council voted. It was a courageous vote by the men and women sent by our churches to conduct the Association business. The messengers are to be commended for voting to stay away from compromise.

The motion is very gracious and puts no deadline to be met by the College.

The next day after the vote, an unprecedented attempt was made to pressure the messengers to reconsider the vote. By God's grace, this effort to reconsider was unsuccessful. The Association stood firm.

Because of the growing conflict of interest, it has been very difficult to deal with the issues concerning our historic position in recent years. Apathy has already begun to set in. We must not let it destroy us. We must be diligent to keep clear of any inclination or temptation to soften.

When the Apostle Paul wrote in commendation of the Corinthians because they had taken a positive stand, he said, "...What carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." (II Cor. 7:11)

In Columbus, the Association members had chances to capitulate, but instead they capitalized on truth as a future. We at the grassroots are happy. Justice was served. ■

AMAZING VOTE, INCREDIBLE STATEMENT!

Dr. L. Duane Brown

Two years ago when the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches met in Ames, Iowa for its annual meeting, a motion was carried during the business session requesting the Council of Eighteen to give greater care in the examination and approval of the agencies. What a surprise to those in leadership who thought everyone was in agreement with its judgment!

This year in Columbus, Ohio a still more surprising and forceful motion was passed by the messengers in the annual business session of the GARBC Conference. The motion which passed 669 to 515 read as follows:

In view of the action taken by the Association in Ames, Iowa, that the Council of Eighteen give more care in the examination and the approval of the agencies,

And in view of Article 6, Section 6 of the GARBC Constitution that any action of the Council may be called up for review by the Association,

And further, in view of Conservative Baptist Association of Churches' longstanding New Evangelical and inclusivistic position,

I MOVE that the Association instruct the Council of Eighteen to monitor and advise Western Baptist College to remove eventually all full-time faculty, administrative staff, and board members who are members of churches in fellowship with the Conservative Baptist Association.

Why did this action carry, which instructed the Council of Eighteen which had just announced their approval of

See "AMAZING VOTE" page 6

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HOTEL TV IS NOT THE ISSUE

Dr. Richard A. Harris

The Regular Baptists for Revival announced a pre-GARBC Conference meeting to open discussion on the proposed amendment regarding agency men on the Council of Eighteen. It was to be held at the Holiday Inn in Columbus. We received a number of letters critical of our choice, due to the Holiday Inn chain being a promoter of late night adult films. This particular Holiday Inn bucked the system however, and does not participate in this program. (See the notice nearby about their decision regarding cable TV.) We checked this early on. We felt it was appropriate to commend them for their stand, and we wanted to be as consistent as possible. This is important.

We have not condemned the leadership of the Council of Eighteen for naming the Hyatt Regency as the GARBC headquarters hotel, even though this hotel makes available pornographic films. It is not easy in our degenerating world to avoid this kind of problem.

As important as hotel TV is, it in no way can detract from the fundamental issues being raised by the RBR about the GARBC. What we are asking for is

a fair hearing for our efforts to improve our Fellowship and steer it back on course. It was evident that many of the letters received on this TV issue were from people who were not listening to our appeals for a revival of our great heritage, but instead they were searching for areas to pick us apart. It would be interesting to know if these same people will write to the Schaumburg Office to complain about the Hyatt Regency being used.

Now that the record is straight, let's put the issue to rest and

get on with the business of building a strong and clear Association, which God can use for His glory in these last days.

Though we must and will preach against sin, the RBR is not on a moral crusade to "fix up the far country." We are preaching the Gospel and co-laboring with Christ to bring the prodigal son back home. The reformation of society through a moral crusade is "another gospel."■



This is a photo of TV card from the Holiday Inn in Columbus, Ohio.

RECOMMENDED READING

Rev. Jack Keep

Here is a list of books that will broaden your understanding of men and movements on the contemporary theological scene. This list is not exhaustive but consists of some of the books we have found most informative regarding the issue of the purity of the church.

ASSOCIATIONALISM

What is a Baptist Association? Jack Keep, RBP

This is a brief history of the Baptist Associations in the United States during the 18th century.

CONSERVATIVE BAPTISTS

The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise R.V. Clearwaters, Central Seminary

This was written by one who was in the leadership and left in the split of the mid 60's.

FUNDAMENTALISM

In Pursuit of Purity Beale, BJU

This is an excellent history of Fundamentalism. It has good information on developments among Baptists including the CBA conflict.

See "RECOMMENDED READING" page 5

NOT TO BE CBA-CONNECTED!

Dr. Ralph G. Colas

To be, or not to be, CBA-connected, that was the Columbus question. The specific question related to Western Baptist College having full-time faculty, staff, and board members who are members of churches in affiliation with the CBA.

As the accompanying diagram indicates, the Conservative Baptist Association of America has its roots in the old Northern Baptist Convention (now called the American Baptist Convention) just as the GARBC does. The GARBC left the NBC and became a separatist body in 1932. The CBA made a somewhat similar exodus in 1947.

However, there were some monumental differences. The CBA group tolerated the apostasy longer than the GARBC group. When they finally left, efforts to amalgamate the two departed groups failed, because of underlying differences in positions regarding the doctrine of separation.

The view of the GARBC was "all out or nothing." The CBA opinion was "in or out." A church could not be in the NBC and be in the GARBC, but a church could be a part of the CBA, regardless of whether it was in or out of the NBC. This option was called dual membership.

This one fact has kept the CBA from being a solid fundamental, separatist association all these years. Allowing one foot in the NBC world siphoned off gradually the strength of the original conviction to separate. It was the ultimate cause for the hard core separatists leaving the CBA in 1963 to formulate the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship. The remaining soft core continues at the helm of the CBA today.

In the CBA, instead of the truth being defended in love, it was compromised by a false love and lack of courage. In general, the FBF and the GARBC remain the only Biblical remnants of the old NBC, although the GARBC is wavering in the winds at the moment. The FBF is a group of pastors, whereas the GARBC is an organi-

zation for churches.

Churches, like pastors and people in general, are known by the company they keep. This does not seem to stop the CBA people however. Their affiliations prove them to be really evangelicals and not fundamentalists.

The CBA has had for many years a policy of encouraging its affiliated churches toward the option of being members of the National Association of Evangelicals, although the CBA as a whole is not a member of the NAE, since it is made up of independent churches. Most GARBC pastors would readily acknowledge that the NAE is nothing close to our heritage as Regular Baptists in its doctrinal persuasions.

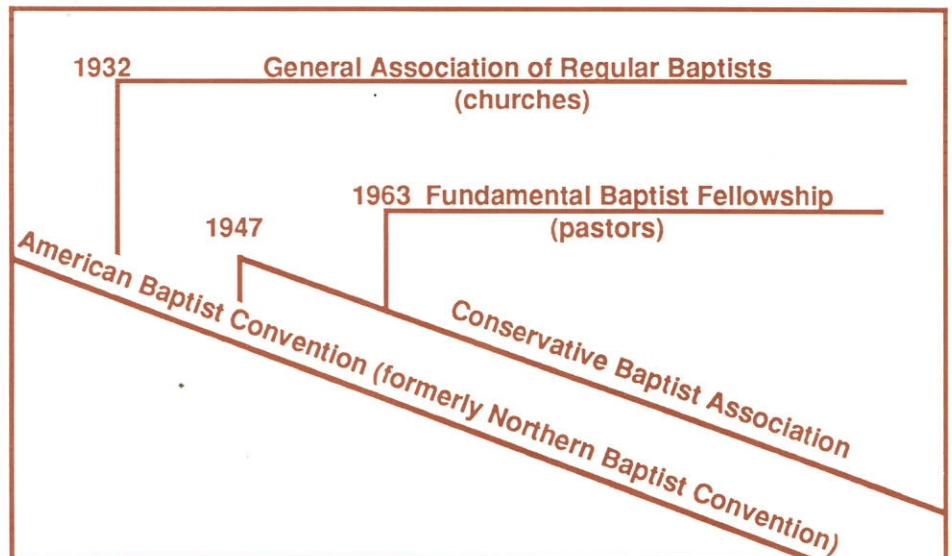
This tie gives the CBA opportunity to rub shoulders with some mighty strange bedfellows, such as the Advent Christian Church, the Assemblies of God, various Lutheran groups, the Church of the Nazarene, various Mennonite groups, Congregational Churches, the Full Gospel Pentecostal Association, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Orthodox Presbyterian churches, the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Church of Christ, and the United Meth-

odist Church, among others.

The Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society have parallel involvements, and have had for years, in the Evangelical Foreign Mission Association. The EFMA and the NAE have identical doctrinal statements. This too presents a very, mixed bag for the CBA, but it reveals its true colors.

Not only are churches and colleges known by the company they keep, but we are also strengthened or weakened by them. Original contacts may be very innocent and the people involved very knowledgeable of the differences that divide them. Soon however, the distinctive differences are blurred and the strength of past convictions are weakened.

Surely for financial support, we do not want to allow people with such diverse doctrine from our own to infiltrate our approved Bible colleges. If we do, we do not understand nor cherish our unique heritage. Our God has not deserted us, nor should our institutions desert their Regular Baptist constituencies. Not to be CBA-connected is the direction. ■



PARTIAL HISTORY OF BAPTIST ORGANIZATIONS

AMENDMENT HEADED TO NIAGARA FALLS

Dr. Richard A. Harris

As had been indicated in previous issues of the *Regular Baptist Review*, we did present the proposed amendment to the Association at Columbus. The actual amendment and the Constitutional changes were distributed to the messengers, and they are being printed below for the benefit of those who were unable to attend the Conference.

The Lord willing, the next issue will deal in depth with the reasons and purposes of the Amendment to exclude agency men from the Council of Eighteen.

The Council of Eighteen passed a resolution in opposition to our amendment, and it was read at the Conference. It did not pass in Council with a unanimous vote. Although individual Council members have every right to express their views on the amendment, to mention this vote at the Conference was most unusual. Many are question-

ing why the executive body of the Association would seek to tell the churches how to vote. It was as though the power and control flow from the Council down, rather than from the grassroots up.

The conference at Columbus was a good one. The attendance was up, and the crowds were enthusiastic. The music was excellent, and there was great fellowship among messengers.

Obviously, we do not all agree on how to get our Association on the move again, but we sensed little bitterness among the messengers. There seems to be little effort from the Council of Eighteen so far to return our annual conference to a clear and unequivocal platform of preaching the Scriptural position of the GARBC, but perhaps it will come. Columbus was encouraging.

The most important vote in Columbus involved only 1184 messengers.

Perhaps some abstained. Our Association has approximately 1600 affiliated churches, which are each permitted six votes, for a theoretical total of 9600 votes being available. This year a big decision, and a correct one, was made affecting and preserving the entire Association, but only a little over 12% of the Association participated in the vote. It took only 7% of the total messengers which should be available to carry the day for right.

Now that the amendment has been read, it is headed for a vote at Niagara Falls next year. The gauntlet was laid down in Ames. The first effort was made in Columbus. Let us pray and work for Associational reorganization in Niagara Falls. Let us put priority upon prayer, principle, presence, and participation at next year's conference. ■

PROPOSED AMENDMENT to ARTICLE VI, Sections 1 & 4, of the CONSTITUTION of the GENERAL ASSOCIATION of REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES:

Wording of PROPOSED AMENDMENT: "No salaried servant of the approved agencies shall serve on the Council of Eighteen."

Implementation of the PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Should the amendment ultimately be passed, the current GARBC Constitution would be changed as follows:

PRESENT ARTICLE VI OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION

Section 1.

Paragraphs 1, 2, 3

At any one time there must be serving on the Council of Eighteen not less than fourteen men other than salaried servants of the approved agencies of the Association.

Also any Councilman completing two consecutive terms of two years shall be ineligible for election for at least one year.

PROPOSED ARTICLE VI OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION

Section 1.

No change

Remove entire paragraph. Add No salaried servant of the approved agencies shall serve on the Council of Eighteen.

No change

Section 4.

The Council shall be elected in the following manner. Each church in fellowship with the Association shall meet in business session and nominate as many names for the Council as it may desire. These names shall be sent to the secretary of the Association at least six weeks in advance of the annual meeting. The secretary shall make proper tabulation of all lists and the eighteen highest names shall be considered the nominees, except that not less than fourteen men other than salaried servants of approved agencies of the Association shall be nominees. Each church in fellowship with the Association shall designate any two of its members to serve on the committee of election. At an announced time during the annual conference, at the call of the secretary, the committee shall meet, at which time the list of eighteen nominees shall be presented to it and each member shall cast a ballot for not more than nine. The nine highest shall be elected to the Council for a two-year term except that at any one time there must be serving on the Council of Eighteen not less than fourteen men other than salaried servants of the approved agencies of the Association.

Section 4.

Two changes as shown below.

Remove underlined portion.

Remove underlined portion.

“RECOMMENDED READING” continued

GARBC

History of the Baptist Bible Union Delnay, Piedmont

This is the best history of the events leading up to the formation of the GARBC that we have read. It covers the conflict in the Northern Baptist Convention, and the rise and decline of the Baptist Bible Union and the formation of the GARBC.

The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches: Background and History Stowell

Dr. Stowell published this in 1949. It is out of print but worth reading.

The GARBC and Its Attendant Movements O'Dell, Western

This is a brief history of the GARBC to the mid 70's. A number of helpful charts are in the appendix.

History of the Approved Missions of the GARBC Hopewell, RBP

This is very informative in showing the response to modernism by fundamentalists interested in promoting missions.

LOCAL CHURCH

The Doctrine of the Local Church Paul Jackson, RBP

Dr. Jackson was a National Representative of the GARBC. This book is must reading for every pastor! Read carefully what Jackson says about separation, missions and church government.

SEPARATION

Biblical Separation Pickering, RBP

This is a historical view of the practice of Biblical separation dating from the Donatists. Many current issues are dealt with regarding the matter of separation and its application. In my opinion this is THE BOOK on this doctrine.

"AMAZING VOTE" continued

Western Baptist College without any regrets, without any conditions, and without any defense of their decision? The reason the motion carried is clear. The Council of Eighteen is out of touch with the convictions of the Association! Many pastors and laymen do not want any organized connection with the New-Evangelical Conservative Baptist Association of America. Obviously, the agency men on the Council would vote for approval of Western Baptist College, because they would not vote to rebuke another agency.

Western Baptist College is an independent institution. It can have anyone it wants on its faculty or board. However, when it wishes to have the approval of the GARBC, it must expect to conform to the Association's historic, separatist position and doctrinal basis. The Council of Eighteen is sending the wrong message to Western Baptist College!

Its connections to the CBA are unacceptable to the GARBC, in spite of what the majority of the Council of Eighteen and the National Representative believe. The Association rejected the Council's unfortunate action to approve Western Baptist College without limitations. When the messengers overturn a decision of the Council of Eighteen, it is an amazing thing!

Believe it or not, in the discussion on the motion, Dr. John Balyo, President of Western Baptist College, made an incredible statement while speaking against the motion. He said the motion should be voted down because "the messengers should not dictate to the Council of Eighteen." This incredible statement reveals an imperial attitude that some of our leaders have toward the autonomy of the local churches of the Association. It shows again that the agencies have slid into a dominating role in the Association.

Is not the Council of Eighteen the servant of the Association? Are the

agencies exerting too much influence? Are not the agencies to be approved by the Association? Are the churches really knowledgeable of the changes taking place in the GARBC?

Dr. Myron Houghton pointed out (in speaking for the motion) that this action was not against Western Baptist College nor against Dr. Balyo. It is against inclusivism with the New-Evangelical CBA.

Let us see what the Council of Eighteen will do with this instruction. As one leading Council member said after the vote in Ames, "This action won't make any difference to the Council at all!" It didn't!

The approval of this motion is an official Association action. It ought to be carried out by the Council of Eighteen and supported by the National Representative. The Association is the messengers from the fellowshipping churches, with their instructions from their local constituencies for the Council. ■

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