

# Regular Baptist Review



"A Perspective of Historic Baptist Principles"

Dr. Richard A. Harris, Editor Winter 1989

## Proposed Amendment For Columbus Conference

Dr. Richard A. Harris

Our great Fellowship has had a glorious history of standing for the Faith. For many years, we have enjoyed the privilege of standing together with men of "like precious faith" whose only goal was to glorify our Lord and reach precious souls. As we have stated before, the hope and purpose of *Regular Baptists for Revival* is to strive for unity and growth, but to do so in the framework of our original purpose. In America there must be a strong and stalwart Baptist Fellowship that will not drift with the tide, but will articulate our separatist, Baptist heritage and remain true to our calling, regardless of the circumstances. We believe the GARBC can continue to be that kind of association of churches, if we take positive action in Columbus.

We realize that there is no single solution to our problems that would guarantee this goal. It requires, first of all, a settled heart, as David said, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." (Psalms 57:7) It grieves us to hear of men in places of leadership making light of our desire to stand true, and ridiculing us by implying we are concerned about whether men wear wide or narrow ties. Our only goal is to glorify God. We must fear compromise and hate sin. We have no other agenda but to be true to His Word and to exalt our blessed Saviour. We are human, as are others, but with God's help, we will endeavor not to walk "...in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation (declaration) of the truth commending ourselves to every

man's conscience in the sight of God." (II Cor. 4:2) We will publish our intentions.

In recent issues, Brother David Norris, a faithful laymen, has amply defended the sovereignty of "the local church." He has clearly and correctly maintained that men in ministries, other than a local church ministry, have a different agenda than pastors and laymen, and rightfully so. It is often this "different

agenda" that causes conflict and loss of unity. The GARBC must remain a fellowship of "churches," fulfilling the aims and purposes for which the churches founded it.

In Columbus, Ohio, at the National Conference of the GARBC in June, 1989, an amendment will be presented in accordance with the procedure outlined in our Constitution. This means that it will

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## Please Call Me A Separatist



Dr. Bryce B. Augsburger

(Editor's Note) The following message is printed as a tribute to our beloved brother, Dr. Bryce B. Augsburger, who was promoted to Heaven on October 29, 1988. He had been an avid and consistent Separatist, Fundamentalist Baptist and very active in Regular Baptists for Revival. This message would have been delivered at the RBR Conference in Kansas City, which began two days after his death.

It's not enough to be called a Baptist...fundamentalist...premillennialist. I want to be known as a **Separatist**. I am aware of the fact that the label (or libel?) of the word, separatist, has been worn by some who hold an extreme position - a position of isolationism, which is not representative of our position. For me and my house, we deliberately choose to risk the stigma as we prefer, in addition to the other nomenclature: Baptist, fundamental, premillennial, dispensational, to be known as Separatists! We prefer...fundamental, premillennial, dispensational, separatist Baptists!

Returning from a 17-day trip to England recently, we were shaken up a bit. We learned that some people of the past whom we held in high esteem were not "come-outers" at all. They did not separate from their ecclesiastical alignments. We felt we were on "holy ground," as we visited some of the Wesley and

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# Truthful But Not Enemies

Rev. Jack Keep

*"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Gal. 4:16*

When the term "pseudofundamentalist" appeared in 1978, there was an expression of outrage in the fundamentalist camp. A number of observers cried that it was a tactic of the Devil to sidetrack fundamentalists from the real enemy. "Let's get on with the business of soulwinning and stop fighting each other," they said. However, something was wrong. It was becoming obvious that some who wanted the labels of **fundamentalist** and **separatist** were becoming broader in their cooperative relationships.

Jerry Falwell was building bridges to the neo-evangelicals. In his book, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, he repudiated the separatist position. Later, Jack Van Impe would publish his book, *Heart Disease In The Body Of Christ*. Jack too, reversed himself on his former stand for separation. Yet both of these men insisted they were fundamentalists and separatists. There was no question about it - the term, fundamentalist, was becoming broader.

In November, 1988, a group of non-fundamentalist scholars met in a conference on fundamentalism in New York. They observed that there are two kinds of fundamentalism today: "strict fundamentalism which is less politically involved and open fundamentalism, represented by Mr. Falwell." Dr. George Marsden said that, "We will see another split in fundamentalism much as it split over Billy Graham."

Older men will remember that the division over ecumenical evangelism made a distinction between fundamentalists and neo-evangelicals. The issue was secondary separation, and there were many voices heard accusing the fundamentalists of "lacking in love" and "not being interested in

evangelism," etc.

The trend toward a broader view of separation in the GARBC became evident in the early 1980s, when a number of prominent men in the fellowship participated in Jerry Falwell's Baptist Fundamentalism '84. Some pastors had been uneasy over speakers invited to approved schools, and about the platforms some of the leaders of the GARBC were sharing. Since that time, there have been many indications of this broadening of the view of separation, in contrast to what our Fellowship has been known for through the years. For example:

1. The loss of Los Angeles Baptist College to neo-evangelical John MacArthur.

2. The increasing ties between Western Baptist College and the neo-evangelical Conservative Baptist Association of America.

3. The reappearance of men on the platforms of our approved agencies, who previously left the GARBC because it was too narrow for them.

4. The invitation to a former president of the liberal Southern Baptist Convention to speak at Cedarville College.

5. The purging of strong separatist leaders from Northwest Baptist Seminary.

6. The reversal by certain GARBC leaders from their previously stated positions, regarding cooperation with interdenominationalists and the CBA.

7. The loss of some strong separatist leaders from the GARBC.

8. The weakening of a separatist stand on some mission fields.

In spite of these and many other examples, the constituency of the GARBC is being told, "There is no drift...there is no changing emphasis in the GARBC." In a recent article in the December, 1988 *Baptist Bulletin*, we are told that "time, ink,

paper and postage are expended by fundamentalists sniping at other fundamentalists while the real enemies of the cross are winning.." We are "debating...the intricacies of the degrees of ecclesiastical separation." We are squabbling "about personal preferences and ecclesiastical nuances." We are involved in "extraneous debates." These words are obviously directed at Regular Baptists for Revival.

In the above-mentioned article, the term, enemies, is used ten times. It should be stated for clarity, that in the context of the *Bulletin* article, enemies refers to false religions and false cults. However, the importance and urgency of the doctrine of separation appear to be downgraded. We should "drive back the forces of infidelity," but we must not debate "the intricacies of the degrees of ecclesiastical separation" or "squabble about personal preferences and ecclesiastical nuances." If we do, we give "the real enemies of the cross" the victories.

Regular Baptists for Revival have no other enemies than the world, the flesh, and the Devil. We do not regard any Bible-believing Christian as our enemy, even if we cannot have church fellowship with him. This goes for our GARBC brethren, who disagree with us on matters of separation. Our understanding of the Bible is that we should "...count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (II Thess. 3:15) We are not dealing with personalities, but with issues. Neither do we consider ourselves the enemies of any other brother in Christ or group of brethren.

We too are concerned about soulwinning and missions. Like other Regular Baptists of this century, we are Baptists and **Separatists** without apology. Our point is that the doctrine of separation is so imperative, that if we tolerate deviance from our Biblical heritage,

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# Report On Kansas City Conference

Dr. L. Duane Brown

Stony Point Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas, hosted a Regular Baptist for Revival conference on October 30 - November 1, 1988. Pastor Robert Houchin and his fine people provided a most gracious hospitality, including a free noon luncheon!

Local speakers, Rev. Russell Farrell and Rev. Robert Glover spoke with great power, along with former area pastor, Rev. Jim Gray, now an evangelist from Phoenix, Arizona. Many folks came forward to rededicate their lives and ministries for the Lord. Dr. Richard Harris, Rev. Jack Keep, Dr. Ralph Colas, and Dr. Duane Brown shared their burden for our Regular Baptist movement. In message after message, they documented how the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches and its approved agencies are drifting away from our original stand and purpose. Special concern

was noted on the doctrinal and financial crisis currently at Western Baptist College and its alliance with Conservative Baptists.

The highlight of the conference was the panel discussion involving Dr. Brown, Dr. Harris, Rev. Keep, Dr. Colas, and Dr. Brong, and Mr. David Norris. Every question was graciously answered by these men. The most sensitive question which came up several times concerned salaried agency men serving on the Council of Eighteen, which approves these very agencies. David Norris pointed out that it is not only a conflict of interest, but these agencies' presidents have a "different agenda" than the pastors on the Council.

A special memorial service was held at the conference (the same day as his funeral service in Romeoville), because Dr. Bryce Augsburger was called Home. Many men shared their testimonies of Dr. Augsburger's

influence and friendship. A tape of the service was sent to his family. His undelivered conference message was entitled, "Please Call Me a Separatist." It appears elsewhere in this edition of the *Review*.

All the speakers made clear their desire to help and strengthen the GARBC - not to split it. Over 55 churches from 11 states were represented. A number of students from Faith Baptist Bible College were in attendance. A great spiritual unity and sense of God's presence were manifested in the preaching, singing, and testimonies.

Thank you, Pastor Houchin and your people, for hosting this conference. If you would want to host one in your area, please contact the Editor, Dr. Richard Harris. Tapes of the messages may be ordered from the host church. (913/299-4774). ■



## MEN WHO LED THE AUGSBURGER MEMORIAL SERVICE IN KANSAS CITY

Front Row (left to right) - R. Colas, D. Brown, R. Farrell, R. Harris

Middle Row (left to right) - S. Stockton, D. Thompson, J. Chelli, E. Elo

Back Row (left to right) - D. Norris, J. Keep, D. Brong

## Is Second Degree Separation Biblical?

Dr. R. Bruce Compton

An issue that continues to cause controversy among fundamentalists is the issue of ecclesiastical separation and particularly the question of believers separating from other believers. As recent publications on the fundamentalist movement have shown, there is a continuing effort by some who identify themselves as fundamentalists to repudiate so-called "second degree" separation. While accepting as biblical a mandate for believers to separate ecclesiastically from unbelief and apostasy, they deny legitimacy to the position that a believer should separate from another believer. The purpose of this article is to respond to certain of the most

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# Why Do Men Compromise?

Dr. Allen P. Dickerson

Sad, but true is the fact that men do compromise. Men who once demonstrated character, and lived by a solid set of Biblical principles do change. This is indeed one of the great mysteries of human nature. The question is, "Why do men compromise?" I believe there may be several reasons:

1. Because of **Misplaced Loyalties**, loyalty to Movements, Denominations, Institutions, or even Personalities, men will move away from what they once held to be right for fear of getting out of step. We must always remember that as believers our loyalty above all is to God and His precious Word. Thank God for all men who hold that persuasion, but we must never be intimidated to move from that position by men who do not hold it.

2. Men sometimes compromise because of a **Desire for Recognition**. How vain we little human creatures are. We want recognition. We want to be listed among, "Who's Who." We want our name to be a household word. We

want our accomplishments to receive men's acclaim. Men will sometimes compromise for no greater reward than to receive the plaudits of men.

3. Men sometimes compromise because of **Weak Convictions**. A spiritual conviction is a principle that one holds that is based upon the immutable Truth of our immutable God, that is revealed in His eternal Word, and Biblical convictions do not change with every wind that blows. A man who claims he holds a Biblical conviction, and changes it, had a preference, not a conviction. A preference is a convenience. It encourages one to hold whatever persuasion is in vogue.

4. Men sometimes compromise because they **Fear Controversy**. We must always remind ourselves that TRUTH spends most of its time in the arena of controversy. Men often weary of controversy, and develop a phobia about controversy. But we have Truth today as a cherished possession because men dare to be controversial. Our Bible tells us to "earnestly contend for the faith." Our Bible tells us to "endure

hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Our Bible tells us to "fight the good fight of faith," and not to "be weary in well-doing."

5. Men sometimes compromise because of **Peer Pressure**. Men often succumb to the pressure of being outside of the mainstream. There is the pressure of bigness, the pressure of desire for recognition, the pressure of conformity, etc. Peer intimidation has ruined many a good man. Oh! to be satisfied to be in the will of God, seeking to give Him my all and being contented and satisfied with the measure of success He desires for me.

6. Sometimes men compromise because they **Develop A Blind Side** in their spiritual life. They move away from a position they once held, and then develop a blind spot, and convince themselves that they are still standing where they always stood. A wise man will take honest inventory of his spiritual life frequently by looking into the mirror of God's Word, and adjusting his life accordingly. (used with permission) ■

## "Amendment" conclusion

be presented this year in Columbus and will be discussed and addressed at the 1990 Conference in Niagara Falls. It will be a simple amendment, which will indicate that salaried servants of our approved agencies will not be eligible to serve on the Council of Eighteen. We love and respect the good men who serve the Lord and stand for Him in our approved agencies, but the GARBC is an Association of churches, not agencies. It is imperative, in this day when God's men in the pulpits of our land are being attacked, that we as a Fellowship exalt the local church and its autonomy and magnify the pastor's position in our churches. Faithful laymen deserve recognition as well, and they have a role to fill.

We must always bear in mind that our agencies provide ministries and services that are indispensable to our local church ministries, and the relationship should be one of warmth and cooperation - but churches make up the Fellowship.

We understand that a proposed amendment is only presented at the first reading. Its merits or demerits are not discussed until the following year. We believe however, that the discussion needs to begin among the churches as soon as possible. We have scheduled an open meeting for everyone to attend, to consider the merits of the amendment. It will be held on Monday, June 26, 1989, at 2:00 p.m. in the Holiday Inn, which adjoins the

Ohio Conference Center and is connected by a covered walkway. The room will hold up to two hundred people. We encourage your attendance. If you plan to make reservations at the Holiday Inn, be sure to tell them you are attending the GARBC Conference, so you can take advantage of the special rates. ■

**HOLIDAY INN**  
33 Nationwide Boulevard  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 461-4000  
Conference Rate: \$62.00  
Single or Double

## "Separatist" continued

Whitefield sites, etc., but we were in for several disappointments. Let's look at some important history.

The Puritans recognized the corruption and compromise within the Church of England and endeavored to correct the compromise and purify the church, but even though they were non-conformists, they had no intention of "coming out" of the church or separating from ecclesiastical apostasy. After many unsuccessful years of attempting to purify the church, the Puritans finally left for America for the purpose of religious freedom and to flee the domination of the monarchy over the church. However, when they did settle in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1628, they set up a state-church relationship in America and remained within the Church of England! The Puritans continued in communion with the Church of England, although they refused to conform to many of its practices and denounced them. Hence, they were known as non-conformists, or Puritans, but **never** as **Separatists**. Paying a lesser price for their freedom than the Pilgrim Fathers, they were intolerant in their spirit, as evidenced by their eviction of Roger Williams from the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Pilgrims were a different lot. The founders of Plymouth were not Puritans or non-conformists, but **Separatists**. They paid a great price for their freedom, and not only saw the corruption in the English Church - they separated from this corrupt and fallen body. They came to America, not merely to establish a new empire, but led of God to establish a new freedom. Having come from an independent congregation in Leyden, Holland, they arrived in America to proclaim a Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King!

A little town of Scrooby is about 50 miles south of York, England. The people of England know little or nothing about this important spot in history! It is the spot where our real

American history began. The little town of Scrooby was the place where the **Separatists** (later known as Pilgrims) met, not in the town's 13th Century Church of England, or in the vicarage of the church, as visitors are led to believe. They met in the Manor House outside of town, then owned by William Brewster, the postman of Scrooby. The postman not only handled the mail, but also accommodated travelers on their way from London to York, a much-travelled road which went all the way to Edinburgh, Scotland. The old York Road is now closed, and the Manor House is a farmhouse.

William Brewster was born and bred in Scrooby in 1566, and returned there to assist his father at the Post after training at Cambridge. While at Cambridge, William developed strong convictions on Soul Liberty, believing that a man should be free to worship God according to the direction of his conscience. Championing this Biblical principle, a nucleus of like-minded reformers gathered in the Scrooby Manor House and ultimately formed the Scrooby Separatist Church in 1606.

Persecuted by the Anglican Church Fathers, Brewster lost his position as the Postman and became the Pastor of this assembly of God-fearing people. Unable to survive because of persecution, these yeomen (tenant) farmers left for Amsterdam, Holland, and later settled in Leyden. The church grew to around 300, and after three years away from their homeland, 106 of them sailed for England with two boats, The Speedwell and The Mayflower.

Arriving in London, they sought to repair the leaking Speedwell, but not receiving a warm welcome, sailed for Southampton where they left the disabled Speedwell. They finally sailed from Plymouth, England for America on September 6, 1620, hoping to arrive in late Autumn in their small (only 25' x 90') boat, the Mayflower. Plagued with sickness en-route, and arriving during the bitter

New England winter on December 20, 1620, they set foot on Plymouth Rock and settled down as best they could for the duration of the winter. Half of their number had died, so that 53 Pilgrims started life in a new land. One of their first efforts for self-government brought forth the Mayflower Compact, a document still prized today as our first constitution.

This band of Separatists had no intentions of repeating the mistakes of the Puritans and set out to establish autonomous assemblies of believers where the highest seat of authority was in the congregation. Though confused somewhat on the separation of church and state, they did separate from the Church of England. True independent, autonomous sovereign Baptist Churches came into existence through Roger Williams and the Primitive Baptists.

There is no question about the genuineness of the revivals of the 18th century under the Wesleys and Whitefield. However, the Wesleys never broke with the Church of England! Although they were forbidden to minister within the Church, and were the founders of the Methodist Church (a church founded outside the Church of England), Charles Wesley requested to be buried "in the grounds of the consecrated" (an Episcopal Cemetery), and his bones lie in the graveyard of Mary Le Bone. John Wesley chose to be buried in the small churchyard behind Wesley Chapel. When the Church Fathers asked why he was not buried in a consecrated burial ground, his followers replied, "We believe these grounds are consecrated by the bones of John Wesley."

John Wesley died with these words upon his lips, "I have died a priest of the Church of England." Is it any wonder that the Methodist Denomination, which the Wesleys founded, has become the most liberal and apostate of all Protestant denominations and affiliated with the

## "Separatist" conclusion

National and World Council of Churches? The Wesleys were not **Separatists**, nor did they heed the Scriptural injunction to "come out."

The breach between the Wesleys and Whitefield was over their theological differences on Calvinism and Arminianism, but not over separation. George Whitefield never did disaffiliate with the English Church.

We do not intend to demean the names: Baptist; fundamental; premillennial; or dispensational. The point is that we ought not to assume that because someone calls himself by these names - he is a **Separatist**. There are separatists who are not premillennial, dispensational, nor Baptist.

This historic church where Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached is at the corner of Elephant and Castle Sts. in South London. It illustrates this point about names. That great preaching point of the past is a Baptist Church of average size today and is still known for its separatist positions. However, its present pastor, Dr. Peter Masters, is an amillennialist with respect to the coming of Christ and is anti-dispensational. What is most grievous is that Dr. Masters and his colleagues have set out to discredit the premillennial/dispensational position and have made it difficult for Baptists who hold this position to flourish in England. Could this development reflect a weakness in the dispensational position of its former pastors - once again reaping what was sown?

We cannot explain why God poured out such unusual blessings upon the ministry of these men. However we should not believe that their compromise can be used as an argument for us to remain in a compromising position. The Bible requires us to separate, and separate we must! Our judgement at the Bema Seat will include what we have done with this injunction, as well as with all others. May God help us to be faithful!

It was this same problem of

separation that kept the Conservative Baptists from joining the GARBC, when they seceded from the American Baptist Convention (then the Northern Baptist Convention). The GARBC separated and came out. This has been their badge of distinction. The CBA men stayed in to purify, and when they finally did come out in 1947, they did not fully separate. They allowed dual affiliation - a policy that led to the ultimate downfall of the CBA.

Separation is the same problem that is keeping the conservatives (Stanley - Criswell) within the Southern Baptist Convention today. These men are Puritans rather than Pilgrims - "stay-inners" rather than "come-outers." History has proven that once an organization apostasizes or defects, there is no way of bringing it back. God's Word has been, is, and always will be the same...II Corinthians 6:17-18, "...come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, ... and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Across from Wesley Chapel lies Bunhill Fields, an unconsecrated burying place of non-conformists. John Bunyan, Suzanna Wesley, Isaac Watts, John Gill and other Godly people are buried there. These made contributions to the cause of Christ. However some of these were only non-conformists, and not necessarily **Separatists**.

Among the separatists were John Robinson, William Brewster, John Smyth, Thomas Harding and Benjamin Keach. These men were not just non-conformists. They were **Separatists!** They were not just Puritans - but Pilgrims!

Benjamin Keach, one of the most notable dissenting ministers of the age, was born on February 29, 1640. He repudiated his infant baptism by believer's baptism at 15 years of age, and began to preach at age 18. He became pastor of the Baptist church located at Winslow. He was often in trouble due to his dissenting views (spoken and written); he was often

seized when preaching and committed to prison. Sometimes he was bound; sometimes released upon bail; sometimes his life was threatened.

On one occasion, his indictment read: "a seditious, heretical and schismatical person, evilly and maliciously disposed, and disaffected to His Majesty's government, and the government of the Church of England." Tried, found guilty, and sentenced to prison, he spent days in the pillory.

He was a powerful speaker, prolific writer, fearless servant of God and Champion of the Faith: fighting the Roman Catholics, the Church of England, the Quakers, Seventh - Day Adventists, and some of his own people (Baptists). Never a strong man, Keach died at age 64, July 18, 1704. He was buried in the Baptists' Burying Ground in the Park, Southwark - a **Separatist!**

He used the pillory as a pulpit and from there said, "The Cross is the way to the Crown, good people. I am not ashamed to stand here this day. My Lord Jesus was not ashamed to suffer on the cross for me, and it is for His cause I am made a gazing-stock. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

These are the people who paid a price for their stand against apostasy and separated from it. These are the saints who insisted on purity of doctrine and practice in the local church. We identify with them. Please call me a **Separatist!** (Edited after Dr. Augsburger's *homegoing*) ■



**“Second Degree”** continued salient arguments raised by these individuals, with special reference given to 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15. In addition, it is also the intent here to reaffirm that second degree separation is a valid and essential aspect of biblical obedience.

The first argument to be considered is that the passages traditionally used to support second degree separation do not involve believers separating from other believers but from unbelievers. Such passages as Matthew 18:15-17, Romans 16:17-18, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Timothy 6:3-5 (assuming the correctness of the reading of verse 5), 2 Timothy 2:16-19, and Titus 3:8-11, it is argued, do not address the sins of believers but of apostates and unbelievers. It is from these that the church is to separate.

In certain of the above passages, it must be admitted, there is a question whether the individuals, described as involved in some sin and from whom believers are to separate, are saved or lost. At the same time, it must also be averred that in a number of these references, the evidence is decidedly in favor of these individuals being true believers. For example, in Matthew 18:15 the offender is specifically identified as “your brother.” The term “brother” is used in such contexts to refer to a saved individual. If this one resists correction, the church is directed in verse 17 to treat him as they would one who is outside the church (“as a Gentile and a publican”). The use of “as” in this instance is intended to show similarity, not identity. The church is to regard him as if he were not a believer, although in fact he is.

In 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 the whole argument revolves around the church’s responsibility in judging fellow believers. In verse 11 the church is commanded not to keep company with one who is called a “brother” and who is caught up in some form of sin. In verse 12 the apostle Paul asks the Corinthian believers a rhetorical question, “Do you not judge those that are within?”

His question concerns their judging those within the body of Christ and the form of his question demands a yes answer. That being the case, he then concludes in verse 13 that they are to put away the sinful individual from among them.

There can be no question that the separation called for in 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 involves separation from another believer. The apostle states in verse 6 that the church is to withdraw from every “brother” who is walking disorderly. In verse 15 he warns those so disciplined are not to be treated as enemies but as “brothers.” In light of the above, there is no basis to support the contention that other than a true believer is ever the object of church discipline and removal.

For this reason a second argument has been raised. Simply stated, it says that those passages which do speak of second degree separation are contextually limited. That is, the circumstances addressed in the immediate context in each of these passages are so interpreted that their application to subsequent generations is severely limited, if not removed altogether. 2 Thessalonians 3 is frequently the test case for this argument. The commands for separation in verses 6 and 14, it is held, are restricted to those who are abusing the Lord’s Supper or who are using the occasion of the fellowship meal, frequently observed with the Lord’s Supper in the early church, for a free meal. As such, the separation would involve not removal from the congregation, but simply exclusion from the observance of the specific activity in view. Support for this interpretation is gained principally from verse 10 where the apostle says, “If any will not work, neither let him eat.”

Such an interpretation does not do justice to the context. To begin with, the statement in verse 10 about not working and not eating must be understood in the light of the surrounding statements. In verses 7 and 8, Paul says that he himself did not act disorderly while with the Thessalonians, taking bread from

others, but worked constantly so as to provide for his own needs. The reference in verse 8 to “bread” does not refer to the Lord’s Supper or to a congregational meal but to the apostle’s daily physical requirements. The same is true in verse 12. There the disorderly are directed to work with their own hands and to provide for their own “bread.” The statement in verse 10, taken with the references before and after, is saying that if one does not work, he should not receive provisions from the church to make up what he lacks.

Turning to the commands in verse 6 and 14, Paul directs the church in verse 6 to separate from a brother who is walking disorderly. To walk disorderly is to live in violation of a set code of conduct. This code, as identified by the apostle in this verse, is the tradition they had received from him, the teaching he had communicated to them. The specific teaching or tradition in view, according to verse 11, involved intentional unemployment. However, the commandment in verse 6 can be more broadly applied. Paul uses the plural “traditions” in 2:15 to refer to the bulk of his communication to them. By application, any conscious violation of a specific command given to them by the apostle would qualify the offender for the same discipline as directed in verse 6.

This application is further supported in verse 14. In this verse the apostle enjoins the church to disassociate itself from anyone who disobeys the apostle’s word. This “word” includes Paul’s instruction about working and eating in the preceding verses. At the same time, the apostle’s “word” cannot be limited to these verses. According to verse 14, this “word” is further described as that represented “by this epistle.” All that he has written in his epistle, therefore, is included in the “word.”

In verse 15 the apostle warns against the possible misapplication of the call for separation. His caution is that in carrying out his command, the believers should not treat the

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we will gradually become as effective as the real enemies of the Cross in squelching the spread of the true Gospel. What we believe and practice concerning separation determines the direction and impact we will have for God in the future. Our GARBC position must be distinctively Biblical. We must not weaken the walls of our defenses by a lack of separation. If we do, our soldiers will subtly be sapped of their strength and eventually surrender, because the battle will become too hard.

It must be admitted that there are two minds in the GARBC. We must decide what position on secondary separation is going to be supported by the Fellowship. Either way there is likely to be a loss of churches or agencies, but we must decide if we are to take the strict position or the

broad position. Indecision will only aggravate the problem.

Perhaps the new generation and some of the old would prefer a broader view of separation - something like the Conservative Baptists. The old generation did not want that in 1948. However, if that is to be the new position, the Association should vote it in officially. If not, then we should practice secondary separation as the old generation did, when they resolved that it was inconsistent for a Regular Baptist Church to be in fellowship with the National Association of Evangelicals or the CBA. Let's not follow in the footsteps of others, who want to retain the titles of **fundamentalist** and **separatist**, but no longer want to retain the position. ■

**"Second Degree"** conclusion

offending party as an enemy; rather they are to regard him as a brother in Christ and carry out the injunction with the intent of restitution.

If there is a lack of compassion and Christian love among fundamentalists today in this matter of biblical separation, and a few would deny this, the solution is not to abandon the biblical imperative. To withhold discipline is not, according to the author of Hebrews, a sign of love. The true test of Christian love here is our obeying the biblical mandate in its entirety, which includes our manifesting a proper attitude toward the errant and disciplining with the hope of restoration. As Spurgeon has said, "To separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not alone our liberty, but our duty" ("The Drift of the Times: Sound the Alarm!"). (used with permission) ■

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