

ORIGIN, WORK AND PRACTICES

OF

ASSOCIATION BAPTISTS

AND

CONVENTION BAPTISTS

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Differences Shown and Modernism Exposed

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By C. A. DARST

Made Available for **FREE** Distribution by the
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DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

OF THE

North American Baptist Association

The churches of this Association heartily subscribe to and agree to defend and promulgate the historic Missionary Baptist Faith and Practice, the interpretation of which is tersely stated as follows:

1. The Trinity of God.
2. The infallible and plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures.
3. The Biblical account of creation.
4. The personality of Satan.
5. Hereditary and total depravity of man in his natural state involving his fall in Adam.
6. The virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ.
7. Christ's blood atonement for fallen man.
8. His bodily resurrection and ascension back to His Father.
9. The person and work of the Holy Spirit.
10. Justification before God by faith without any admixture of works.
11. Separation of God's children from the world.
12. Water baptism (immersion) to be administered to believers only and by Divine authority as given to Missionary Baptist churches.
13. The Lord's Supper as a church ordinance is to be ministered to baptized believers only and in Scriptural church capacity.
14. Eternal security of the believer.

(Continued on Page 16)

WHICH—ASSOCIATION BAPTISTS OR CONVENTION BAPTISTS

In referring to Association Baptists I refer to the group with which I am affiliated, the North American Baptist Association, unless otherwise stated. When I refer to Convention Baptists, I shall refer to the Southern Baptist Convention, unless otherwise stated.

Churches of the North American Baptist Association are known as Association Baptists because our churches associate together in our work. Our churches come together at associational meetings in equality, that is, each church entitled to equal number of messengers, no matter the size of membership, who are chosen by the church from her own membership. These messengers receive direct authority from the local church to do business with messengers from churches of like faith and practice. There are no boards to dictate to the messengers. There are no centralized powers to whom we are forced to look for our authority. The messengers are subject to no one except the church that elects them, and the church is not subject to anyone except the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head. There are no boards to plan and make programs to be forced upon the churches. Even though we are known as Association Baptist Churches, we are plain **MIS-
SIONARY BAPTISTS**. This is true in the local churches, in the district associations, in the state associations and in the national association. In other words, we are old time Missionary Baptist Churches working together in an associated (association) work.*

Convention Baptist Churches are called by that name because they are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Conven-

*NOTE: If you desire more information concerning the mission work of the NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION or if you need the assistance of a missionary, write Elder W. J. Burgess, Secretary-Treasurer of Missions, 824 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. Bro. Burgess will be glad to visit your church and explain our work if your church desires to know more about the scriptural mission minded association, or he will see that someone else will do so.

tion. Our Association Baptist Churches organized the association by authority of the churches. That is, each local church voted in business conference to enter into the associated work. This is not true of the churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. The Convention was not organized or formed by the churches; it was formed by messengers from MISSIONARY SOCIETIES, CHURCHES AND OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES. You may obtain a minute or annual of the Southern Baptist Convention and read the following paragraph from the constitution:

"The messengers from missionary societies, churches, and other religious bodies of the Baptist denomination in various parts of the United States, met in Augusta, Georgia, May 8, 1845, for the purpose of carrying into effect the benevolent intention of our constituents by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the denomination for the propagation of the gospel." (Annual of Southern Baptist Convention, 1948, page 19.)

NOW, WHO ORGANIZED THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION?

It was organized by individuals from "Missionary societies, churches and OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES." It was organized separate and apart from the churches, therefore it is a separate, distinct organization. Not only did individuals from churches have a hand in organizing the Convention, but the individuals came from MISSIONARY SOCIETIES and OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES. Obtain an annual and read it for yourself.

WHEN AND WHERE WAS THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION ORGANIZED?

It was organized on May 8, 1845, in Georgia. See paragraph quoted above. The Southern Baptist Convention cannot date any further back than 1845. On the other hand,

there are active OLD LINE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCHES, which have never been affiliated with the Convention, that are older than the Southern Baptist Convention, that are still doing business for the Lord. The Convention cannot date back to the days of Christ, but Old Line Missionary Baptist Churches, such as are in existence today, have existed all along back to the days of Christ.

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION IS A CORPORATION.

The minutes or annual of the Convention tells us so. The same constitution that tells us when and where the Convention was organized tells us that the Convention is **incorporated**. The constitution of the Convention names a group of men, and these words follow: "And others, either associates and successors, be and they are hereby incorporated and made a body politic by the name and style of the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION." (Annual of S.B.C., 1948, page 18.) This document was enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia in its General Assembly. Yet, there are those in the churches that are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention that will deny these statements, but they will not turn to their own annual and read for themselves. The Southern Baptist Convention is as much a corporation as any business that is incorporated. Who would think of the apostles, such as Paul, Peter, John, etc., coming together and incorporate themselves into a "Baptist Convention" under the laws of Palestine, Macedonia or some other (province), and go out and proselyte the churches of the Lord and get them to join the "Convention" and send their money through its channels. Well, this is the method and policy of the Southern Baptist Convention, which is a corporation. If all the churches that feed the BOARD would withdraw their money, claim their rights as churches as they had before May 8, 1845, which is just a little more

than one hundred years ago, and be like the New Testament Churches, the "BOARD" would soon go out of business. The churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention feed the incorporated board, which is not a part of the churches and was organized separate and apart from the churches.

Let us keep in mind that the early New Testament Churches ASSOCIATED together in the preaching of the gospel, but these New Testament Churches were not incorporated, neither did such a CORPORATION exist then as does over the work of the Southern Baptist Convention. Paul and others were chosen by the churches. Proof: "Who was chosen of the churches (plural) to travel with us with this grace," II Cor. 8:19. These chosen ones were messengers of the churches. Proof: "Our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches; and the glory of Christ." II Cor. 8:23. Thus New Testament Churches had messengers, and these churches associated together in their work for the Lord. But nowhere do we find an INCORPORATED BODY mentioned in the Scriptures.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION AND THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

What are the real differences between the North American Baptist Association and the Southern Baptist Convention? Let us notice the powers and purposes of each.

Under the law of the State of Georgia in 1845 the Southern Baptist Convention was "made a body politic, . . . with authority to receive, hold, possess, retain, and dispose of property, either real or personal, to sue and be sued, and to make all by-laws, rules and regulations necessary to the transaction of their business, not inconsistent with the laws of this State or of the United States; and said corporation being created for the purpose of eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the BAPTIST DENOMINATION OF CHRISTIANS, for the propagation of the gospel, any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding" (Annual of S.B.C., 1949, p. 18.)

Now, let's notice the powers and purposes of the North American Baptist Association, and then we will compare the two. First, I will tell you what the Association is. In Article IV of the Articles of Agreement, Yearbook, 1950, we read: "This Association is, in its nature, the joint co-operation and fellowship of the churches composing it. Each church has a voice in every enterprise sponsored by this Association." See page 51.

WHAT DOES THE ASSOCIATION PROPOSE TO DO?

"It will exercise no ecclesiastical authority whatsoever, but it will, by every precaution, recognize the autonomy and independence of each individual church" (Article V, p. 51).

Here are some interesting comparisons:

1. The S.B.C. is an "incorporated" body. Keep in mind that this "incorporated" body is a separate body from that

of the churches. It was not organized by the churches.

On the other hand, the N.A.B.A. is not incorporated, and it is not a separate, distinct body apart from the churches. It is the "joint cooperation and fellowship of the churches composing it."

2. The S.B.C. was "made a body politic."

The only purpose of the existence of the N.A.B.A. "is to encourage and foster cooperation of the churches composing it in carrying out the will of our Lord as expressed in the great commission as stated in Matthew 28:18-20" (Article II, p. 50).

3. The S.B.C. has power or "authority to receive, hold, possess, retain and dispose of property, either real or personal, to sue and be sued." This corporation, which was made a body politic, has the authority, not only to receive and hold property, but to "possess" and "dispose of property, either real or personal." In other words, it has power to take over church property without the authority of the church and even against the will of the majority of the members.

On the other hand, the N.A.B.A. "will exercise no ecclesiastical authority whatsoever" over the local church, but it will "recognize the autonomy and independence of each individual church."

4. The S.B.C. was organized or was "created for the purpose of eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the BAPTIST DENOMINATION OF CHRISTIANS . . ." (S.B.C., Annual, 1948, p. 18). What is the meaning of all this? ELICIT means to "draw out." COMBINE means to put "together." DIRECT means to "guide, govern." (New Winston Dictionary). What do we have? The S.B.C. assumes the right and power to draw from the churches their resources, to direct, guide, to govern the churches. We see further proof of this in the fact that the churches MUST have friendly

attitude toward the Convention, be sympathetic toward it, and to channel their funds through the Convention or else. The Convention tells the churches what to do. The great commission was not given to the S.B.C. The Lord gave the commission to the churches. It is unscriptural to lord it over the churches of the Lord, see Matt. 20:25-27. The N.A.B.A. recognize the local church as the greatest and highest institution on earth. Our churches compose the Association and DIRECT the Association, but the Convention directs and controls the churches.

5. The S.B.C. does not practice equality of representation. One church is allowed ten messengers or delegates at the Convention while another church can have only one. The Convention representation is based upon the ability to pay and the ability to pad the church roll. See Article III, 1948 Annual, p. 19. Hence the churches with a small membership cannot have the voting power as that of the larger churches: A church with 500 members would be allowed two messengers while a church with 250 or less would have only one. That is what the S.B.C. constitution says in so many words. Here is an example of such reasoning: A man that weighs 300 pounds should be allowed three votes, at least more than one, when he goes to the polls to vote for an officer while a man that weighs 100 pounds is allowed only one vote. So you see there is no equality.

On the other hand, the N.A.B.A. believes in equality of churches. "Each church in this Association is entitled to three messengers chosen from her own membership" (Article III, Section 5). We believe that a church is a church, regardless the size or ability to pay. A citizen of the U.S. is allowed only one vote. If his size or wealth were the determining factors he might have more than one vote. Each local church is a unit in God's kingdom work, no more and no less.

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION AND CHURCHES ENDORSES MODERNISM

There are, no doubt, many individuals in the churches and some churches in the Southern Baptist Convention that still hold to the old time honored principles of the New Testament, but on the other hand there are scores of them that have already repudiated the true doctrines that designate old time Missionary Baptists from others. To these the doctrines and principles for which our forefathers died are meaningless. Here I shall give you some information to prove to all open minded Baptists that the Southern Baptist Convention is courting modernism and that a great host of churches that are affiliated with that Corporation have departed from the faith. I am appealing to all sound Baptists and sound Baptist Churches to throw off the yoke of bondage and cast their lot with a group of Baptists who are free to speak, free to write about, and free to preach the blood-bought principles of the New Testament, and at the same time enjoy equal voice and equal representation in our ASSOCIATION.

MODERNISM IN THE CONVENTION

Dr. E. P. Alldredge, in his book, "While Southern Baptists Sleep," speaking about the Convention held in Oklahoma City, has this to say about the Liberals and Unionizers:

"As best I can learn the facts, there were 30 or more members of our great boards, nine groups of influential pastors, one Convention Committee and our great Foreign Mission Board which held distinct and definite alignments with one or more of the state, local or national unionizing organizations. And these active groups of unionizers are not only being given key positions in our Southern Baptist Zion; they are being carefully protected and shielded from attack; and

they are being put forward on all occasions," see page 20.

Then on page 24 he tells how certain councils are dominating the work. I don't have space to quote all of it, but here is enough to give you the insight:

"Southern Baptist leaders do not know the invasion forces of the Inter-Council Field Department, under the leadership of the Federal Council and its six other affiliated councils, largely dominate the state of Virginia today, also the Convention of Washington, D.C., and are seeking to engulf Maryland and Northern Missouri."

These quotations show that the Southern Baptist Convention is directed and controlled by modernistic men and by such councils as stated above. Since Dr. Alldredge held an official position in the Southern Baptist Convention for over 25 years, he has seen unionism and modernism at work in the Convention, therefore he should know wherein he speaks. The Southern Baptist Convention is not only unscriptural in its organization, in its purpose, etc., it is unscriptural in that it courts modernism. Dr. Alldredge and others offered a resolution at the Oklahoma City meeting for the purpose of trying to head off modernism in the Convention, but the resolution was killed by the modernists.

THERE IS MODERNISM IN THE CHURCHES TOO

Now, let us turn our attention to some cases where churches have departed from the faith and have adopted practices that are foreign to the New Testament.

IN ILLINOIS

Just here I wish to quote a paragraph or so from "The Illinois Baptist," which is the official paper of the Illinois State Convention. I quote from February 20, 1948, issue:

"Even among Southern Baptists, although still small, the forces of liberalism and modernism are working. Many of the churches of the eastern part of the convention prac-

tice open communion and receive alien immersion. The modernists of our convention have started their own magazine, 'Christian Frontiers' with editors prominent in our convention."

It continues: "Although these forces of liberalism are in the minority, they are growing. The forces of alien immersion, reception of letters from apostate Baptist Churches, Union revivals, pulpit affiliation, scoffing at the necessity of repentance and the use of prayer in salvation are mere trends toward more and more liberality and finally modernism."

This was back in 1948, only three years ago. But since then other churches have accepted alien baptism and many sound Baptists have left the churches of that state convention.

WHAT ABOUT ST. LOUIS?

Dedication of Babies

According to the Wellston Journal, published on June 14, 1950, an infant son was dedicated in the West Park Baptist Church. I have this article and the picture of the infant baby. Other Convention Churches in the St. Louis area are known to have already dedicated babies.

ALIEN BAPTISM

Several years ago a member of the Overland Baptist Church, who was baptized by that church, came to the Bethany Baptist Church, St. Louis, seeking membership. A committee was sent to investigate the soundness of the Overland Baptist Church. I have that report before me as I write this article. Here is one question the committee asked Mr. Score, who at that time had been pastor for 15 years: "Do you take baptism from churches that are not Baptist Churches?" The pastor answered: "Yes, if they say they have been saved." That church had been practicing that for 15 years at the

time the investigation was made. The investigation was made at least 10 years ago. And mind you, that church is in the St. Louis (Convention) Association. Letters and baptisms are exchanged freely among those churches.

The Second Baptist Church has been ousted from the St. Louis Association (Convention). Why? One of the daily papers had this to say, and I quote: "The complaint was based upon the practice at Second Baptist Church of admitting to membership in the congregation persons from other denominations who have not been immersed in baptism as required by strict Baptist doctrine."

The complaint states that the church had received members from other denominations who have not been immersed. If the members received by the Second Baptist Church had not been immersed then what kind of baptism had the church received? If it didn't receive immersion, it had to receive sprinkling or pouring. However, the news report says that it was sprinkling.

The charge stated that the Second Baptist Church had received baptism which was contrary to "strict Baptist doctrine." The other churches would have recognized the Second Baptist Church if she had received immersion from other faiths, instead of receiving sprinkling. Strict Baptist doctrine requires more than immersion by other denominations. True Missionary Baptists do not consider immersion by other faiths as scriptural baptism, but the convention churches in St. Louis recognizes such baptisms. Yet they claim that they are contending for the faith of our forefathers. May I raise this question: Will the churches that excluded the Second Baptist Church receive her baptisms? They accept immersions from other denominations! In either case it's alien baptism.

WHAT IS THE PRACTICE OF THE CONVENTION CHURCHES IN ST. LOUIS?

A few years ago I asked a certain convention pastor this question: "What kind of baptism do the churches of the St. Louis Association (Convention) consider as being scriptural baptism?" I asked this question knowing that some Convention Churches in St. Louis had received immersion from other faiths and these churches were not ousted from the St. Louis (Convention) Association. The pastor answered: "We consider any baptism that is by immersion as scriptural baptism." I have a witness that can testify to the truthfulness of this statement.

The above statement made by the Convention pastor is also the practice of the Convention Churches in St. Louis. I know of definite examples of open communion. Many, many of them make it a practice of exchanging pulpits with other faiths. Many of the members of the Bethany Baptist Church are acquainted with a lady who united with the Fourth Baptist Church of St. Louis on her "Christian" baptism, that is, she received baptism from the Christian Church in Herculaneum, Mo. This lady wanted to come from the Fourth Baptist Church to the Bethany Baptist Church, St. Louis, on the baptism that the above named Convention Church had received. However, she did not come, because she refused scriptural baptism. Again, the Pine Lawn Baptist Church has a member who has Methodist baptism. These are only a few of the many cases that could be mentioned.

I am not censuring the individuals in these cases; I would like to help them. The blame and responsibility must be placed at the doors of the churches and upon the pastors who refuse to "preach the word," therefore we should expose their loose practices.

Dr. Paul Weber, Secretary of Missions of the St. Louis (Convention) Association, admits that some of the churches

receive alien immersion. In a letter to him I inquired as to the practices of the churches as to baptism. He replied very briefly and said: "Some of our churches accept 'Alien Immersion'—most of them do not." But he did not answer this question that was asked: "Do the churches consider immersion of other faiths scriptural or unscriptural?" Why are the churches that receive immersion from other faiths allowed to remain in the fellowship of the Convention Churches of St. Louis? Why did they merely point out the church that accepted sprinkling? Is it because they wouldn't have any churches left if they drew the line and accepted only churches that adhered to true Missionary Baptist baptism?

There are many, many more cases that I could relate about the Convention Churches here and elsewhere, but space will not permit. Modernism and loose practices are adhered to on the wholesale order in a great host of Convention Churches, and true Baptists need not be blind to these things. Such churches are Missionary Baptists in name only; they are not Missionary Baptist Churches in faith and practice.

May I urge all true Missionary Baptists everywhere to stand for "the faith" that was delivered to the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. True Baptist Churches should know what kind of baptism they receive, and this can only be true by knowing the church from which the baptism comes. It is time for true Baptists to wake up, if they are not already awake. Heresy is on the march, therefore we should be on guard. This little booklet is being sent forth with a prayer that Association Baptists might hear the trumpet, and that we might be better prepared to meet the issue of modernism in the name of Baptists today. Association Baptists, that is, the Churches of the North American Baptist Association have gone on record condemning open communion, alien baptism, pulpit affiliation and modernism. May her flag wave in favor of the New Testament principles until Jesus comes.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT
of the
NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

15. Establishment of a visible church by Christ Himself during His personal ministry on earth.
16. World wide missions according to the Great Commission which Christ gave His church (Matthew 28:19-20).
17. Perpetuity of Missionary Baptist churches from Christ's day on earth until His second coming.
18. That all Scriptural churches should ever be held as equal units as to their rights and privileges in their associated capacities.
19. That all Scriptural associational assemblies and their committees are servants of the churches.
20. That we brand as unscriptural open communion, alien baptism, pulpit affiliation with heretical Ministers, unionism, modernism, modern conventionism, one-church dictatorship, and all kindred evils arising from these practices.
21. We believe that baptism to be valid must be administered by the authority of a true scriptural Missionary Baptist church, and we believe that a so-called Baptist church which knowingly receives alien immersion is not a Scriptural Baptist church, and its ordinances are not valid.
22. The personal, bodily and imminent return of Christ to earth.
23. The bodily resurrection of the dead.
24. The reality of Heaven, involving Divine assurance of eternal happiness for the redeemed of God.
25. The reality of Hell, involving everlasting punishment of the incorrigible wicked.