TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Once again it is my privilege to introduce another combined issue of *Texas Baptist History*. This issue includes the combined articles for the 2005 and 2006 fall meetings of the Texas Baptist Historical Society and the articles from the 2004, 2005, and 2006 joint meetings of the TBHS and the Texas State Historical Association.

As promised in the 2001-03 combined issue, I want to introduce some of the members of our Dallas Baptist University editorial team. Our copy editor for this 2004-06 combined issue of *Texas Baptist History* is my faculty colleague, Dr. Deborah McCollister, Professor of English. Affectionately known by her students as "Dr. Mac," Dr. McCollister joined the full-time faculty at DBU in 1991. Dr. McCollister has deep Texas roots, being reared in Gilmer, Texas, and having received her B. A. degree from Baylor. She also earned her M. A. and Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi. A specialist in American and British Victorian literature, Dr. McCollister has presented and published a number of scholarly papers in her discipline as well as being a frequent contributor to BaptistWay Press. She served for many years at DBU as the English department coordinator before stepping aside last year to return to the classroom on a full-time basis. She and her husband Mackie are active members of the First Baptist Church of Arlington.

Our senior editorial assistant/design editor on both the combined 2001-03 issue and the 2004-06 issue of *Texas Baptist History*, and hopefully for many upcoming issues, is Wanda Allen. Wanda has been the administrative assistant for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences since 2001. The fact that *TBH* has been caught up in its publication schedule so quickly since DBU assumed the editing of the journal in

February of 2008, is largely due to Wanda's diligence and pursuit of excellence. She is a native of Alabama but has lived in Texas for the past thirty-two years. Prior to coming to DBU she was the administrative assistant to the director of Talenton School, a school for gifted and talented students. Wanda completed her degree in business administration at DBU in May of 2008. She and her husband Jay attend the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Cedar Hill. In the 2007-08 issue I will introduce our book review editor, Dr. David Stricklin, and our web site editor, Dr. Stephen Stookey.

The 2004 issue includes articles about two outstanding Texas Baptists from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, J. M. Dawson and George W. Truett. The first article is by Marshall Johnston, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Aransas Pass. It is entitled, "A Lone Star Social Gospel" and discusses the strong influence of Walter Rauschenbusch upon J. M. Dawson, longtime Texas Baptist, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco, and founder of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs [now the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty]. Johnston's article is followed by one by Christopher Canipe that deals with the involvement of the legendary pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, George W. Truett, in the American Expeditionary Force during World War I. The article is entitled "Preaching the Gospel in a World Made Safe for Democracy" and explores the significant influence that Truett's evangelistic work in France had upon his worldview and his later ministry at FBC of Dallas.

The 2005 issue has an article written by Paul Stripling, retired director of missions for Waco Association. Dr. Stripling presented this paper, "How Do Associations Handle Issues of Doctrinal Diversity?" at the Fall 2004 meeting of the Texas Baptist Historical Society. Revised from earlier presentations that Stripling made on the subject, the paper demonstrates various approaches taken by associations over particularly divisive and controversial subjects. Unfortunately, this issue only has one article. We are hopeful that in a future issue we

will be able to publish at least one article originally scheduled for this issue. Fortunately, there are some fine book reviews in this issue as well.

The 2006 issue includes a delightful article by Butch Strickland on the Independence Baptist Church, Texas Baptists' oldest continuously active church and site of the Texas Baptist History Museum. Strickland's brief article is entitled "The Foundations of the Lord Are Sure: An Early History of Independence Baptist Church" and is filled with remembrances of key events and people in the church's early life. Andrew Hogue's article follows Strickland's with an article discussing religion and politics in American life. The article entitled "Richard Land and the American Presidency, 1988-2004" discusses Land's leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission and his relationship with three U. S. presidents.

Near the end of his *Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History*, H. Leon McBeth writes, "What we do know is that Texas Baptists have a glorious history, with heroes and heroines who have held their Baptist faith firmly, have witnessed consistently, have given sacrificially, have endured dangers and hardships aplenty, and have invested their lives in small rural and village as well as city churches." We hope you enjoy the 2004-06 issues of *Texas Baptist History* as we seek to further record our story.

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XXIV 2004

PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN A WORLD MADE SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY: GEORGE TRUETT, RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, AND THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

George W. Truett, who served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas from 1897 until his death in 1944, has been generally recognized by Baptists in the United States as one of the denomination's most eloquent advocates for religious liberty and the separation of church and state. His famous sermon on the issue, delivered from the steps of the United States Capitol building in 1920, is still celebrated by Baptists both for its graceful style and its compelling substance. Indeed, almost sixty years after his death, Truett remains, for many of his spiritual descendants, *the* Baptist champion of religious liberty.

Truett's understanding of religious liberty, however, cannot be understood apart from his deep love for democracy and his abiding faith in the American tradition of freedom. For Truett, the ideals of Baptist theology and American democracy perfectly complemented one another in their mutual affirmations of, and respect for, individual liberty. Church and state, in other words, shared a great deal of common ground—so much so that, despite their strident rhetoric of separation, it was often difficult to discern where Truett and his fellow Texas Baptists located the boundaries between the church and state in the early 1900s.

Truett's tour of duty as a preacher in Europe during World War I offers an interesting case in point. Asked by President Wilson to lead "inspirational services" for American soldiers overseas, Truett eagerly embraced the opportunity to carry the Gospel to those on the front lines of the war. He believed that

it was a service to his country that, as a patriot, he could not easily refuse. Preaching the Christian message as a uniformed ambassador for the U.S. government, albeit under the official auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.), Truett effectively straddled the wall separating church and state—a wall which, apparently, was neither as solid nor as high as Baptists adamantly claimed. Or was it? Clearly, based on the widespread accolades the preacher received at home for his patriotic service, Truett's fellow Texas Baptists saw no inconsistency between his preaching activity overseas on behalf of the government and his Baptist-bred commitment to religious liberty and the separation of church and state. George Truett's experience in Europe with the American Expeditionary Force provides an intriguing lens through which to consider Baptist understandings of religious liberty during the early years of the twentieth century.

I

Before turning to Truett's service during World War I and its implications for Baptist understandings of religious liberty, though, it may be helpful to enlist the insights of the late Anabaptist theologian John Howard Yoder, whose 1984 essay entitled "The Constantinian Sources of Western Social Ethics" outlined several variations of church-state establishments.[1] In this essay, Yoder uses the phrase "Constantinian shift" to describe the manner in which Christians adjusted their theological and ethical convictions to conform to the new religious and political realities after the Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 311. Whereas before Constantine, Christians were a frequently persecuted minority, after Constantine Christianity soon became the "official" faith of the Roman Empire. When Caesar entered the church, Yoder argues, the character of the church changed forever. Rather than insist that, in order to become a Christian, Caesar had to change his behavior in keeping with Christian standards of conduct, the

church instead simply changed its ethical standards in such a way as to allow Caesar to continue acting like Caesar, but now with the blessing of the church. In outlining the different ways in which this "Constantinian shift" continues to shape Christian ethics the contemporary Western world, Yoder described one arrangement that emerged during and after the Enlightenment and the American Revolution. "Religious liberty and disestablishment bring it about progressively that church and state as *institutions* become less linked," Yoder writes. "Each has greater autonomy over against the claims of the other. Yet even with this shift, the moral identification changes little, as the U[nited] S[tates] especially demonstrates. Once the separation of church and state is seen as theologically desirable, a society where this separation is achieved is not a pagan society but a nation structured according to the will of God. . . . Moral identification of the church with nation remains despite institutional separation."[2]

Yoder labeled this arrangement "neo-neo-Constantinian" and claimed that, in substance if not in style, it preserved the moral and ethical overlap between church and state that characterized earlier stages of Christendom. As such, it offers a helpful conceptual framework within which to consider the ways Texas Baptists generally understood religious liberty and the separation of church and the state during the early decades of the twentieth century. More specifically, Yoder's definition of "neo-neo-Constantinianism" provides an intriguing perspective upon George Truett's six-month tour of duty as a Baptist preacher associated with the American Expeditionary Force in Europe.

II

As an evangelistic preacher, George Truett had few peers. During his forty-seven years of service at First Baptist Church, the congregation added over seven thousand new members, most of them by baptism. "He preaches for conversions," wrote

one journalist, "and gets them at the close of every sermon. In his regular church services, he averages fifty to seventy-five conversions a month."[3] In 1925, a *Christian Century* survey of 90,000 ministers named Truett one of the twenty-five "greatest" leaders in American Protestantism.[4] "Dr. Truett is numbered among the small group of powerful preachers in America," noted one observer. "Some say he is the brightest star in the galaxy of sermonic geniuses among the Baptists."[5]

Arguably the most famous Southern Baptist preacher in America between 1900 and 1925, George Truett stood squarely in the denominational mainstream of his day, both theologically and politically. In addition to his pastoral responsibilities at First Baptist, Dallas, Truett actively participated as a leader in Southern Baptist life. He represented "the soul of Baptist statesmanship," writes church historian Leon McBeth, "and in many ways was the unofficial spokesman for the entire denomination."[6] Not surprisingly, then, Truett's public positions on most theological and political issues, generally speaking, matched those of his Baptist contemporaries in the early twentieth century.

Among these issues, the question of religious liberty and the separation of church and state stirred the Baptist soul most passionately. Religious liberty, in short, was widely considered *the* essential conviction that distinguished Baptists from their fellow Christians, for it reflected the Baptist understanding of faith and salvation at its most basic level. "Fundamentally, Baptists hold that religion is individualistic, that it is something in the mind and heart," wrote J. B. Gambrell, editor of the *Baptist Standard*, Texas' Baptist newspaper, in 1920. "Therefore if one is not religious in his own mind and heart, he is not religious at all, and no outside pressure can make him so."[7] For this reason, Baptists insisted upon absolute religious freedom for everyone. "One must believe for himself, and repent for himself, and be baptized for himself, and pray for himself," Truett told the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1916. "Therefore, no institution, whether church or state, and no person—whether

parent, or preacher, or pope, or priest—must dare to come between that soul and its divine Lord."[8] The institutions of the church and those of the state, Baptists generally agreed, must be kept completely and forever separate. To this end, Baptists vigilantly guarded against the use of public money to fund religious education and against other potential violations of church-state separation.

During Truett's day, the Roman Catholic Church, with its system of parochial schools and supposed "shadowy" connections to a foreign power, served as the most frequent target of Baptist venom regarding issues of church and state. At the heart of the Baptist antipathy toward the Roman church laid an uneasy suspicion that Catholics in America owed their true allegiance not to the United States, but to the Pope and his designs for world domination. The very idea that a Catholic could potentially place allegiance to the church ahead of allegiance to the state both astounded and alarmed Baptists, who confidently asserted that nothing like that could ever happen with them. Indeed, the essential harmony between Baptist principles and American democracy, they claimed, rendered such a scenario simply implausible. "Baptists are, of all the religious bodies, the most democratic," wrote E. Y. Mullins, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in 1919. "The individual, the church, the district association, the state and general conventions, all seek to embody the free democratic principle."[9] Or, as Truett put it in 1911, "the triumph of democracy, thank God, means the triumph of Baptists everywhere."[10]

III

When the United States finally entered the Great War in April of 1917 after three years of ambivalent neutrality, Truett and many of his fellow Texas Baptists—and along with the vast majority of Americans—applauded the nation's intention to wage war, as President Wilson declared, in order to "make the world safe for democracy." In November of 1917, Truett

introduced a resolution at the Baptist General Convention of Texas in support of the war effort. "We would solemnly pledge to our fellow patriots everywhere and to the civil government of which we are a part," the resolution proclaimed, "our loyal devotion to the principles inspiring the present titanic struggle of the democracies of the world against the most highly specialized and most powerfully organized autocracy in the world." Baptist support of the American war effort, the resolution continued, reflected the Baptist commitment to democracy. "Baptists are essentially and fundamentally democratic. We believe that the norm of the highest civilization is a New Testament church, where every member is equal in privilege with every other member. . . . It is our profound conviction that in the reconstruction of the world on a democratic basis all the moral forces of society will be needed, acting in concert, for the exaltation and maintenance of the proper standards of righteousness in civil government and everywhere else."[11] In other words, the relationship between democracy and Christianity was directly proportional: as one flourished, so would the other. In the eyes of the Texas Baptists who enthusiastically endorsed Truett's resolution, then, the Great War fought to make the world safe for democracy also represented a moral struggle for the survival of Christian civilization.

To be sure, this equation of democracy and Christianity exerted a powerful influence on the imaginations of Truett and his fellow Baptists in 1917. In a sermon preached soon after the United States entered the war, Truett expressed his firm confidence in the future of democracy. Democracy cannot fail, he argued, because it is of God. "It may be that other wars will have to be fought before true democracy can be established in all the earth," he declared, "but established it will be because its basic principles are the very essence of the Kingdom of God."[12] As the foremost voice of democracy in the world, United States had a special religious mission to perform. "The task of America," declared Truett in another sermon preached around the same time, "is that she herself

become thoroughly and truly Christian. Brethren, this mighty America can command the conversion of the world on one condition only, and that is that she be Christian through and though." The United States, he continued, "is to be Christian in her commerce, and in her politics, and in her art, and in her education, and in her literature, and in every phase and fiber of her social order."[13]

Other Baptists echoed Truett's faith in America as a partner in the missionary endeavor. "Missions is the war behind this great war. Missions is the key to unlock the future of this world," wrote the editors of the *Baptist World* in June of 1918. "The only real safety for the New Testament faith is in spiritual democracy. The little, self-governing groups of regenerate men, called churches in the New Testament. They alone can truly make and keep democracy safe for the world."[14] American victories for democracy on the field of battle, it seemed, promised to bring with it success in the Baptist struggle to win souls for Jesus. "Without wishing to displace the soldier in the affection and loyal support of all lovers of justice and right," wrote one ardent advocate of evangelism in the *Baptist Standard*, "I would place beside him the foreign missionary as equally worthy of the confidence and support of those who are truly determined to safeguard the democracy of the world."[15] Baptist foreign missionaries and American soldiers abroad, in other words, stood for the same thing—democracy, in its spiritual and political forms, respectively.

It was in this context, then, that Truett and nineteen other American preachers received invitations from President Wilson "to deliver their messages of patriotism and religion to the Allied armies."[16] At the end of his Sunday morning sermon on June 2, 1918, Truett announced his decision to accept the call of his government and go to war-torn Europe:

> In this crisis-hour, it is unthinkable that preachers and churches should hesitate to give their most loyal support, both by teaching and by sacrificial service, to our noble Christian President, and to all those joined with him in authority, as they summon all the

> people of the Nation to give with ungrudging spirit their time, their money, their lives, their all, that justice, brotherhood, and all those priceless ideals which enlightened men hold dearer than life itself may be permanently enthroned among all the free and friendly peoples of the earth.[17]

Truett's decision met with widespread approval among Texas Baptists. The board of deacons at First Baptist unanimously granted Truett a paid leave of absence and arranged to take care of his expenses while overseas.[18] The president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board wrote a letter of introduction for Truett in which he expressed his "appreciation and admiration of the noble, Christian patriotic spirit of [First Baptist, Dallas] and its pastor."[19] The *Baptist Standard*, typically an aggressive defender of the separation of church and state, warmly endorsed the move. "Believing that our army in France should have the best men who could be secured for every department, the Government, *through the proper agencies*, has asked a number of the leading ministers of the United States to go to France and engage in religious work among the soldiers," the newspaper reported. "The big word now for us is Duty—duty to God and duty to our country." Truett and another Texas pastor, Fred F. Brown, "after prayerful consideration, have felt that the call of their country was the call of God."[20]

The fact that Truett, although wearing the government-issued uniform of the American Expeditionary Force, would *officially* be serving under the authority of the Y.M.C.A.—the "proper agencies" noted by the *Baptist Standard*—seemed to satisfy any Baptist concerns over possible breaches in the wall of separation between church and state. Indeed, the institutions of church and state did not overlap at all, at least in the technical sense. The *Baptist Standard* kept its readers well apprised of Truett's activities abroad, and in almost every article, the paper faithfully reminded Texas Baptists that Truett *officially* represented the Y.M.C.A. and not the American government. *Unofficially*, however, Texas Baptists took great pride in Truett's

religious service to military personnel. Truett, wrote one pastor in the *Baptist Standard*, was one of a handful of pastors who had already put on a uniform and "are over there working with our boys." Others, he continued, should follow Truett's patriotic example, for "your country and your Christ are calling upon you to go to [our soldiers] and dress their wounds, share their sorrows, and above all, to give them spiritual advice in this awful hour of testing, trial, and temptation."[21] According to his diary, Truett arrived in England on August 11, 1918 and spent most of that fall in London, making daily excursions via train, car, or even motorcycle, of up to a hundred miles round trip to various Allied camps in the countryside where he sometimes delivered as many as six sermons in a single day. "I would have gladly crossed the ocean and braved all the perils and hardships for what I have seen and felt today," Truett wrote to his wife on September 14, 1918. "Multitudes—vast multitudes came to the side of our great Savior and Christianity. Impossible to tell how great it was. Never, never can I get away from the greatness and blessedness of this day."[22] The next day brought even more good news. "This has been one of the highest days in all of my life," Truett confided in his diary. He continued:

> Have spoken six times today, to an audience, all told, of some 15,000 men. Spoke morning and night in the Big Tent. Then to four huts. Once to some 2000 aviators. . . . My soul does not doubt that hundreds and hundreds, perhaps a full thousand men were today turned unto the Lord. They stood up confessing Him, by the hundreds. The other conferences were wonderful. To God be all the praise.[23]

Often overwhelmed by the opportunities for evangelism among the Allied soldiers, Truett understood his preaching duties as a patriotic response to the twin summons of country and Christ. "One could wish that he had a thousand lives with which to help our blessed bonnie boys," he wrote to his wife on October 12, 1918. "I love them with a measureless love, and if I can help them in their marvelous task, help them even a little, surely I am

happy for the privilege."[24] The soldiers to whom he ministered, Truett wrote a week later, "are to face death when called, a death for the world's betterment, for its safety, for righteousness. If one can fortify them, to any degree, he feels he must."[25]

On October 26, Truett crossed the English Channel and landed in France. For the next three months he preached to soldiers along the Allied side of the Western front and, after the Armistice, in Germany as well. Truett was near Brest, in northwestern France, when the Armistice went into effect on November 11, 1918. "Today is probably the most notable day in all history, next to the day when Jesus died on Calvary. All France is a riot of joy," he wrote in his journal. "Never, ever did the world see the like before. Two flags everywhere were waving—the French and American flags. . . . Now may the victorious nations be humble, and obedient to the call of the highest. It is a time for prayer. God help us!"[26]

After the war, Truett frequently reflected on its meaning as he toured the battle-scarred landscapes of France and Germany and visited with victorious Allied soldiers. Typically, he understood the war as a divine judgment upon Germany delivered by the Allied nations. "Now, may people everywhere be given to see that God's will must be followed, or all shall go wrong," he wrote on December 10, 1918. "Germany ignored God's will—forgot that nations are amenable to Him, to reap what they sow—forgot that their guns, submarines, and Zeppelins could not overturn His throne. The Lord reigneth—let all the earth rejoice."[27] Indeed, the pure motives of the United States in entering the conflict deeply impressed Truett as he considered God's hand in guiding the outcome of the war. In what may have been the outline for his standard sermon to American and Allied troops, the preacher scribbled the following notes on the last two well-worn pages of his journal:

> Patriotism to be forever based on righteousness. . . .Whatever our national faults—I will confess that our history here and there puts us to blush, yet in this conflict, God is our record, we enter it with

> clean hands and a pure conscience. . . . For no selfish end did you unsheathe the sword, but to redeem your plighted word and to defend the weak. Justice and mercy are our guiding stars. . . . National greatness consists in these things. Home, religion, and the highest things to be given the highest place.[28]

For Truett, the link between patriotism and righteousness suggested a deeper connection between the ideals of church and state, a shared sense of purpose and, perhaps, even a shared destiny.

The calls of country and Christ, at least in the Great War, apparently sounded very similar to Truett, who returned home in February of 1919 to a hero's welcome. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, which sent a reporter to the train station to cover the homecoming, as Truett entered the station, friends lifted him onto their shoulders so that the crowd could see him. It took ten minutes for the preacher to make his way from the station entrance to the main gates, where he then had to wade through a crowd of well wishers lining the outside steps.[29] Two nights later, over a thousand people turned out for a civic banquet in Truett's honor at Dallas' Scottish Rite Cathedral. After relating a few stories from overseas, the guest of honor turned serious. "There are several things to remember about the war," he said. "The first is that our reasons for entering were blameless. . . . The integrity of a country is worth dying for and the honor and freedom of the United States is worth dying for." Drawing upon the sacrifices of American soldiers as inspiration, Truett closed with an exhortation to live boldly for the sake of God and country: "Let us play the game [of life], in all relations, human and divine, so that we can say with the immortal Wesley, 'God is with us!'"[30]

IV

Apparently, none of Truett's fellow Baptists expressed any reservations about his tour of duty as a preacher affiliated with the American Expeditionary Force. No one seems to have

raised any public questions about his willingness to serve the government in a religious capacity. This lack of controversy should not be surprising. In the eyes of Texas Baptists, at least, the fact that Truett served in Europe under the official auspices of the Y.M.C.A. satisfied their concerns about any possible improprieties over the separation of church and state. As long as the *institutions* of church and state did not *officially* overlap—as was the case with Truett—then activities like preaching the Christian Gospel to American soldiers at the government's request fell comfortably within the limits of acceptable behavior for Baptists. In fact, such activity was not only acceptable, but warmly encouraged as a patriotic contribution to the United States' effort to make the world safe for democracy—and, as Texas Baptists in the early 1900s understood implicitly, the triumph of democracy meant the triumph of Baptists everywhere. By serving his country, then, Truett also served his church.

Herein lay the ironic essence of what Yoder called a "neo-neo-Constantinian" understanding of religious liberty and church-state separation. Truett and his fellow Texas Baptists vigorously opposed any institutional overlap of church and state (such as public funding for private religious schools) while simultaneously proclaiming, and celebrating, a moral and ethical consistency between the two. In other words, their rigorous rhetoric of institutional separation masked an underlying sense of identification—a "sweet harmony," in the words of one eighteenth-century Baptist—between Texas Baptists and their nation, an identification powerfully nourished by the Baptists' devotion to democracy. Truett's service as a preacher to the American Expeditionary Force offers a revealing glimpse of the "neo-neo-Constantinian" perspective that defined Texas Baptists' view of religious liberty and the separation of church and state during the early years of the twentieth century. As such, it also serves as a cautionary tale for scholars of religious liberty who look to the past for present direction concerning issues dealing with church and

state. Beneath yesterday's strident Baptist rhetoric demanding strict separation may have rested a more accommodating soul, perfectly comfortable with church and state sharing an ambiguous moral common ground—particularly in an attempt to make the world safe for democracy.

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NOTES

[1]See John Howard Yoder, "The Constantinian Sources of Western Social Ethics," 135-47, in John Howard Yoder, *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

[2]Ibid., 142.

[3]George W. Gray, "Out of the Mountains Came This Great Preacher of the Plains," *The American Magazine* 100 (November 1925): 140.

[4]"Greatness in Preachers," *Christian Century* 42 (1925): 44-45.

[5]Edgar DeWitt Jones, *American Preaches Today: Intimate Appraisals of 32 Leaders* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1933), 293.

[6]Leon McBeth, "George W. Truett: Baptist Statesman," *Baptist History and Heritage* 32 (April 1997): 9.

[7]*Baptist Standard*, June 3, 1920, 5.

[8]George Truett, "What We Preach," in *Sermons from Paul*, ed. Powhatan W. James (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), 21.

[9]E.Y. Mullins, "Wanted: A Baptist Demonstration," *Baptist Standard*, January 2, 1919, 5.

[10]George Truett, "God's Call to America," in *God's Call to America* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923), 19.

[11]*Baptist Standard*, November 29, 1917, 14.

[12]George Truett, "The Eagle and Her Nest," in *The Prophet's Mantle*

(Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1948), 80.

[13]Truett, "God's Call . . .", 22-23.

[14]*Baptist World*, June 13, 1918, 4.

[15]*Baptist Standard*, January 23, 1919, 12.

[16]Wilson, as quoted in Powhatan W. James, *George W. Truett: A Biography* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1939), 131.

[17]*Baptist Standard*, June 6, 1918, 8.

[18]Leon McBeth, *The First Baptist Church of Dallas: Centennial History* (1868-1968) (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968), 159.

[19]Letter, from Home Mission Board, June 20, 1918. In Truett Collection, File 733, A. Webb Roberts Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. Many thanks to Dr. Mike Pullin, former director of the Archives Department at Southwestern Seminary, for his patient and generous assistance in facilitating access to, and research in, the Truett Collection.

[20]*Baptist Standard*, June 6, 1918, 6, emphasis added.

[21]*Baptist Standard*, August 29, 1918, 5.

[22]George Truett, letter to wife, September 14, 1918, Truett Collection, File 1341.

[23]George Truett, diary, September 15, 1918, Truett Collection, File 665.

[24]George Truett, letter to wife, October 12, 1918, Truett Collection, File 1343.

[25]George Truett, letter to wife , October 19, 1918, Truett Collection., File 1343.

[26]George Truett, diary, November 11, 1918, Truett Collection, File 665.

[27]George Truett, diary, December 10, 1918, Truett Collection, File 665.

[28]George Truett, diary, No date (last two pages), Truett Collection, File 655.

[29]*Dallas Morning News*, February 5, 1919, 7.

[30]*Dallas Morning News*, February 7, 1919, 16.

A LONE STAR SOCIAL GOSPEL? THE INFLUENCE OF WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH ON THE SOCIAL CHRISTIANITY OF J. M. DAWSON

Historians of Baptists in the American South have concerned themselves for many years with the question of the influence of the "social gospel" in the South. This question is related to the larger issue of the social consciousness of Southern Baptists. A traditional historiography argued that Southern religion was almost exclusively individualistic and other-worldly in its concerns. This, it was argued, was due to the traditionalism inherent in Southern thinking. Consequently, since Protestants in the South (Southern Baptists among them), were highly individualistic products of their Southern culture, there was little influence of the social gospel in the South. A further argument for the absence of a social gospel tradition in the South was based upon the recognition that the social gospel arose in an urban, industrial context, while the South during the same time period remained rural and agrarian.[1]

The arguments reflected by such historiography have been successfully challenged. Historians such as John Lee Eighmy and Wayne Flynt demonstrated that in certain circles in Southern Baptist life, a social consciousness characterized church life and activity.[2] These historians have stopped short, however, of concluding that there was indeed a version of the social gospel in the South. Instead they argued for the existence of a strong tradition of "social Christianity" or "applied Christianity" among various Southern Baptists that in part was influenced

by certain social gospel proponents, the most significant of whom was Walter Rauschenbusch.

For a large number, perhaps the majority, of Southern Baptist leaders who studied and promoted social Christianity, based in part upon the influence of the social gospel, Walter Rauschenbusch served as their exemplar.[3] While they did not necessarily share certain aspects of his liberal theology, they nevertheless attributed much to his influence. Two examples of Southern Baptist leaders influenced by the Rochester scholar are Louie Newton, one-time president of the Southern Baptist Convention and Henlee Barnette, professor of ethics at Southern Seminary.

Louie Newton, in his autobiographical work, *Why I Am a Baptist*, relates an experience from his early days as a rookie journalist for a New York City newspaper.[4] He was assigned to interview Walter Rauschenbusch whose works, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* and *Christianizing the Social Order*, Newton had "soaked up."[5] He described Rauschenbusch as "an overwhelming person," in whose presence Newton "felt absolutely awed." He concluded his description of the encounter with the Rochester professor by quoting verbatim the majority of Rauschenbusch's tract, "Why I Am a Baptist."[6]

W. Morgan Patterson described Henlee Barnette as "one of the most perceptive students of Walter Rauschenbusch" among Southern Baptists.[7] In his article entitled "Walter Rauschenbusch: Baptist Exemplar of Social Concern" Patterson attributes a quote to Barnette that is telling, in that it demonstrates the high esteem in which the Southern Seminary professor held Rauschenbusch: "America has produced three great prophets: Abraham Lincoln, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Lincoln was raised a Baptist, Rauschenbusch was a Baptist, and so was King. Each of their fates was that of a prophet. Lincoln and King were killed and Rauschenbusch was rejected by most of his fellow Baptists."[8] While many may have rejected the "prophet" of the social gospel, not all Baptists did, even in the South.

Another Southern Baptist leader who was influenced by Rauschenbusch was the Texan J. M. Dawson. According to Dawson, Barnette once referred to him as "the pioneer among Southern Baptists in proclaiming the social gospel."[9] Joseph Martin Dawson (1879-1973) is probably best known for his service as the first executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, where he worked from 1946 to 1953. In that capacity Dawson gained a reputation as a champion for religious liberty and its logical corollary, the separation of church and state. What must not be overlooked, however, is the fact that Dawson performed this role in Washington later in his career. Prior to his denominational position, he served for many years as a pastor and, even earlier, he was the editor of the Baptist Standard for a short time.

As a long-time pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco (1915-1946), Dawson became influential in Texas Baptist life. During his long tenure in Waco, but beginning with his pastorate at the First Baptist Church of Temple (1912-1915), much of Dawson's preaching and writing revolved around the social implications of the gospel.[10] By his own admission, Dawson's reading of a number of Walter Rauschenbusch's works influenced much of his thought on the subject. In this paper I will analyze Dawson's earliest writings on social Christianity to listen for the echoes of Rauschenbusch's social gospel. Moreover, I will look at elements that represent a departure from the Rochester professor's thought. I will then conclude with some implications for further study of the issue of Southern Baptists and the social gospel.

As mentioned above, Dawson admitted to Rauschenbusch's influence. In his autobiography, *A Thousand Months to Remember*, Dawson described Rauschenbusch as the one "from whose writings I had received my concept of a full gospel—'application of Christianity to the life here as well as that which is to come.'"[11] He further declared that he had possessed "a dozen of [Rauschenbusch's] volumes, including his earth-shaking *Christianity and the Social Crisis*."[12] Several

years later Dawson told the interviewer for his oral memoirs, "I procured all [Rauschenbusch's] books and read them."[13]

The most telling example of the explicit influence of Rauschenbusch upon Dawson is found in the Texan's work, *Baptists and the American Republic*.[14] In this celebratory history of the Baptist influence on the development of religious liberty and American democracy, Dawson included chapters on Roger Williams, Isaac Backus, John Leland, and Luther Rice. He also devoted a chapter to Walter Rauschenbusch as the prophet and promoter of a "Righteous Society."[15] Describing the Rochester theologian's life, work, and thought, Dawson stressed Rauschenbusch's emphasis on individual regeneration as well as social, political, and economic transformation. According to Dawson, while Rauschenbusch was "[f]irm in his devotion to the doctrines of old evangelism, he nevertheless instituted a new kind of evangelism."[16] This new evangelism "he believed should embrace, not only the realization of personal sin, but also the recognition of the deadly corporateness of sin."[17] While he also described Rauschenbusch's thought concerning the Kingdom of God and the attendant socio-economic critique, Dawson nevertheless continued throughout the chapter to stress, to an exaggerated extent, his subject's emphasis on individual regeneration and conversion, concluding with the following statement: "Final appraisal of Rauschenbusch must regard his tremendous emphasis upon *personal regeneration as the primary condition of social improvement*."[18]

Dawson later explained the reason why he included Rauschenbusch in *Baptists and the American Republic* in glowing terms: "I still believed that Rauschenbusch, without forsaking the traditional view of the necessity of personal, individual regeneration, enlarged the outlook of most Christians to include social salvation, really changed our country's civilization, and affected theology."[19] The recognition that he read Rauschenbusch through an individualistic lens is critical for understanding the nature of his influence on Dawson.

Dawson was perhaps the first Texas Baptist to preach and have published a series of sermons on social Christianity. In 1914, E. C. Routh, then editor of the *Baptist Standard*, asked him to produce a series of articles on the "social implications of the gospel."[20] These six articles, published in issues from July through October, 1914, were condensed manuscripts of sermons he had preached to his congregation at the First Baptist Church of Temple in 1912.[21] Of these articles, the three that are the most pertinent to this particular study are entitled "The Man in the Hole," "Christ and the Laboring Man," and "Christ and Capital."[22]

Dawson claimed that in preparation for the sermons, he procured all the books that Rauschenbusch had published up to that point, 1912.[23] This, therefore, would have included *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *For God and the People: Prayers of the Social Awakening* (1910), and *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912).[24] While Dawson adopted subject matter common in much of Rauschenbusch's work, he salted it to his own individualistic, Southern Baptist taste.

In the first of the series "The Man in the Hole,"[25] Dawson introduced a foundational theme that would be prominent in each of the subsequent articles. This theme, which he attributed to the teaching of Jesus, is "His revolutionary doctrine of the infinite worth of man."[26] Stressing the worth of the individual, Dawson wrote, "Jesus it was who gave the world the teaching that every human life is infinitely precious, the most insignificant man, no matter how deeply fallen, is sacred."[27] This sacredness of each individual life should evoke compassion towards others and a desire to help them. Consequently, "compassion for the man in the hole and the passion to uplift him are the great notes of our time."[28] Deserving of criticism, then, are those who are complacent while viewing the man in the hole.

Moving away from the individual emphasis and sounding a note similar to that of many social gospel proponents, Dawson proceeded to identify the man in the hole. This category of humanity included, "two million child laborers denied

education, made thin and pale by unwholesome conditions of toil, and corrupted in morals by a squalid environment," "thirty millions of immigrants in this country who are sought as cheap laborers and herded like sheep to the polls to vote for corrupt measures," "200,000 girls exploited by villains in the traffic of infamy," "the vast army of drunkards constantly augmented that an iniquitous business may be maintained," and "the masses of submerged industrial classes, who in a Christless economic order, are doomed to poverty and all the ills incident thereto."[29] In light of these tragic situations, Dawson, in social gospel form, suggested the need for a "clearer vision that Christianity is of social as well as individual applications."[30] He asserted "there are two salvations—one of the individual for eternity and another of society in time."[31] This social salvation consists of society lifting people out of the hole and filling in the hole, so no one else falls into it: "Just as bog holes in many counties where numbers of people have been inconvenienced and suffered heavy losses by community effort have been filled up and made splendid highways, let us fill up the social pits where so many languish."[32] Failing to suggest any method for "filling the holes," he concluded his article with a reversion to the traditional Southern Baptist emphasis on the individual: "The reformation of society must be preceded by getting the individual saved from sin."[33]

In "Christ and the Laboring Man,"[34] Dawson described with rhetorical flourish what he understood to be the mission of Christ to the "laboring classes": the Nazarene came "not to legislate for them, but to enunciate for them great principles"; his "mission was not to annihilate, but to regenerate"; and he came "not to agitate but to arbitrate."[35] By implication then, the primary role of the church is to instruct, convert, and mediate. But is the subject of instruction, conversion, and mediation the society or the individual? On this point Dawson could not decide. He suggested that society should appropriate a correct "doctrine of man's dignity." Such an appropriation would then "secure protection against needless exposure to

peril by machinery, dangers from occupational diseases; will procure rightful regulation of hours of labor, the guaranty of that sufficient leisure which will lift the laboring man above the daily grind of a brute, and will obtain for him that minimum wage which will insure proper housing, provisions, and all else needful to sane and healthful living."[36] He further asserted that "[the] awakening of the laboring people to this great truth will cause them to demand it and the appropriation of this truth by the men who control capital will cause them to yield it."[37] Dawson closed the article with another vague prescriptive statement: "The spirit of Jesus is to be applied in all our industrial relations and when it rules therein many problems will be speedily solved."[38]

The individualistic theme, however, emerged in Dawson's discussion of what he considered to be the regenerative role of Christ. While a change in conditions is important, what the laboring man needs is not primarily "a new job, but a new personality."[39] This is evident in the fact that "Jesus came to give new existence to men, not primarily to rehabilitate the conditions of their toil."[40] According to Dawson, the knowledge of this fact was requisite to bringing about any change for capital or labor.

The week after the *Standard* published Dawson's article on the laboring classes, the editors printed "Christ and Capital."[41] In this piece Dawson used the biblical parable of the rich man and Lazarus to criticize the unjust use of wealth. He couched the critique in terms of both the sin and tragedy of the rich man, according to tradition named Dives.[42] Dawson judged the character of Dives' sin to be the "gross immorality" of the "heartless, selfish use of wealth."[43] Dawson condemned this immorality with some strong rhetoric: "Dives at play and feasting on the products of others is unspeakable, and betrays a normal sensibility or perversity that deserves the torments of hell."[44] While the sin of Dives was immorality, his tragedy was his motivation. Dawson suggested that the rich man's motives were self-promotion, personal security, and family legacy.[45]

While the primary implication of the article related to the immorality and tragedy of an individual's unjustly acquired and applied wealth, Dawson did make reference to social conditions. For example, relating the individual use of wealth to its social implications, Dawson suggested ironically that "[the] strongest bulwark against socialism is in the recognition of the stewardship of wealth."[46] This stewardship demands that the wealthy "regard their money as a public service."[47] Dawson also discoursed briefly concerning three ways by which he observed people can acquire wealth without earning or stealing it. Once again hinting at a social gospel perspective, he suggested that these means are "legitimate, in the present order, but baneful and destined to be greatly curbed."[48] The means were inheritance, property appreciation, and the reaping of high returns from an unjustly low investment in labor costs. Regarding untaxed inheritance, Dawson complained that those people whose wills or trusts gave "children millions" to spend "in extravagance and dissipation is a menace, both to the children and to society, and restrains the kingdom of God."[49] Property appreciation he suggested is found "chiefly in the increase of values of lands, which men buy, hold off the market, do not improve and after a long nap wake up and sell at the price determined by the development brought about by others."[50] The third means of "baneful" acquisition of wealth Dawson considered the cruelest. He described it as "employing labor at under prices and by the use of capital producing great and extraordinary returns, the profits of which the capitalist pockets and mocks the real producers."[51] He did find hope, however, in the public concern about the third means. In a statement that would have later made Reinhold Niebuhr cringe, Dawson wrote, "Mr. Ford's distribution of large sums of profits from his manufacturing this past year is a revelation of the quickened conscience on this point and is a prophecy in our industrial life."[52] Despite the turn toward the broader socio-economic context, Dawson once again ended his article on a clear note of individualism. He lamented that "wealth has

such a peril for the individual's religious life and such disaster for the home."[53]

How then did Dawson appropriate Rauschenbusch? He did so only in terms of subject matter, not substance of thought. Indeed, Rauschenbusch wrote much about the economic order and its relationship to theology and, more importantly, Christian ethics. He critiqued capitalism and what he considered the inevitable competition between the leaders and the workers. While he suggested that latent in the American capitalistic order existed "great powers of human goodness," Rauschenbusch argued that the inherent competitiveness of the order insured that these powers were "largely kept down or misdirected through the constitutional maladjustment of social forces in capitalism."[54]

Suggesting a directly substantive influence of Rauschenbusch on Dawson is the inclusion of a chapter in *Christianizing the Social Order* entitled "The Tragedy of Dives."[55] In this chapter Rauschenbusch argued that the tragedy of Dives is not his use of wealth or his acquisition of wealth or even of his motivation for acquiring and using wealth. Instead, the tragedy is the mere possession of wealth within the current social order. Rauschenbusch lamented that his "rich brothers are in a tragic position" because "every rich man is the sad hero of a tragedy, and the more noble and wise and righteous he is by nature, the more tragic is his fate."[56] Rauschenbusch asserted that the wealthy in the current social order are "in a position where they cannot escape wrong and unhappiness" because "[their] money gives them power, but that power is an intoxicant that undermines their sense of human values."[57] However, a comparison of this view of wealth with Dawson's demonstrates that the similarities between the two are not substantive. For Dawson the "tragedy of Dives" was not the wealth itself; it was the immoral use of it.[58] Rauschenbusch argued that social forces inevitably corrupted the possessor of wealth, while Dawson argued that the corruption was found primarily in the individual and his or her stewardship of wealth.

A final aspect of Rauschenbusch's thought provides a definitive contrast with that of Dawson. Central to Rauschenbusch was the notion of the Kingdom of God. For Rauschenbusch, the fundamental Christian task was "to transform human society into the Kingdom of God by regenerating all human relations and reconciling them in accordance with the will of God."[59] This transformation of society does begin with the change in the individual heart: "The fundamental contribution of every man is the change of his own personality."[60] This change, however, is deeply social in its implications: "We must repent of the sins of existing society, cast off the spell of the lies protecting our social wrongs, have faith in a higher social order, and realize in ourselves a new type of Christian manhood which seeks to overcome evil in the present world, not by withdrawing from the world, but by revolutionizing it."[61] For Rauschenbusch, the Kingdom of God included economic life. A mere transformation of the individual into a more moral capitalist was insufficient: "But the Kingdom of God includes the economic life; for it means the progressive transformation of all human affairs by the thought and spirit of Christ."[62] This transformation was, for Rauschenbusch, a "two-handed job."[63] It involved the simultaneous transformation of individuals and the economic structures: "We must change our economic system in order to preserve our conscience and our religious faith; we must renew and strengthen our religion in order to be able to change our economic system."[64] For Rauschenbusch, the Kingdom of God progressed by means of the reciprocity of individual change and social transformation. Dawson, by contrast, made very little mention of the notion of the Kingdom of God and consistently grounded his suggestions for any social transformation, economic or otherwise, in the prior regeneration of the individual.

What then is to be made from the above, admittedly brief, study? I suggest the following implications for further work on the social gospel and Southern Baptists:

1. The influence of the social gospel on Southern Baptists, exemplified by Dawson, was more symbolic than substantive. Dawson may have imported the *idea* of a social Christianity into Texas but not the *ideas* of social Christianity prevalent in the north. As others have argued and this study has confirmed, the grid of Southern Baptist individualism strained out the more collective aspects of the social gospel.
2. For Southern Baptists individual regeneration was primary; social change was secondary, albeit important. For Rauschenbusch and other social gospel proponents, individual regeneration and social change were symbiotic.
3. Finally, perhaps the question of whether or not there was a social gospel tradition among Southern Baptists is moot. Maybe, as Foy Valentine is quoted to have said of evangelicalism, the social gospel is "a Yankee word."[65] To search for the evidence of social gospel thought in the south seems to imply something normative about the social gospel. Need that be the case? Perhaps all that is necessary is to ask how specific social gospel proponents influenced specific Southern Baptist and other Southern Protestant leaders as the above brief and modest study has attempted to do.

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NOTES

[1]Examples of such historiography include Rufus Spain's treatment of the Southern Baptist post-bellum social attitudes, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of the Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Nashville: Broadman, 1967) and Samuel Hill, ed., *Varieties of Southern Religious Experience* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988).

[2]This view is represented by John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural*

Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972) and to some degree by David Stricklin's work on the dissenting tradition within the Southern Baptist Convention, *A Genealogy of Dissent: Southern Baptist Protest in the Twentieth Century* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999). In his article, "Southern Baptists: Rural to Urban Transition" in *Baptist History and Heritage* 16 (January 1981), 24-34, Wayne Flynt argued that during the rural to urban transition of the early twentieth century, "most Baptist leaders were neither oblivious to urban social injustice nor were they hot-headed revolutionaries."

[3]See "Baptists and Social Revolution" in *Baptist History and Heritage* 7 (July 1972), 129-85. This issue was dedicated to the "response of Baptists in America to the social revolution of the twentieth century." (129).

[4]Louie Devotie Newton, *Why I Am a Baptist* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957). Newton served during the 1920s as the editor of the Georgia Baptist newspaper, *The Christian Index*. He also served as a professor of church history at Mercer University. Beginning in 1929, Newton was the pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta. During his pastorate, he served in a number of denominational posts, including president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Foreign Mission Board member, and associate secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

[5]Ibid., 97.

[6]Ibid., 98-105.

[7]W. Morgan Patterson, "Walter Rauschenbusch: Baptist Exemplar of Social Concern," *Baptist History and Heritage* 7 (July 1972), 130.

[8]Ibid. Patterson does not provide a reference for the quote attributed to Barnette.

[9]Oral Memoirs of Joseph Martin Dawson (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Religion and Culture Project, Program of Oral History, 1972), 138. Regarding the accuracy of Barnette's statement, Dawson demurred.

[10]A helpful treatment of the social thought of Dawson and other Texas Baptist leaders is found in John Storey, *Texas Baptists and Social Christianity, 1900-1980* (College Station, Texas: Texas A. & M. University Press, 1986).

[11]Joseph Martin Dawson, *A Thousand Months to Remember: An Autobiography* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1964), 212.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Oral memoirs, 139.

[14](Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1956).

[15]Ibid., 171-94.

[16]Ibid., 186.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid., 193, italics in the text.

[19]*A Thousand Months*, 212.

[20]*A Thousand Months*, 114. In his oral memoirs he relates the year and place where he preached the sermons. Oral memoirs, 138.

[21]*Baptist Standard*, July 30, 12-13; September 24, 3, 10; October 1, 3, 11; October 8, 6, 13; October 15, 3; and October 29, 2. Ironically, the October 8 issue contained a letter from Walter Rauschenbusch concerning the condition of Baptists in Europe, then experiencing the privations of World War I (20-21).

[22]The other three were entitled "A Child in the Midst," "The Rise of Women," and "Tomorrow."

[23]Oral memoirs, 139.

[24]Dawson moved to the First Baptist Church of Temple in late 1912 (*A Thousand Months*, 109). Depending upon the date of the release of *Christianizing the Social Order* and his ability to acquire it in Central Texas, one can assume that Dawson used it as a source for his sermons. I analyzed the articles under that assumption.

[25]*Baptist Standard*, July 30, 1914, 12-13.

[26]Ibid., 12.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]September 24, 1914, 3, 10.

[35]Ibid., 3.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid., 10.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

[41]*Baptist Standard*, October 1, 1914.

[42]From the Latin for "rich."

[43]*Baptist Standard*, October 1, 1914, 3.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid., 3, 10.

[46]Ibid., 3.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid., 11.

[54]Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1912), 237.

[55]Ibid., 291-310.

[56]Ibid., 309.

[57]Ibid.

[58]*Baptist Standard*, October 1, 1914, 3.

[59]*Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York: MacMillan, 1907), xi, quoted in Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *20th-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 61.

[60]Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Rauschenbusch Reader: The Kingdom of God and the Social Gospel*, compiled by Benson Y. Landis (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 22.

[61]Ibid.

[62]*Christianizing*, 458.

[63]Ibid., 460.

[64]Ibid., 459-60.

[65]Quoted in Kenneth L. Woodward, et al., "The Evangelicals," *Newsweek*, October 25, 1976, 76, cited in Joel A. Carpenter, "Is 'Evangelical' a Yankee Word? Relations Between Northern Evangelicals and the Southern Baptist Convention in the Twentieth Century," in *Southern Baptists and American Evangelicals: The Conversation Continues*, edited by David S. Dockery (Nashville: Broadman, 1993), 78.

BOOK REVIEWS

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To God Be the Glory: Diamond Jubilee History of First Baptist Church, Borger. By the Members of the Church. Austin, Texas: Nortex Press, 2001. 169 pp**.**

Written by members of the church family, *To God Be the Glory: Diamond Jubilee History of First Baptist Church, Borger*, is a detailed account of the seventy-year history of a vibrant church. Unlike many church histories that are constructed around individual pastors, *To God Be the Glory* is the history of the members' activities and the church's many ministries.

The book begins with a wonderful account of how the boomtown of Borger came into existence along with the discovery of oil. As many of the members of the church were and are employed by oil companies, a large part of the church's history is intertwined with the oil business. The authors have included detailed notes on the birth of the church, telling pictures, and well-written vignettes of members' activities scattered throughout the text.

This is not a dry book. The authors know how to tell a story. The readers will be entertained by the story of Pastor Bernard visiting local bars to witness and raise money to build the church and by an account of how a visiting evangelist and his wife were involved in a fight after a revival service. Almost every year of

its existence, First Baptist Borger's membership has grown with current worship services numbering well over one thousand. Not only has the church grown in membership, but it has also founded several missions, many of which are now vibrant and growing independent churches. Special attention is also given to mission trips. The church has not only worked locally, statewide, and nationally but has sponsored mission trips to Brazil, Mexico, Hungary, and a number of other countries. The authors have done an excellent job with the appendices which depict people who have been licensed to the ministry, mission trips, and deacons. *To God Be the Glory: Diamond Jubilee History of First Baptist Church, Borger* is a well-written and documented account of a church that has missed few if any opportunities to advance the Kingdom. I highly recommend this book.—*Reviewed by Joe Early, Jr., Assistant Professor of Religion, University of the Cumberlands*

First Baptist Church Bonham: A History. By Joe Campbell, et al. Bonham, Texas: Self published. 2002. 122 pp.

First Baptist Church Bonham: A History is a nice little paper-bound volume published by the church in 2002 to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the founding of the church. A committee led by Joe Campbell collaborated to research and write this volume that covers the history of First Baptist Bonham, beginning with its founding in 1852.

Four primary chapters form the heart of this history. These chapters don't correspond with pastoral tenures, but rather chart the construction of the four main buildings used for worship by the church. This format works well, but the authors do not hold to this model consistently and include two chapters at the end that deal with music ministry and missionary activity. These two chapters seem out of place and unfortunately turn into mere lists of choir members and WMU leaders and deacons. The other appendices included are of primary value only to those with a

connection to the church and include a list of all the pastors of the church and a church directory listing from 1919. A further difficulty arises with the lack of documentation of sources.

The authors chronicle the growth and development of FBC Bonham from its origin in a small log structure which also served as a schoolhouse, to a thriving county-seat church with a modern building and well developed ministries. The authors describe well how FBC Bonham has reached out to its broader community and has always served as a center for community activity as well as church activity. This ministry was clearly evident when the church served as the hub for events during the funeral of Sam Rayburn, who although not a member of the church, had ties to the church and to the community of Bonham as its favorite son.

Texas Baptist historians will note that FBC Bonham had strong connections to some important, early Texas Baptist leaders. B.F. Fuller, who wrote a history of Texas Baptists at the turn of the twentieth century, was a charter member of the church before his move to Paris, Texas. George W. Truett had close ties to the church as well, having spent a considerable time in nearby Whitewright. Truett preached at the dedication of the church's third building in 1921.

This volume has value, however, to those without a direct connection to FBC Bonham. The history of this congregation provides a snapshot of Texas Baptist life from the second generation of Texas Baptist life to the present. FBC Bonham had its share of short pastoral tenures, proving that this is not a recent phenomenon. The church also experienced the shift from pastors who were educated at Southern Seminary in Louisville to pastors educated at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. This church also experienced a wrenching split in the 1950s; unfortunately the authors do not examine the circumstances in any detail. Even painful experiences in church life can provide important data for the larger picture in Baptist life.—*Reviewed by Michael A. Dain, assistant professor of religion, Wayland Baptist University, Lubbock, Texas*

Onalaska First Baptist Church: Our History from 1910-2003. By Don S. Wilkey, Jr. Onalaska, TX: Onalaska First Baptist Church, 2003. 67 pp.

Pastor Don Wilkey, Jr. utilizes his long tenure at Onalaska First Baptist Church to help inform this well-researched history of the church. Located in Polk County in East Texas, Onalaska First Baptist Church was one of the earliest Baptist churches founded in its area. Dr. Wilkey does a superb job of researching the beginnings of this church in spite of the lack of a specific history of the origin of the church. He includes not only the story of the beginnings of Onalaska FBC but also a short history of William Joshua David, retired missionary to Africa, who started not only this church, but also the local Baptist association during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Dr. Wilkey reminds his readers that "some of the decisions they [the church forefathers] made continue to affect our own congregation" (2). With its location in the heart of East Texas, Onalaska has been exposed to a number of the major controversies that have affected Texas Baptists over the past century. This history acknowledges that controversies are not always reflected in the minutes of church business meetings, and so the author digs deeper through state papers and historical documents of the time to fully develop his story. Dr. Wilkey includes the Landmark controversy that was so prominent in this area, the financial struggles of Southern Baptist churches in the 1930s and 40s, and even the split between the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. At the same time, problems common to many small churches are discussed, including the continuing struggle this church had over property and expansion.

Overall, this self-published history of the Onalaska First Baptist Church is an excellent example of an endeavor that every church, small or large, should undertake. Just as Dr. Wilkey mentions in his preface, "It is a reminder that the

decisions we make in this fellowship will affect generations to come" (2).—*Reviewed by Lisa Marie Seeley, adjunct professor of history, Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, Texas*

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Minutes
2003 Annual Meeting
November 10, 2003

The Texas Baptist Historical Society met Monday, November 10 at 10:00 am at the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Lubbock, Texas, with 50 people present.

Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, presented the annual membership and financial report. For 2003 the society had a membership of 112. During the year, the Society received income from journal sales and dues totaling $7,300.00 with expenditures of $12,163.56. On November 10, the checking account balance was $21, 423.76.

The Society members endorsed the recommendations of the Nominating Committee and elected the following officers for 2003-2004: Carol Holcomb, Belton, President; Van Christian, Comanche, Vice-President; and Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, Secretary-Treasurer.

Lefever presented the following budget for 2003-2004:

INCOME

Historical Committee, BGCT	$5,800.00
Membership Dues & Journal Sales	2,000.00
Luncheon	300.00
Transfer from reserves	-0-
Total Income	$9,100.00

EXPENSES

Journal Printing	$4,500.00
Journal Postage	400.00
Journal Labor	2,000.00
Journal Supplies	300.00
Newsletter Printing	100.00
Newsletter Postage	.00
Awards	600.00
Speaker's Honoraria	600.00
Miscellaneous Supplies	50.00
Luncheon	300.00
Total Expenses	$9,150.00

Van Christian presented the 2003 Church History Writing awards to the following:

Pam Benson for *To God be the Glory: 100 Years, FBC Sabinal*

J. A. Reynolds for *The Sesquicentennial History of First Baptist Church, Belton, Texas, 1853-2003*

Lefever announced the program for the Spring Meeting with the Texas State Historical Association, Austin, March 4, 2004: "Lone Star Visions of Church, State and Society, 1912-1950: Two Texas Perspectives."

Program: Ken Camp, Dallas, presented an overview of the history of Texas Baptist Men. Meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

Respectfully submitted,
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Secretary-Treasurer
Texas Baptist Historical Society

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HOW DO BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS HANDLE DOCTRINAL DIVERSITY

According to Ernest Fitzgerald, in *God Writes Straight with Crooked Lines*,[1] a radio station in a Southern city aired a series of programs originally broadcast during pre-television days. The programs included such radio classics as *The Great Gildersleeve*, *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Sam Spade*, and *The Lone Ranger*.

The reaction in the city was interesting: a lot of television screens were blank as people turned on their radios. Young and old alike, apparently, found the radio programs interesting. Some would say that more recently, a kind of nostalgia has swept the land in other forms: Mickey Mouse watches, railroad pocket watches, bibbed overalls, Dick Tracy's phenomenal return, *ad infinitum*.

Many specialists in human behavior believe this phenomenon reflects dissatisfaction with contemporary lifestyles. There seems to be a deliberate effort to escape to the "good old days." The trouble with this effort is that no one seems able to identify just when the good old days were! Most people do not know the facts of the difficulty of life in the past—if they did, "the good old days" would not seem so attractive.

Today's dilemma is simply stated: how can we keep our balance in a world of such incredible change? Or, to clarify the frustration of many churchmen today, how can I maintain a balance in my role today in church government, or Baptist polity, in the midst of doctrinal diversity? How can there be

in this modern age a sense of independence in my practice of priesthood of the believer and understanding of the autonomy of the local church, yet have interdependence with my brothers and sisters of other associational church fellowships?

Very simply, Baptist polity is a study, according to James Sullivan in his historic book *Rope of Sand with Strength of Steel*, of "how Baptists do things as denomination and why."[2] In a focus on Baptist polity, one can observe how churches function and their reasons for being, "as well as the rationale behind their acts and their doctrinal positions."[3]

Within a denomination, *church polity* springs from innumerable statements of Baptist thought on which most agree to a general pattern of principal points (with some minor disagreements). What are these factors that make up this general pattern?

1. Baptist confessions or declarations of faith are voluntary expressions of individuals or independent bodies, rather than official creeds or dogmas.
2. There is no general council, synod, or other superior authority to require uniformity.
3. The dispersal, in time and place, of Baptist groups in different environments contributes to varieties of emphasis within a general pattern.[4]

Thus, God saves people individually—then "He 'groups' the redeemed churches"—which can be seen in the life of an association, as well as conventions—"to save the world."[5]

What is a church? Not a sanctuary, an educational building, a steeple or pews, but rather a body of baptized believers. A church is people—to help carry out the Great Commission. Therefore, to address the role of churches as they relate to associational doctrinal diversity is to always be reminded of the freedom of each church and the individual freedom represented in the historic belief called the priesthood of the believer.

Also inherent in any discussion of the association is the presupposition that an association is made up of small, homogeneous groups of churches that are easily accessible to one another geographically and find fellowship easy and good, according to Allen Graves.[6] J. C. Bradley, in his own inimitable manner, gives this comprehensive definition of a Baptist association: "A Baptist association is a self-governing fellowship of autonomous churches sharing a common faith and active on mission in their setting."[7] E. C. Watson gives this description of an association: "The program of the (or a) Baptist Association is the means by which the efforts of all the Baptist churches in a local geographical area are concentrated and directed so as to provide a strong and balanced church ministry to all the people living in that area."[8]

Associations have unique components as noted in the following:[9]

1. They are based on a common doctrinal belief approved by the body at the time the association is established.
2. Because of its history and the close proximity of churches, the association is the only unit in Baptist life other than the church with any responsibility akin to disciplinary action. It can receive churches or withdraw fellowship if the churches' practices or beliefs are contrary to adopted doctrines. Though most associational leadership would agree to this, words written by Edward Hiscox, 1893, need to be provided in his study on doctrinal diversity:

> Because an Association is not a representative body, and because church cannot be represented by any other organization, and because a Church cannot, even if it would alienate or transfer its powers and responsibilities to any man, or body of men, therefore an Association cannot legislate for the churches, exercise any authority over them, or bind them in any way by its own action.[10]

However, in theory—if not always in practice—churches in associations are to commit themselves to both the missionary concept as well as to the concept of cooperation.[11] Such a goal of cooperation—expressed in the first association in Philadelphia in 1707—became more apparent in 1750-1755 in the Charleston Association in their cooperative effort in missions and evangelism.

Occasionally, in years past, churches became competitive or argumentative. Associational leadership conferred with these churches to help them to resolve their differences. If these efforts failed, the association at times took disciplinary action against a church or churches. However, many students of Baptist polity believe the association should not intervene in the internal matters of a church. Normally, an association only withdraws fellowship on the grounds of unchristian conduct—which sometimes can be a most subjective accusation—and it can later work for reinstatement.[12] Yet, withdrawal of fellowship has often been based on doctrinal differences—or diversity!

Churchmen need to be informed about the practice of withdrawal. More detailed occurrences will be chronicled later. Withdrawal from churches is still uncommon among associations. However, such a practice was called to our attention in the fall of 1987 when Baptist associations in Missouri, Tennessee, and Oklahoma withdrew fellowship from churches "over issues of the role of women in the church, divorce and speaking in tongues."[13]

The intensity of the Green County Association, Missouri, was reflected in their dismissing Rolling Hills Baptist Church, Springfield—with a vote of 90 percent of the messengers—for what the association charged was "deviation from the association's 'historic interpretation of scripture' in reference to *glossolalia*, or speaking in tongues."[14]

As noted above, an association normally does not intervene in internal matters of churches, but there are indications that

this practice is changing. According to the *Standard's* same report, Muskogee Association in Oklahoma voted 196-48 to withdraw fellowship from "Brushy Mountain Church when it changed its bylaws to exclude any church that calls or ordains as pastor or deacon a man or woman who has been divorced and remarried 'until such time the doctrinal error is corrected by either resignation or dismissal.'"[15]

In Memphis, Tennessee, as noted in the same Baptist Standard report, a church which called a woman as a pastor lost fellowship because it had done so. The Prescott Memorial Church "was dropped by [a] vote of about 75 percent of the 360 messengers attending the meeting."[16] The association's credentials committee reported the calling of a woman pastor was "an irregularity that may threaten fellowship of the association."[17]

Apparently, as noted in these accounts, associations are in transition as to how far they go in entering the matters of local churches. This transition was further seen in a West Texas church, some years ago, regarding the practice of alien immersion.[18] Also, on October 19, 1987, the executive board of an association voted to withdraw from a Texas church—to the surprise of the congregation and pastor—because the board found the church to be "heterodox in the faith and disorderly in practice."[19] This church, the largest in the association and leader in baptisms, had been notified earlier of "doctrinal differences" and had been placed on a type of "watchcare" until such differences could be resolved. Apparently, they were not, in that the charges alleged that the church practiced beliefs not "consistent in Southern Baptist interpretation of scripture."[20]

Practices of withdrawal from fellowship are not common. Historically, withdrawal from fellowship has always been an option—or as some say, in the "Baptist tradition"—but associational executive boards, according to some observers, must be sensitive not to step over the thin line of the autonomy of the local church nor infringe on the concept of the priesthood of believers. Apparently, most associations

now limit such steps of withdrawal only to churches that "interfere with or cause dramatic disharmony" among the churches of an association. This disharmony may or may not be related to doctrinal diversity. However, most recently this has been the case.

The association is an integral part of the life of Southern Baptists—a barometer of the diversity of churches. James Sullivan expresses this diversity as he describes the Southern Baptist Convention as not only being large in numbers, but also made up of people who are different.[21] Such differences are seen in personal appearance, modes of worship, their location, and methods of work. Some churches are old, others new. As to theology, most Southern Baptists are considered quite conservative by the rest of theological world. Some prefer informality in worship—others, high church liturgy. In Waco Association, diversity is the key. On any given Sunday, one church may have twelve in Sunday school attendance and one mile away, another congregation is reaching more than two thousand in attendance. Some churches use choir robes; others use none. Pipe organs may reverberate within Gothic architecture in one church while the decibels may reach an all-time high in a sister congregation with an outstanding guitarist. One church may have a robed clergy providing a litany in worship—with the assistance of women who have been ordained as deacons—whereas another congregation may not use a printed order of worship at all!

The road through diversity also includes some doctrinal differences and diverse views of our Baptist doctrines. How do associations handle doctrinal diversity?

An examination of the more salient doctrinal controversies provides the student with a better understanding of how churches deal with this diversity. These, on which we will now focus our attention, continue to be listed by directors of missions and other denominational leaders as the controversies that continue to plague the local churches and associations the most.[22] Minimal background material is actually required for an examination of

the charismatic discussion and matters relating to the ordination of women. However, more historical information is needed and thus provided for the examination of alien immersion.

Charismatic Tendencies and Doctrinal Diversity

Joe Mosley, in his 1980 book *The Battle among Baptists*, considers the role of Dallas Baptist Association as it dealt with two churches which "espoused the Charismatic position."[23] The position of both churches was contested. The Associational Credentials Committee worked diligently to meet with both churches to inform them of the Executive Board's intentions. According to Dr. Mosley, "every effort had been made to lead the churches back to the historic Baptist interpretation of the scriptures."[24] Such efforts failed. The churches continued their "non-Baptistic practices and the 1975 annual meeting brought a recommendation from the Credentials Committee for the association to withdraw fellowship from the two bodies," according to Mosley.[25]

Mosley, the parliamentarian at these meetings, stated that much debate took place. There were basically two groups who opposed withdrawing fellowship: first, those who agreed with the doctrine of the two charismatic churches (their views had been printed and circulated for all to read); and second, an even larger group who attacked any withdrawal from fellowship. Why? Actually, this latter segment believed

> that withdrawing fellowship from a congregation because of their doctrinal convictions would be a violation of the autonomous privilege of the local church. In effect, they were accusing the Credentials Committee of "tampering" with the local church's privilege of believing and practicing their faith as they pleased. This, they argued, was a Baptist polity.[26]

According to Mosley's summary of this statement, these opponents of withdrawing fellowship were saying that a church can believe and practice anything and still be Baptist, because it is autonomous.[27]

To be more concise, "How free is a local Southern Baptist Church with respect to its belief?"[28] The actual warning to these churches, noted earlier, took place when the Associational Credentials Committee brought its recommendation to the Dallas Baptist Association, October 17, 1974.

> In view of the fact that we…have been…blessed of God…the Association…reaffirms its confidence in the biblical position and emphasis historically held by the Southern Baptist Churches of our Association; and that we express our strong opposition to any movement of any of our churches or staff members who depart from these biblical positions, leading to doctrinal and practical extremes in any direction; and that we deplore the practice of those who express or imply an attitude of spiritual superiority with their misrepresentation of certain so-called Charismatic gifts, such as faith healing, glossolalia and exorcism, thus disrupting the fellowship of our churches. We further request that churches holding such views reconsider their practices. If they cannot work in harmony with our historic views, we strongly urge that they voluntarily withdraw from our Association….[29]

The churches in question were the Beverly Hills Baptist Church and the Shadygrove Baptist Church.

One year later, October 16, 1975, the Association Credentials Committee, after having studied the problems precipitated by the charismatic movement, brought a "stronger recommendation" than the previous year. C. E. Colton, pastor of Royal Haven Baptist Church, Dallas, read the following statement:

> WHEREAS the constitution of the Dallas Baptist Association states, "The churches of the Association shall be in doctrinal harmony with qualifications and fitness of its membership…. This right shall be recognized as inherent and indispensable;" and whereas certain churches (of our Association)…have openly practiced the present day phenomena of glossolalia and…exercises which mark a radical departure from what Southern Baptists have traditionally and historically believed are valid biblical gifts and doctrines, thus indicating that they are in doctrinal error and

> are no longer in harmony with our historic Baptist…practices and doctrines…. BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the messengers from these churches be not seated…and that they be no longer considered as cooperative bodies of our Association.

The crowd was larger—nearly one thousand gathered in the Bethany Baptist Church—compared with four hundred persons who adopted the warning the year before. It had been twenty years since a church had been removed from the Dallas Association. As the people "filled the aisles," they listened intently as Colton asked to speak to the committee's motion. In essence he reflected a concern over the violation of autonomy, by saying "…the action today is not designed…to presume to exercise authority over anybody's church… we believe in the autonomy of the local church…." Yet, according to Colton, the "Dallas Baptist Association is also an autonomous body….It has the right to determine with whom it will have fellowship."[31]

Dr. Colton, in his impassioned plea, indicated that "we love these people and their pastors, but I cannot . . . see how so many people insist that in order to love each other we must all be under the same ecclesiastical shelter. We have," affirmed Colton, "a different interpretation of the teaching of the scripture."[32]

Quickly, a counter measure to the recommendation was provided by Douglas Watterson, pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas. Before presenting this motion, Watterson stated that the actions taken at this meeting could be "precedent-setting for what shall happen in a great many associations in the Southern Baptist Convention."[33] Then Watterson stated: "The real question we face today is not whether we interfere with the autonomy of a local church, but whether, indeed, we withdraw fellowship from churches on bases other than they violated the New Testament."[34]

Watterson alluded to a statement in the recommendation, referring to the phrase "… a differing interpretation of the teaching of the scripture."[35] Watterson, defending his views,

reflected: "…we acknowledge the gifts of tongues and of healing are validated by the New Testament as legitimate gifts of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the exercising of the gifts, which have no sure biblical authority for rejection, does not constitute valid cause for exclusion from fellowship by Baptist bodies who recognize the New Testament as the only rule for faith and practice."[36]

After much debate, Moderator Bill Weber, pastor of Northway, Dallas, presided over the vote. The recommendation "not to seat the messengers of the churches in question passed by a margin of 604 to 401."[37] The result of this vote by duly elected messengers was that Beverly Hills and Shadygrove Baptist churches were separated from "functional participation and identification in the Dallas Baptist Association."[38]

The effects of this unprecedented action by Dallas Association were felt around the state. This meant that the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1975 and 1976 would also be dealing with this unusual occurrence.

During the 1975 Baptist General Convention of Texas meeting in Dallas much anticipation had mounted regarding the effect that the action of the Dallas Association would have during the seating of messengers. Though no one contested the seating of the messengers from the two churches from which the Dallas Association had withdrawn, several areas of debate were apparent. Much discussion relating to the autonomy of each church and association ensued.[39]

Later, during the 1976 annual session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in San Antonio, under the presidential direction of James Harris, pastor of University Baptist Church, Forth Worth, the seating of the two Dallas charismatic churches was challenged.[40] The Convention Credentials Committee met with the person issuing the challenge. Yet, after the meeting with the person and even some debate, Presnall Wood, chairman of the Credentials Committee, indicated that it denied the challenge to the seating of the two churches in question. However, the Convention body

almost unanimously rejected the Credentials Committee's recommendation—which permitted the challenge to stand. The two churches were not seated at this Convention—an historic first.[41]

Some interpret the action of both entities, the Dallas Association and the Baptist General Convention of Texas, as a *profound* limitation to the autonomy of the local church. Southern Baptists may agree to disagree. A summation of these steps is provided by Mosley:

> Southern Baptists may agree to disagree. This adage is only applicable, however, when it results in a synthesis of decision and the body reaches a point of agreement upon which it can move forward. It is within the moving forward that the agreeing to disagree has practical validity. Otherwise, it means only the people can continuously argue and never settle any matters.
>
> In a broad, objective view of the action taken by these Baptist bodies, one sees autonomy in its purest form. Had the Southern Baptists of Texas operated under an ecclesiastical governing body, there would not have been two years of delay and prolific debate. That hypothetical ecclesiastical body would have handed down some kind of decision. The issue would have been settled long before it was.
>
> On the other hand, autonomy, as Southern Baptists have historically exercised it, becomes a beautiful distinctive banner. It results in one of the clearest forms of congregational democracy.[42]

Alien Immersion and Doctrinal Diversity

Alien immersion became the subject of controversy in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Though there are different definitions of alien immersion, one that is concise is noted by W. W. Barnes: "A baptism, regularly performed in the name of the Trinity, on confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, by an administrator who belongs to a different ecclesiastical fellowship or church order; [the administrator] is an alien."[43]

Charles M. O'Neal, after a thorough study of the California Baptist Convention as it deals with alien immersion, defined such as meaning "non-Baptist immersion." He further declared that a distinction in some areas is made between alien immersion and alien baptism: "Alien immersion includes only those baptisms by immersion."[44] Alien baptism includes baptism considered alien whatever the mode has been. The term "open membership" refers to churches that receive all believers whatever the mode, the method or the meaning of their baptism. Some would require no baptism at all. In this study, however, the terms alien immersion and alien baptism may often be used interchangeably.

J. R. Graves and his views on baptism, particularly alien immersion as reflected in Landmarkism, provide fertile soil for controversies in associations and state conventions today. In a July 13, 1964, interview with R. G. Lee, former pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, Lee indicated that J. R. Graves made many contributions to Southern Baptists. According to Lee, "J. R. Graves was one of the greatest Southern Baptists that Southern Baptists have ever had."[45] Eloquently, Lee further reflected, "Do not let anyone say J. R. Graves was just an old 'Landmark.'"[46] (In all fairness, this opinion of Graves is not universal.) Lee also spoke of Graves' ability to preach, "sometimes three hours and fifteen minutes. I wish I could preach like that," said Lee.[47]

In light of Lee's affirmation, James Leo Garrett, formerly of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and recently retired from the faculty of Southwestern Seminary, has stated, "The most important single variant in the doctrine and practice of Baptists in the United States, and one that affects Southern Baptists in particular, comes with Landmarkism."[48]

Though some consider Landmarkism as a deviation from normative Baptist thought, Charles O'Neal declares that it has made deep penetration into Southern Baptist views. The problem, which dramatically affects associations, according to

O'Neal, is further complicated because many who reject much of Landmark doctrine hold to similar views on the ordinances.[49] Thus, again this viewpoint stems back to Graves' views on alien immersion.

"Landmark" or "Landmarkism" refers to those who advocated the restoration of the "pristine purity of the early church by keeping a faithful membership and ministry,"[50] according to Robert Torbert. Graves, as early as 1846, beginning as co-editor of *The Tennessee Baptist* with R. C. B. Howell, argued that the practices of the early church should be restored, many of which he believed were being neglected by Baptists of his day. The term became more prevalent upon Graves' suggestion to J. M. Pendleton to write *An Old Landmark Reset*[51] in which Pendleton explained that a new practice was not being introduced, but rather an old practice was being revived. For Graves, baptism became a pivotal point as a hub, from which sprang forth, like spokes in a wheel, other areas of belief.

To understand the impact of these views in associations today is to give close attention to Graves' thought. He immersed his belief in a form of successionism. For him, church succession was almost inseparable from baptismal succession. He followed a traditional approach to church succession by tracing the current local church back to the Jerusalem church, as paralleled with baptismal succession in which one traces his personal baptism back to the Jerusalem church to make it "valid."

Graves, in many of his editorials in *The Tennessee Baptist*, several of which were signed by his pseudonym "Fidus," expressed deepest disagreement to the answer given by W.J. Waller, editor of the *Western Baptist Review*, to a question by R. B. Burleson. The question was: "Is the immersion of a person in water into the name of the Trinity upon a credible profession of faith in Christ, by a pedobaptist minister who has not been immersed, a valid baptism?"[52] Graves stated that such a question was precipitated by the fact that some ministers were advocating both openly and privately the receiving of all "immersed" pedobaptists who presented themselves to

the churches without rebaptizing them. This caused quite a controversy in the Muscle Shoals Association in Alabama, which resulted in this query to Waller by Burleson. A group in the association appointed a committee for and against such a question. The committees were to report their findings and convictions in *The Tennessee Baptist*. The negative side, stated Graves, did write a few articles, but the others wrote none except to Waller. They called Waller "down upon" the other brethren and said that he was most "discourteous" and "unchristian" in his "language."[53]

The position and answer to the query given by Waller should be noted in order to better understand Graves' reactions. Waller suggested that those who could furnish "clear and indubitable evidence of the validity of their baptism, according to the terms of the affirmative of this question, vote non-fellowship for those churches and ministers who believe it right to receive a member who has been immersed on profession of faith by a Pedobaptist minister; let all the rest keep silence."[54] In other words, as W. W. Barnes stated it, Waller believed that "the necessity of the historical succession of 'valid' baptism and the impossibility of tracing it render baptism 'useless and nugatory [worthless]!'"[55]

The question arises again today as to how associations, and even state conventions, continue to deal with this alien immersion controversy. The North Carolina Convention dealt with this issue in 1972. In that state a special committee was to "plead with churches differing…and task that they choose the course and follow the practice followed by [the] other 99% of North Carolina Baptists in insisting on believer's baptism by immersion in water as a prerequisite to church membership."[56] Among the twenty churches that accepted alien immersion only twelve actually admitted this course of action. Of these was the Nashville Baptist Church which reflected the following, as part of its "Membership Policy":

> People are accepted by transfer of letter from other Christian churches provided they accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord

> and Savior. They are instructed in our Baptist position and the meaning of our baptism. They are offered this baptism if it will be meaningful to them as a symbolic experience. However, those who feel that their baptism to them was a valid experience and that to submit to any further ceremony in this regard would be to refute their former religious experience as Christians are accepted into membership on the basis of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the validity of their baptismal experience to them.[57]

In the same state, The First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro had a similar policy for membership, worded in this manner regarding "reception" into church membership: "By transfer of letter from another Christian church giving evidence of immersion or of another mode, if that baptism is meaningful to the candidate and was 'believer's baptism.'"[58] The above, though representing only a part of the church's policy, reflects a conviction contrary to that of J. R. Graves. The church accepted what many term "alien immersion" on the basis of the candidate's testimony of a previous baptism, by immersion or another mode, in a different denomination—terming such as "believer's baptism."

In an unpublished paper Bob Polk reflects upon the process through which the Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky—whose pastor was Wayne Dehoney, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention—went as the church dealt with the problem of alien immersion. Dehoney advised that the church appoint a committee to deal with the issue.

The committee "found in the New Testament no prescription regarding the validity of baptism as depending on church or polity and saw in the New Testament no other mode than immersion and no other requirement than that of a confessing believer." Further, "They discovered in the New Testament no other purpose than witness to salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the believer's symbolic death to the old life of sin, its burial through Divine forgiveness, and the rising to a newness of life and found from church history that many of the most damaging errors of an

apostate church grew out of the false doctrine of sacramental salvation—the teaching that salvation is mediated through and sustained by the 'sacraments' of baptism and the eucharist." Finally, the committee "examined the church's original Articles of Faith, adopted in 1849 when the church was constituted, defining baptism as 'immersion of a believer in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,' with no mention of any other prerequisite." Consequently, the committee "inquired and learned that churches in their association and state and Southern Baptist Convention received members on statement of faith—salvation and previous immersion—baptism, and that their church had honored letters of dismissal from these churches without question." The committee "reaffirmed the basic Baptist principle of congregational autonomy—the right of the individual local church to determine terms of admission of its membership." Ultimately, the committee recommended "that the persons requesting membership be received on the basis of their Christian conversion experience and previous baptism by immersion." The motion passed by an overwhelming majority.[59]

Regarding associations, one notes how the Lubbock Association, Texas, dealt with this delicate issue. This association in its October 1983 annual meeting "rejected a change in its constitution that would have deleted a definition of a 'regular' Baptist church as one whose membership is composed wholly of individuals baptized into a church of like faith and order."[60] Actually, the change, recommended by the association's Constitution Committee, failed to carry, with "54 percent of 550 messengers voting against it."[61] A constitutional change required a two-thirds majority to pass.

The revisions would have required messengers to be "members of the church by which they were elected. Any church believed not to be abiding by Article 1 Section 2 of this constitution must be dealt with at the time of the seating of messengers at the annual meeting. Specific reason must be given why that church is believed to be out of harmony with the

spirit of Article 1 Section 2."[62] Basically, Article 1 Section 2 of the constitution affirmed the authority of the local church but granted the association "the right to deny seating to messengers from any church 'unorthodox in faith, unchristian in character of leadership, or non cooperative in practice.'"[63]

At that time Director of Missions Doyle Holmes said that the suggested change was precipitated at the previous year's executive board meeting by a challenge to a practice of Trinity Baptist Church, Lubbock. According to Holmes, Trinity took a stand that it would not baptize a person from another denomination under "certain circumstances."[64] Holmes further declared that "Alien immersion has been an issue here for 17 or 18 years."[65] In 1965 when the definition of a "regular" Baptist church was added to the constitution (the word "regular," according to Article III Section 2, indicates "a church whose membership is made up wholly of individuals who have been baptized into a Baptist church of like faith and order"),[66] Second Baptist Church, Lubbock, withdrew from the association.[67] Trinity Church did not send messengers to the annual association meeting in 1982 or 1983, according to Holmes. Later, in a personal letter from Dr. Hardy Clemons, pastor, Second Church, Lubbock, to Presnall H. Wood, editor of the *Baptist Standard*, other information was brought to light. Clemons contended that his congregation had neither withdrawn from Lubbock Association nor had fellowship been withdrawn. He did state that the situation had "remained undefined" despite the fact that Second Baptist continued to submit its annual letter to the association as well as cooperate also, "the B.G.C.T., the S.B.C. and…the world."[68] Director of Missions Holmes confirmed that the frustration of this event in the Lubbock Association continued for years.

However, with a similar reference to "regular" Baptists, Director of Missions Robert E. Smith, Rio Grande Valley Baptist Association, Texas, in November 1982, interpreted the language of that association's constitution as it relates to *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Smith referred to the word "regular"

Baptist church much like the Lubbock Association. Quoting from his association's document he said, "The word 'regular' shall be construed to mean a church whose membership is made up wholly of individuals who have been scripturally baptized into a Baptist church of like faith and order."[69]

Smith was answering the comments of some who apparently indicated there was a difference in the wording regarding baptism in *The Baptist Faith and Message* and his association's constitution. He took the wording in Article VI of *The Baptist Faith and Message*—that is, that "The New Testament church…is a local body of baptized believers," and that the church is an "autonomous body," and argued that there is no difference in the manner both groups refer to the local Baptist church. Then he concluded, by referring to one of those who served on a study committee for the preparation of *The Baptist Faith and Message*, by saying:[70]

> If I had ever had a question as to whether or not our association's constitution was not in accord with the main stream of Southern Baptists, this conversation convinced me that the association is right. Anyone who favors "alien" immersion – that is that baptism is not a church ordinance—does not accept the language and intent of The Baptist Faith and Message. This document written by some of our great leaders, voted by our Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and reaffirmed in 1981 is still a sufficient guideline for our association. We may have some coming on with a "new enlightment" but I am perfectly satisfied with THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE and our association's Constitution and By-Laws, Article III. Membership.[71]

Earlier in 1967, the May 17 *Baptist Standard* recorded the views of Wayne Ward, theology professor at Southern Seminary. This distinguished professor reflected on what he called the "strife" splitting some associations and churches over alien immersion. Ward asked the most important question: where is authority for baptism located?[72]

According to Ward, associations and conventions had presumed to judge local churches and tell them what they should

do about receiving members. Ward stated: "A convention or association is not a church." Further he declared: "It does not baptize; it does not ordain; it does not have the right of discipline over the churches."[73] He noted that associations do not have the right to "get at" local churches and control their actions. Baptists have never really agreed on all matters of receiving members or observing the Lord's Supper, noted Ward. Baptists have let the local church, under the direct lordship of Christ, determine the fitness of its members in practice of the ordinances. He insisted in the 1967 article that associations and conventions had tried to "pre-empt" this God-given authority in the local church and dictate doctrine to local congregations, thus resembling the "old Catholic church." Ward concluded by stating:

> Even if some Baptist congregations violate New Testament teaching of baptism, The Lord's Supper, or something else, the best way to deal with it is in the fellowship of Christian love and understanding.
>
> Associations and conventions should stick to coordinating the efforts of the churches in missions and education and leave to the churches the responsibilities of baptizing converts, observing the Lord's Supper, and disciplining the members. The lordship of Christ is exercised directly in the church—the gathered community of believers—and it is not handed down by promulgation from his convention.[74]

Thus Ward apparently reflected the complexities and tension between the relationship of associations and conventions with churches, and the decision-making authority each church has regarding the ordinances.

The Ordination of Women and Doctrinal Diversity

A classic picture of controversy regarding the ordination of women can be traced back to the Executive Board Meeting of the Amarillo Baptist Association, Texas, December 5,

1983, when Terry Hill, pastor of South Lawn Baptist Church, presented an unexpected resolution concerning this subject. Stating that "recent trends in the practice of ordination to the gospel ministry and to the office of deacon within Southern Baptist circles and particularly among Southern Baptist [sic] within our state of Texas have included the ordination of women," the resolution went on to say that the Executive Board of ABA opposed the ordination of women, calling it an "errant practice…contrary to the teachings of the Bible" and denying seating of messengers from churches that either practiced "the ordination of women… or recognize[ed] the ordination of a woman to its deacon body or church staff."[75]

However, at the August 20, 1984, semi-annual meeting of the Amarillo Association, this resolution was stricken from the record by a vote of 18-11.[76] Then, at the annual meeting of the Amarillo Association on October 22, 1984, a resolution opposing the ordination of women was presented by Terry Hill. Hill's resolution charged that "some Southern Baptist Agencies and Churches seem to have allowed their Christian doctrine and practice to be controlled by modern cultural, sociological, and ecclesiastical trends or by emotional factors." The resolution concluded with the affirmation that "the Biblical position" was that churches ordain "qualified men only."[77] A motion was made suspending the resolution indefinitely and this carried! Therefore, according to Director of Missions Roy Kornegay, the resolution was not discussed.[78]

The saga continued—for at the October 16, 1989, Annual Meeting, a motion was made and approved that a "called" meeting of the Executive Board be planned for the purpose of discussing matters "pertaining to licensing and ordination of women."[79] During that called meeting a straw vote was taken: "Do you personally believe in the licensing and ordination of women?"[80] The results of the vote were: ten, yes; eighty-five, no. Later a motion was made during discussion to deny seats to churches at the annual meeting or withdraw fellowship from churches licensing or ordaining women. The motion failed thirty-

five to fifty-three. Shortly after this, seven churches withdrew financial support and participation in associational activity until some positive action was taken on the above motion.

A special meeting was called by Kornegay on December 11, 1989. He later said that he invited persons from both extremes of this issue—as well as respected persons who stood on "middle ground."[81] The purpose: to draw up a motion with which both extremes could agree—yet realistically understanding neither side would find total satisfaction.

Thus, on January 29, 1990, the Executive Board adopted a compromise statement by a margin of eighty-five to ten. The statement was the historic agreement. The Board agreed that a majority of its members believed "the practice of licensing or ordaining of women" to be "unscriptural." It added that they agreed that such a practice could lead to the Amarillo association's withdrawal of fellowship from churches taking action regarded as "unorthodox in faith" and recommended that no church "follow this practice." At the same time, the Board also affirmed "the autonomy of the local church" and insisted that the cooperation of an association's churches was strictly "voluntary."[82] Kornegay later indicated that "healing is still taking place but the issue is no longer a test of fellowship or even discussed."[83]

This concern over healing, as reflected by Kornegay, apparently was shared by others, as noted in the 1983 issue of *Baptist Press*. In a discussion of the controversy over ordaining woman as deacons, Leon McBeth, professor of church history at Southwestern Seminary, stated: "Baptists have not always been this uptight about the church roles of women."[84] Further McBeth declared, "Minutes, diaries and literature show women have historically exercised leadership roles in the church." McBeth affirmed that women "have testified, exhorted, led prayer meetings and preached…" as well as served as "deaconesses and elderesses."[85] (Of course, this conflict about ordaining women was apparent to many historians when the Southern Baptist Convention was organized in 1845.)

The conflict had also emerged in a dramatic way in other associational meetings in 1983. The Capital Baptist Association declined to seat messengers from First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, which had "ordained three women as deacons."[86] Concurrently, Redwood Empire Baptist Association in Marin County, California, rejected messengers from a church with two women deacons and from two other churches which had ordained women to the gospel ministry. More specifically, seven messengers from the Tiburon Boulevard Church in Tiburon, ten from First Baptist, Sonoma, and one from Redwood Church, Napa, were refused seating as a result of a disagreement over this subject. Bill Ryan, associational missionary, stated the vote to be eighty-four to fifty-four not to seat the messengers from the three churches. Ryan added that the motion contained wording which put the three churches in a special watch care status for a one-year probationary period at which time they would be "restored to the fellowship if they ceased their non-biblical practice."[87] The Tiburon Boulevard Church, attended by many from Golden Gate Seminary, had two women deacons, including one serving as chairperson. The Napa church listed an ordained husband and wife as associate pastor, and the Sonoma church ordained a husband and wife who later went to North Dakota as Home Mission Board planters, according to the 1983 *Baptist Standard* report.[88]

It is obvious that whether one agrees or disagrees regarding the ordination of women—in the gospel ministry, or as deacons—most churches in the Southern Baptist Convention have taken such steps with much prayer, religious education, and caution. For such actions have had a bearing on sister churches of an association—negatively and positively.

Conclusion

The principle of voluntarism is seen in Southern Baptists' emphasis in the experience of the individual believer in becoming

a Christian. Freedom is precious to Southern Baptists. Most Baptists have contended that no organization, or person, should exert any authority or power over another Baptist! Historically, Baptists have lived and died to preserve this principle of choice. Thus, the question comes, how far can churches exert their freedom and latitude in doctrinal diversity and not go beyond the norm of doctrinal beliefs practiced by sister congregations?

In seeking answers as to how associations handle doctrinal diversity, several steps are most clear. For instance, history demonstrates that the society system of cooperation utilized by some Baptists in the nineteenth century did not answer the question of doctrinal diversity and conflict effectively. In the same general period, other denominations such Presbyterians and Methodists also experienced divisions. Yet, while the societies failed in resolving these dilemmas and the denominational structures of Presbyterians and Methodists struggled with division, the "associations were, perhaps, never so severely tested as during this era of conflict. They measured up to the challenge."[89]

In the light of the strength of the association, a philosophy—which found its beginning in England in the search for religious liberty—which has flourished on American shores, is this: Christians could work together as well as refuse to do things together and still be free![90] Basically, these advocates believed that churches could work together without sacrificing their autonomy.

Diversity is a key word in Southern Baptist life, particularly in associational work. It would be truly a tragedy if the very ingredient that has given life and vitality to this great denomination proves to be a death-knell for missions and evangelistic growth. Apparently some today cannot accept philosophical diversity in methodology—all unrelated to any basic doctrinal differences. Such inability to practice flexibility can lead to political power struggles, petty verbal attacks, and extremism, which leads only to more polarization in the practice of denominational diversity. Referring to the spirit of "voluntariness," James Sullivan stated:

"If we all wanted all Baptists alike, we would launch an aggressive program of indoctrination! We would formulate a few catechisms and teach every Southern Baptist to memorize them. We would do the same with certain doctrinal statements and organizational methods."[91] Instead, reflected the outstanding Christian statesman: "…we have taken the route of religious education. Through education we offer concepts that are widely accepted and believed or stated in the Scriptures…that way…people…make applications to their own lives."[92] We realize, however, there must be common doctrinal beliefs to give this theological stability to churches within the association, while concurring with the spirit of "voluntariness" and diversity in methodology and many other ways.

In a 1983 editorial in *The Baptist Messenger* of Oklahoma, Richard T. McCartney wrestled with this dilemma. He observed:

> If the association is to be made up of member churches and the state convention constituted of member associations, all kinds of problems could ensue. The annual meetings of both would become delegate assemblies rather than democratic, autonomous bodies. Churches would instruct their delegates how to vote and the democratic debate of the annual meeting would be futile.
>
> Every autonomous Baptist body has the right to define its own constituency, but we must be careful not to encroach on the authority of one body in attempting to further the ends of another.[93]

Paul Stripling
Baylor University
Waco, Texas

NOTES

[1]Ernest A. Fitzgerald, *God Writes* Straight *with Crooked Lines* (New:York:Atheneum, 1981), 11-15.

[2]James L. Sullivan, *Rope of Sand with Strength of Steel* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1974), 13.

[3]Ibid., 12-13.

[4]L. R. Elliott, "Baptist Church Polity," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1978), 9-19.

[5]Sullivan, 26.

[6]See Allen Graves, *Principles of Administration for a Baptist Association* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1978), 9-19.

[7]J. C. Bradley, *A Baptist Association: Churches on Mission Together* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1984), 15.

[8]E. C. Watson, *Superintendent of Missions for an Association* (Atlanta, GA.: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1969), 5, quoting H.S. Sauls, "Associational Missions," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), 1:88. See Bradley, 15-24, for further discussion about a definition of an association.

[9]Sullivan, 69-72.

[10]Edward Hiscox, *The New Directory for Baptist Churches* (Philadelphia: Duson Press, 1957), 335.

[11]Sullivan, 70.

[12]Ibid., 71.

[13]"Three Associations Approve Ousters," *Baptist Standard*, October 28, 1987, 11.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Paul Stripling, "Alien Immersion: J.R. Graves and Contrasting Views," in *Texas Baptist History* (Waco, Texas: The Texas Baptist Historical Society, Baylor University Press, 1984), 4:83-105.

[19]Toby Druin, "Lumberton Church Ousted," *Baptist Standard*, October 28, 1987, 10.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Sullivan, 102-103.

[22]Personal interviews conducted by Paul Stripling, Executive Director, Waco Baptist Association, at Central Texas Meeting of Directors of Missions, February 15, 1990, First Baptist Church, Waxahachie, Texas; and with other directors of mission and denominational leaders, Sheraton Inn, Waco, Texas, March 27, 1990.

[23]Joe Mosley, *The Battle Among Baptists* (Dallas: Maple Springs Publishing Company, 1980), 4.

[24]Ibid., 5.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid, 8.

[29]Dallas Baptist Association, *Minutes of the 72nd Annual Meeting*, Dallas, Texas, 1974, 27.

[30]Dallas Baptist Association, *Minutes of the 73rdAnnual Meeting,* Dallas Texas, 1975, 31-32.

[31]Mosley, 11.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid, 12.

[35]Ibid.

[36]*Minutes of the 73rdAnnual Meeting,* 31-32.

[37]Mosley, 12.

[38]Ibid.

[39]*Texas Baptist Annual,* Dallas, Texas, 1975, 18.

[40]Mosley, 18.

[41] Ibid, 20.

[42]Ibid, 21.

[43]W.W. Barnes, "Alien Immersion," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville:Broadman Press,1958), 32.

[44]Charles M. O'Neal, "The Alien Controversy in the Southern Baptist General Convention of California in Relation to Historic Baptist Doctrine and Polity" (Master's thesis, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, 1973), 2.

[45]Personal Interview with R.G. Lee at University Baptist Church, Forth Worth, Texas, July 13, 1964.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid.

[48]*Church Chimes* (Louisville, Ky: Walnut Street Baptist Church, 1971), n.p.

[49]O'Neal, "The Alien Controversy," 40.

[50]Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1950), 298.

[51]J. M. Pendleton, *An Old Landmark Reset*, (Nashville: Graves and Marks, 1854).

[52]W. J. Waller, *Western Baptist Review*, March 1848, 267.

[53]J. R. Graves, "Editorial," *The Tennessee Baptist*, February 22, 1849, 1.

[54]Waller, *Western Baptist Review,* March 1848, 271.

[55]W. W.Barnes, *Southern Baptist Convention 1845-1953*, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954), 271.

[56]G. McLeod Bryan, *Documents Concerning Baptist and Church Membership: A Controversy among North Carolina Baptists*, Special Studies Series No. 1 (n.p.: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1977), p.v.

[57]Ibid, 3-4.

[58]Ibid., 130.

[59]Gaines S. Dobbins, "The Issue of Alien Immersion," *The Baptist Program,* September 1974, 6, in Bob Polk, untitled paper.

[60]"Lubbock Rejects Change," Baptist Standard, November 2, 1983, 4.

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[63]"Constitution of the Lubbock Baptist Association," *1982 Minutes*, Lubbock Baptist Association, Lubbock, Texas, Article I, "Name and Nature" and Section 2, 16.

[64]"Lubbock Rejects Change," 4.

[65]Ibid.

[66] "Constitution of the Lubbock Baptist Association", 16.

[67]"Lubbock Rejects Change," 4.

[68]Letter from Hardy Clemons, Pastor, Second Baptist Church, Lubbock ,Texas, to Presnall H. Wood, Editor, *Baptist Standard*, November 8, 1983 (used by special permission).

[69]Robert E. Smith, "An Interpretation of 'The Baptist Faith Message,'" *The Valley Voice,* Rio Grande Valley Baptist Association newsletter, vol. 8, no.10, November 1982, 1.

[70]Herschel H. Hobbs, "Report of Committee on Baptist Faith and Message," adopted by Southern Baptist Convention, May 9, 1963.

[71]Ibid.

[72]"Baptismal Authority Important in Matter of Alien Immersion,"

Baptist Standard, May 17, 1967, 9.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Ibid.

[75]Executive Board Meeting, *Minutes*, Amarillo Baptist Association, Buchanan Street Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, December, 5, 1983, 2.

[76]*Minutes*, Amarillo Baptist Association, Semi-Annual Meeting, Eastridge Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, August 20, 1984, 2.

[77]*Minutes*, Amarillo Baptist Association, Thirty-Second Annual Meeting, October 22, 1984, 37.

[78]Telephone interview by Paul Stripling with Director of Missions Roy Kornegay, Amarillo, August 30, 1990.

[79]*Minutes,* Amarillo Baptist Association Annual Meeting, South Georgia Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, October 16, 1983, 27.

[80] "Called" Executive Board Meeting, Amarillo Baptist Association, South Georgia Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, October 23, 1983, 1.

[81]Telephone conversation with Kornegay, August 30, 1990.

[82]Minutes, Executive Board Meeting, Amarillo Baptist Association, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, January 29, 1990, 2.

[83]Letter from Roy Kornegay, Director of Missions, Amarillo Baptist Association, to Paul Stripling, Executive Director, Waco Baptist Association, August 30, 1990.

[84]Leisa Hammet, Article, *Baptist Press*, Nashville Tenn., November 1, 1983, n.p. citing Leon McBeth, Professor, Church History, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

[85]Ibid.

[86]Ibid.

[87]"California Association Ousts Churches," *Baptist Standard*, November 2, 1983, 4.

[88]Ibid.

[89]J. C. Bradley, "The Association: Alive and Well at 275," *Associational Bulletin* (Atlanta, Ga.: Associational Missions Division, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, May 1982), 16:3.

[90]James L. Sullivan, *Rope of Sand with Strength of Steel* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1974), 63.

[91]Ibid., 46.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Richard T. McCartney, "Free or Not? *The Baptist Messenger*, Vol. 72 October 20, 1983, 3.

BOOK REVIEWS

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The Texas Hill Country Pastor: The Man with the Red Socks. By Don Dilmore. Lima, Ohio: Fairway Press, 2003. 182 pp.

Some men are born with the heart of a pastor and the ability, knowledge, and willingness to do the work. In writing *The Texas Hill Country Pastor: The Man with the Red Socks: The Story of Brother Max Copeland, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Marble Falls, Texas,* Don Dilmore tells of such a man. Beginning with Brother Max's heritage and his early years, the author reports anecdotes from Brother Max's life to give the reader a moving and thorough understanding of what made him a great pastor, friend, athletic booster, and community leader.

In the preface of the book, Dilmore says that he hopes that his readers will realize through the life of Max Copeland that God works in our lives if we give Him the opportunity. He describes Copeland's forty-two years as pastor in Marble Falls, Texas by telling stories of how Brother Max lived the life of a pastor twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and fifty-two weeks a year. He attended all of the athletic events in Marble Falls and became closely acquainted with the athletes

and their parents. He visited the sick from his church and from the whole community, both in local and distant hospitals. He regularly ministered in nursing homes, led revivals, preached the gospel, conducted hundreds of wedding ceremonies, and seemed always to be present when people were in need.

Dilmore describes Brother Max as a man of great compassion and wisdom who built a consensus rather than promoted his own agenda. Copeland built a great church in Marble Falls through consistent, caring ministry that required many long hours rather than a series of gimmick-oriented programs. Not only did the people of First Baptist Church consider Brother Max to be a great man, but the community also recognized him as "both spiritual guide and trusted mentor to all who sought this path, from the youngest child to the oldest seniors of our community" (173). A city council proclamation named February 8, 2000 as Brother Max Copeland Day in the city of Marble Falls. The city council praised him "as a healer to human conditions often more painful and harder to mend than physical hurts, as a loyal supporter" and "as a rock steady inspiration to generations of our youth, as they competed on the playing fields and courts of our schools" (173).

I recommend *The Texas Hill Country Pastor* as required reading for all young persons who feel called to serve in the ministry as well as for all pastor search committees who are considering what kind of man to seek to be the pastor of their church. Dilmore relies upon primary sources, including Brother Max's own words, to create a touching and inspiring portrait of a man who has lived an exemplary life.— *Reviewed by David Stricklin, Professor of History, Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, Texas*

In God With Us: The Heritage of Immanuel Baptist Church, 1913-2000. By Immanuel Baptist Church Historical Committee. Benton, Texas: University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Press, 2003. 148 pp.

Because a new railroad line was constructed from Galveston and continuing that went through Belton, Texas, the population of the latter city was on the rise at the close of the nineteenth century. Even though the First Baptist Church of Belton already existed, it was too far removed from the train station, and another Baptist church was needed to meet the needs of the community. *In God With Us: The Heritage of Immanuel Baptist Church, 1913-2003*, the historical committee has written a strong account of how the Immanuel Baptist Church has met and continues to meet the needs of an ever-increasing and diverse population. The book is divided into ten chapters with each chapter apparently having a different author. The divisions within each chapter are concurrent with the pastors of that era. For the most part, this book is a history of the church's pastors, budgets, building programs, organizations, and mission endeavors. The appendixes provide a tremendous amount of detail for the story.

When the church was born in 1913 there were only forty-two members. Ninety years later the membership numbered 2,523. All areas of the church mirror this incredible growth. One statistic that does stand out is the number of baptisms. With few exceptions since 1921, the church has averaged about thirty baptisms a year. Even though the membership has grown exponentially, the number of baptisms has remained relatively the same. This fact demonstrates that the church is in a growing community where most new members are added by transfer of a letter rather than baptism. One outstanding aspect of the book is the timeline appendix indicating what the authors deem to be the most significant events in the history of the church. Readers of this book will wish that several of the events mentioned in this timeline were elaborated on in the body of the text itself.

The book concludes with personal notes from several members. Some of the note writers have been members of Immanuel for more than fifty years. Their stories and anecdotes add color to the text. The authors have also added several picture galleries throughout the book that bring many of people mentioned in the text to life. One would have hoped that *God With Us* had contained more material concerning individual members, worship services, fellowships, and general material on everyday life in the church. In spite of this minor drawback, *God With Us* is a good representation of a strong church that has served Christ for more than ninety years.—*Reviewed by Joe Early, Jr., Assistant Professor of Religion, University of the Cumberlands*

Building His Kingdom: 140-History, 1864-2004, First Baptist Church Salado, Texas. By Charlene Ochsner Carson. Austin, Texas: Nortex Press, 2003. 231 pp.

Building His Kingdom portrays the long life of a Baptist church in a small Texas town as town and church grew from frontier to future. Charlene Carson cleverly integrates the history of First Baptist Salado with the history of Salado, the state of Texas, and the United States. She illustrates how the growth and decline periods of this archetypal Baptist church are so closely tied to the fortunes of the town within which it resides.

Carson does an excellent job of exemplifying Baptist life in Texas within this history of FBC Salado. She includes details about the manner in which finances were handled by the church, while at the same time giving her readers a real-life picture of money in the early years of the church. When the reader moves from a discussion about the church taking up a collection to pay for the church clerk's supplies, "T.R. Russell subscribed 50 cents and seven other members subscribed 25 cents each, thus raising $2.25 to pay the $2.15 debt," to the

church's enthusiastic participation in the Southern Baptist Convention 75 Million Dollar Campaign within two pages, it is easy to comprehend the enormous goal this campaign was seeking to reach.

The accomplishments of each of the many pastors are also included but in such a manner as not to be burdensome or redundant. The modern reader might wonder why a church would go through so many pastors, many staying only a year or less, until Carson skillfully describes the manner in which pastors served and were annually called, many serving more than one church, quarter time or half time each, and few living on the field of their service. This was the norm in the Texas frontier well into the twentieth century. Carson also includes colorful descriptions of the "protracted meetings" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These day-long revival meetings drew most of the community on a nightly basis to hear the Word of God preached passionately and to see many saved and then baptized almost immediately in the local river or creek.

Building His Kingdom serves not only as a well-written history of First Baptist Salado but also an outstanding history of the Baptist church within the history of Texas and an example of the life cycle of a healthy small town church. Charlene Carson has gifted the people of FBC Salado and the rest of Texas Baptists with an historical jewel.—*Reviewed by Lisa Marie Seeley, adjunct professor of history, Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, Texas*

The Sesquicentennial History of First Baptist Church: Belton, Texas 1853-2003. By J. A. Reynolds. Austin, Texas: Nortex Press, 2003. 172 pp.

The Sesquicentennial History of First Baptist Church Belton is an attractive hardback book commissioned by the Heritage Committee of the church to commemorate the

sesquicentennial of the founding of the church. The author is eminently qualified to write a history of First Baptist Church, Belton. He is not only a longtime member of the church, but also served for over thirty years as the dean of the religion department at the University of Mary Hardin Baylor.

Reynolds arranges the material into nine chronological chapters, each covering a distinct era of the church. In some places the chapters provide a year by year synopsis of church events and difficulties. Reynolds focuses on the people that made FBC Belton a strong and resilient church. He details the activities of its pastors both before and after their time in Belton. Many significant Texas Baptists ministered from the pulpit of FBC Belton including George Washington Baines, M. V. Smith and A. C Miller. In some ways the recognition of the great ability of these individuals was a detriment to the church because they moved on to another field of service, cutting short their ministry in Belton. Reynolds also details the strong lay leadership at FBC Belton. A church like FBC Belton remains strong because of qualified and dedicated lay leaders as well as paid staffers.

One theme that recurs early in the book is the financial struggles that the Belton church faced. Even before the Depression era this church was often in arrears at the end of the financial year and had to make a special push to make up the budget shortfall. Reynolds points to the adoption of a unified budget process pioneered in the Southern Baptist Convention as improving the consistency of giving at Belton.

The book is well documented although—as Reynolds laments—some church records are lacking. FBC Belton suffered this loss of church records due to fire, a plight that many churches face. Reynolds researched church minutes, associational minutes, and many secondary sources in order to contextualize FBC Belton's place in the mainstream of Texas Baptist life. Rather than place at the end in an appendix, select and interesting documents are reproduced within the text at the

appropriate time period. An index is included that references only individuals. Even with its emphasis on lay leadership the book is heavily oriented to significant pastoral leaders with chapters on "The Basden Years," "The Kemp Years," and "The Davis Years."

The Sesquicentennial History of First Baptist Church Belton tells the story of an important central Texas church. The book is readable and profitable for a broader readership than just those with connections to FBC Belton.—*Reviewed by Michael A. Dain, assistant professor of religion, Wayland Baptist University, Lubbock, Texas*

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minutes
2004 Annual Meeting
November 8, 2004

The Texas Baptist Historical Society met Monday, November 8 at 10:00am at the Baptist General Convention of Texas, San Antonio, Texas, with 56 people present.

Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, presented the annual membership and financial report. For 2004 the society had a membership of 90. During the year, the Society received income from journal sales and dues totaling $600.00 with expenditures of $2,162.52. On November 8, the checking account balance was $19,261.24.

The Society members endorsed the recommendations of the Nominating Committee and elected the following officers for 2004-2005: Van Christian, Comanche, President; Ellen Brown, Waco, Vice-President; and Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, Secretary-Treasurer. Emily Row, San Angelo, was elected to serve a two-year term on the Executive Committee.

Lefever presented the following budget for 2004-2005:

INCOME

Historical Committee, BGCT	$5,800.00
Membership Dues & Journal Sales	3,000.00
Luncheon	300.00
Transfer from reserves	-0-
Total Income	$9,100.00

EXPENSES

Journal Printing	$4,500.00
Journal Postage	400.00
Journal Labor	2,000.00
Journal Supplies	300.00
Newsletter Printing	100.00
Newsletter Postage	300.00
Awards	600.00
Speaker's Honoraria	600.00
Miscellaneous Supplies	50.00
Luncheon	300.00
Total Expenses	$9,150.00

Carol Holcomb presented the 2004 Church History Writing awards:

Donald S. Wilkey, Jr. for *Onalaska Baptist Church: Our History,1910-2003*

Charlene O. Carson for *Building His Kingdom: 140 Year History, First Baptist Church Salado, Texas*

Charles M. Thompson for *God With Us: The Heritage of Immanuel Baptist Church*

General Texas Baptist and Associational History: Carr M. Suter, Jr. for *Dallas: The Doorway to Missions*

Unpublished paper: Ron Ellison for "A. C. Maxwell and J. Frank Norris, 1924-1935"

Lefever announced the Program for the Spring Meeting with Texas State Historical Association, Austin, March 3, 2005 would be "Dancing on the Global Stage: Texas Baptists and World Issues."

Dr. Paul Stripling, Waco, presented a paper on "How Associations Handle Issues of Doctrinal Diversity." The meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

Respectfully submitted,
Alan J. Lefever
Secretary-Treasurer
Texas Baptist Historical Society

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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"THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE LORD ARE SURE"
A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDEPENDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH UNTIL 1900

Independence Baptist Church is the oldest continuously active Baptist church in Texas. It was actually the fifth "missionary" Baptist church, but the first four churches have either ceased to exist, or have been restarted during their history. Independence Baptist has never closed its doors in its 166 years. In addition, it was, according to H. Leon McBeth, "one of the greatest Baptist churches in early Texas."[1]

The church was founded on August 31, 1839, in the community of "Coles' Hill" or "Coles' Settlement," named after Judge John P. Coles. Coles was one of Stephen F. Austin's original 300 Anglo settlers in Texas who came to own over 35,000 acres of land that reached from the Independence area almost to present-day College Station. Judge Coles played a prominent role in starting Baylor College in Independence, but he and his wife's knowledge of the presence of Baptists in Texas goes farther back. Mrs. Coles remembered attending a Baptist worship service in 1822 but did not recall the preacher's name. Mr. Coles, acting for the people of the community, had already petitioned the Congress of the Republic of Texas to charter a school in Independence in 1837. The charter was granted, and the Independence Female Academy began in the building where there had already been a functioning school founded by Miss Frances Trask. These two schools ultimately failed but provided the determining factor for deciding the site of Baylor College. When it seemed Independence would lose

the bid for a university—the community had already offered one section of land, one yoke of oxen, five head of cattle, one cow and calf, one bay mare, one bale of cotton, twenty days of hauling, and $200 cash—E. W. Taylor, Albert G. Hayes and undoubtedly Coles, leaders in the community, offered the use of the buildings of the Academy as incentive to begin the school there. With that, they won the bid.

Because of these new opportunities for education and religious worship, Independence earned the nickname "the Baptist Jerusalem of Texas." Additionally due to the community's emphasis on the arts, culture, and education Independence earned the nickname "The Athens of Early Texas" to which the college also contributed.[2]

Independence Baptist Church met in homes in the winter and brush arbors in the summer until the Baylor facilities were made available. Then in 1853 the church built its first building at its present location. That structure burned in the spring of 1872, and in the fall the congregation built its current building which features twenty-inch stone walls and stained glass imported from Belgium. Rescued out of the fire were the pulpit and pulpit chairs, a silver Lord's Supper set, and eight pews made by the slaves of a local plantation owner named Asa Hoxie. One of the pews displays U.S. and Texas flags bolted to the end to mark the pew of Sam Houston, the most prominent member of the church. On the pew in front of that one are initials of Houston and his wife, which he carved. Houston was converted and baptized by this church in 1854 which became an "event" in Independence. He was supposed to have been baptized in a "baptistry" which had been carved out of the limestone bottom of a creek in the form of a coffin. Dr. Rufus Burleson had chosen the coffin shape to take seriously the symbol of being buried in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life. However, some local boys found out about the baptism and filled the baptistry with rocks and limbs. When Dr. Burleson found out, he said, "I'll just out-general them," and baptized Houston in Little Rocky

Creek, two miles south of the church, on November 19, 1854. Incidentally, the creek where Houston was supposed to have been baptized was called the Little Jordan River by the students of the Baylor men's campus. They said if they could get across it to the girls' campus, they would be in the "Promised Land."[3]

Sam Houston was not the only famous member of the Independence Baptist Church. George Washington Baines, Lyndon Baines Johnson's great grandfather, pastored there in 1850 and also served for a short time as president of Baylor. Henry McArdle was also a member of the church and the art professor at Baylor. He painted the *Dawn at the Alamo* and *The Battle of San Jacinto* that hang in the Senate chambers in the capital building in Austin. Moreover, first president of the consolidated women's group in Texas, Fannie Breedlove Davis, was a member. Also, Anne Luther Bagby was a member of the Independence Baptist Church before leaving in 1881 with her new husband, William Buck Bagby, to become Southern Baptists' first missionaries to Brazil, the denomination's longest ongoing foreign mission field. Thus began the great saga of the "Bagbys of Brazil," which saw five generations of this remarkable family serving there. Mrs. Bagby "captured the hearts of Texas Baptists," and McBeth suggests that "perhaps no person did more to awaken them to the foreign missions challenge."[4]

The first pastor of the Independence Church was Thomas Spraggins who met with eight members on the day of its organization in 1839. Shortly thereafter four more members were received by letters. The first to be received by baptism were James D. and Lydia Alcorn. A series of revivals increased the church membership. Since Spraggins was only a temporary pastor, the church called T. W. Cox later in that same year.

Cox was persuasive. He could preach with such eloquence and power that many did not realize his intent until he later declared himself to be a follower of a new movement that Baptists called Campbellism. This revelation, along with

some questionable business practices, resulted in Cox's being ousted from Baptist life in 1841. However, during his pastorate of the Independence Church, he was instrumental in founding the first Baptist association in Texas which first met in June of 1840, assembling four pastors and about twenty-five lay persons in Independence. Among the four pastors, two were "missionary" and two were considered "Calvinists," or "anti-missionary." After Cox delivered a critical speech about "anti-missionaries," the meeting adjourned without forming an organization.[5]

On October 8, 1840, another attempt was made in a meeting at Travis. The missionary churches represented were Travis, Independence, and La Grange. Cox pastored all three churches simultaneously. The messengers elected Cox moderator and voted unanimously to form a missionary association. Since the main issue of the meeting was an appeal for unity, the association became known as the Union Baptist Association.

In January 1841, William Melton Tryon settled between Washington and Independence. He became co-pastor of the Independence Church with Cox, and in July the church held a revival in which ten were added by conversion and ten by letter. Soon thereafter, a series of events revealed that there were others in the congregation in addition to Cox who adhered to Campbellite doctrine and Tryon preached against this doctrine to such an extent that it divided the church. As a result, Tryon wrote that "the church is small but the congregation is the largest in the republic." Due to his influence the Union Association formed an educational society that eventually solicited from the Republic of Texas the charter for Baylor. [6]

The church weathered the Cox crisis, but another arose with the Mexican invasions of Texas in 1842. It was said of the church during that time that "owing to the troubles of the war the church experienced a very lukewarm time and a falling off of its membership." Mr. A. G. Haynes came to the church's aid during this time, which has been described as one of its

stormiest. He prevented the church's dissolution by his timely interventions and moderate counsels. During this time the formation of the Providence Church in nearby Chappell Hill caused Independence Church's membership to drop. It had started with eight members and in spite of the turbulent times had grown to twenty-seven.

Independence Baptist Church and Baylor University were inseparably linked from 1846-1886. Some church members and pastors served as trustees or presidents of Baylor or were students at the institution. The first president of Baylor, Henry Lea Graves, was also the first of the Baylor presidents to pastor the church. In 1847, Graves was called as pastor of the church, and a revival resulted with twenty-four conversions and eight additions by letter. After Graves came a series of pastors, many with names readily familiar in Baptist life: Baines, O'Bryan, Burleson, Renfro, Ross, Crane, Buckner and others. During O'Bryan's ministry Independence enjoyed two revivals. Twenty-three people became members by baptism and eighteen by letter. In 1855, during Burleson's ministry, the church reported the revival in which Sam Houston made his public profession of faith along with twenty-one other candidates for baptism including Fannie Breedlove Davis and J. Frank Kiefer, the so-called "Evangelist to the German people." With that revival and possibly another, there were fifty-six people added to the church by baptism and twenty-three by letter in that year.[7]

The church was without a pastor in November 1857 when a presbytery was called to ordain a Baylor student by the name of Henry C. Renfro. The night after his ordination Renfro preached a sermon called "What shall I do to be saved?" This sermon inspired and aroused his classmates, his teachers, and the members of the church. They began a meeting that lasted for eleven days in which there were seventeen conversions, two additions by letter, two additions under watch-care, as well as several others said to have "sought Christ." Renfro was called as pastor but only served for two months.

Under Pastor Ross's subsequent leadership, the church experienced more growth. In three different revivals, fifty-nine joined by profession of faith and seventeen by letter. However, one other event marked Ross's ministry. Under one of the old oak trees at the church, he and Sam Houston prayed together that Texas would not secede from the United States the night before the final vote of secession. Disappointed by subsequent Texas secession, Ross died a year later and is buried in the Independence cemetery.[8]

On the whole, during these years preceding the Civil War, the church grew significantly. In 1851 it had seventy-five members. In 1860 it was reported to have 205. It had ordained five men to preach. Among these men were, J. Frank Kiefer, so-called the "Evangelist to the German People" who was offered an honorary doctorate by Baylor which he refused, saying, "… I may modestly claim to be somewhat gifted in hiding by ignorance, I know I am not sufficiently talented to do so on all occasions, in the public positions I necessarily occupy, and failing to do so would injure me and the institution conferring the title." Pinckney Harris and William W. Harris were also ordained. Pinckney Harris was an insightful Bible scholar who preached with deep feeling despite a speech impediment. His influence was as great as any two men in the area along the Colorado River from Austin to LaGrange. William Harris was probably best known for preaching a revival in Dallas from which the First Baptist Church was formed in 1868. He served as pastor there for three years.[9]

The Civil War years brought a lot of changes to Independence. Many of the young men left to fight in the war. The city's leaders decided not to allow the railroad to pass through the community, basically saying that they didn't want the riff-raff that came with it. The main route between the two burgeoning cities of Austin and Houston was diverted around the city changing from what is now Highway 390 to Highway 290. The money went elsewhere

and with the money went the population. There was a power struggle that resulted in Burleson leaving Baylor in 1861 to become president of Waco University and taking most of the male students with him. For another twenty-five years, Baylor continued at Independence, but the tide was set. William Carey Crane was elected to succeed Burleson, and McBeth states that "he struggled manfully to keep afloat a sinking ship."[10] Immediately following the war, 125 freedmen left the church and began the Liberty Baptist Church which still functions as a vital force in the community. By 1886 Independence had become a ghost town. The male students and their faculty united with Waco University to form Baylor University, and the female students and their faculty moved to Belton and became The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

With this the church began a long period of decline, but did produce at least one fruit that kept it alive during some of its most difficult years. In 1902 Gertie McCrocklin was baptized in the church. She played the church's old pump organ for fifty-four years, and after her death she was succeeded by her daughter Medora (Dotie), who played it until she was no longer able. The more than ninety years of these ladies' faithfulness to the church, it can be argued, kept its doors open.[11] So severe was this period that "in 1935 J. B. Tidwell read a telegram calling for Baptists to raise $1500 to save the ruined walls of the old Independence church, cradle of Texas Baptist history and 'oldest Baptist church shrine in Texas.'"[12] The subsequent efforts of Texas Baptists helped to keep the church alive.

Today the church is "still alive and growing," as the sign says. It is going through an era when a lot of folks are choosing to move their homes out in the country. It has stood against unsound doctrine and stood up for those who would proclaim the truth. It has stood against anti-missionary movements and even sent from its walls missionaries all over Texas, the U. S. and foreign fields. It has endured periods

of heartbreaking decline and enjoyed the blessings of God in church growth. It has seen decisions made that affect the direction of associations and conventions. It has sent up prayers to heaven that affected a nation.

Butch Strickland
Independence Baptist Church
Independence, Texas

NOTES

[1]Harry Leon Mc Beth, *Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History* (Dallas: Baptistway Press, 1998), 25.

[2]Ibid., 26.

[3]From pastors' historical notes files, Earl Allen, pastor, 1965-1970, Independence Baptist Church. Copies in the possession of the author. Hereafter cited as pastors' notes.

[4]McBeth, 79.

[5]Pastors' notes.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

[10]McBeth, 59

[11]Pastors' notes.

[12]McBeth, 203.

RICHARD LAND AND THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY 1988-2004

Richard Land, current president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), is one of a long line of Southern Baptist statesmen to express his denomination's concerns to the American government. Although the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) did not occupy an official full-time presence in Washington, D.C. until Land, a Texan began his tenure at what was then called the Christian Life Commission (CLC) in 1988, the denomination does lay claim to a far-reaching record of conveying concerns to government officials, especially presidents. In fact, it was only eight years after its 1845 conception that the SBC first addressed an American president, calling on any who held the office—Franklin Pierce being the present occupant—to see that all treaties between the United States and other nations include a guarantee of full religious liberty for U.S. citizens living abroad.[1] In light of such exhortations, which occurred some century and a half before Land took the reins of the CLC, the denomination's relations with presidents were doubtless antiquated, and in that sense, Land's presidential relations, which are the focus of this essay, are not unprecedented. They are, as I shall argue below, unique—in scope, in frequency, in access, and in potency.

To be sure, the SBC's relations with the government have not always been consistent. Until the twentieth century—with the exception of the Civil War years, when Southern Baptists were infamous for their positions on slavery and opposition to the Union—the tenor of Southern Baptists in dealing with the federal government was typically indifference, save only those instances when convention-goers perceived a need for government

enforcement of religious liberty issues.[2] But it is clear that by the 1920s Southern Baptist agencies believed the American presidency was relevant to the moral concerns of Southern Baptists and, the US President, in the minds of denominational statesmen, had reason to pay attention based on the numerical growth of the denomination. A.J. Barton, longtime leader of the Social Service Agency, forerunner to the CLC and today's ERLC, saw fit to press Washington officials on behalf of Southern Baptists on issues ranging from Prohibition in the 1920s and 1930s, to the American position leading up to World War II in the 1930s and 1940s and the formation of the United Nations following that war. Southern Baptists also showed great interest in the American presidency in the 1970s, when Watergate and the American presence in Vietnam became subjects of discourse on the floor of the annual SBC meeting. Also during that decade, a new trend began when Gerald Ford became the first sitting President to address the "messengers" who had gathered to conduct the SBC's annual business. And since Ford's address, Presidents Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush have all addressed the Southern Baptists at their annual gathering.

So, while it is evident that certain Southern Baptist agencies and leaders have always been interested in American presidential politics, none has been as vigorous or ambitious in its approach as the ERLC under Richard Land, who significantly altered that agency's direction and influence when he became its leader in 1988. A significant part of this approach involved improving its status as a consequential player in presidential politics, taking the agency and the denomination as a whole to unprecedented heights as a political force. This essay chronicles that journey.

Land's Ascension: A Brief Background

Land, a native Texan and Texas Baptist, ascended to the CLC's top post on the heels of the ten-year struggle for control of the SBC, in which an organized contingent of

denominational conservatives (theologically *and* politically speaking) successfully wrested from the "moderates" the reins of the denomination's elaborate machinery. Part of the SBC's vast bureaucracy at that time was the CLC—today's ERLC—which had, under Foy Valentine's direction in the two decades prior, gained a reputation as a culturally progressive agency, committed to dealing with ethics issues on behalf of Southern Baptists. In this role the agency inevitably delved into political issues from time to time, but certainly one would not have identified it as strictly political. That task had long been outsourced to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs (BJC), a typically progressive Washington agency representing the interests of more than a dozen Baptist denominations, including the SBC. But Land, who left his work as a political advisor to Texas Governor Bill Clements and as vice president at Criswell College in Dallas, helped to usher in a new direction for the SBC when he took over CLC leadership in 1988 and he brought with him ambitious new plans for his agency—plans that would deviate significantly from the precedent set by his forebears.

His appointment was indeed a momentous change for the CLC. Land recalls a particular conversation about the transition, when he was told early in his tenure by a Southern Baptist from the moderate camp, who lamented the CLC's shift in direction, "It's not like you're just an agency head; it's like you eloped with our favorite daughter." Laughing, the ever-garrulous Land countered: "Actually, it's like I shacked up with your favorite daughter—and didn't even bother to marry her."[3] In other words, Land knew that the CLC was a significant agency within the denomination, and he was committed to significantly altering and even expanding it as a conservative political body.

Upon his appointment, Land expressed three main prerogatives. He sought first to establish for the agency a pro-life *bona fides*, authorizing that the CLC was, as he believed, no longer "a pro-abortion organization, which it certainly could

have been accused of being." He also wanted Southern Baptist conservatives to be involved in racial reconciliation, and he wanted to foster a new discussion on the relationship of church and state.[4] To some degree, Land has no doubt achieved each of these goals during his tenure. But what he perhaps did not anticipate in 1988 was the extent to which he and the agency and the denomination he represented could become a major force in presidential politics—an unprecedented status for all involved.

The first step in this process, once the denomination cut ties with the BJC, came when the CLC expanded its operations to include religious liberty issues and established a physical presence in the nation's capital. Adding the first full-time employee to its D.C. office in 1989, the agency increased that number to three by 1990, staffing the office with a Director of Government Relations, a Director of Media and News Information, and a Director of Christian Citizenship and Religious Liberty Concerns, who also served as General Counsel. These posts were staffed by a qualified bunch, a Supreme Court-experienced lawyer and a former House Republican Study Committee aid among them. The office was rounded out, of course, by Land, who commuted back and forth between the capital and the agency headquarters in Nashville and who, upon assembling this qualified team, set out to make a presence known in Washington.

This involved, perhaps more than anything else, establishing relations with the presidency. Land has since summarized his work with individual presidents in this way: George H.W. Bush's administration "would take our calls and mostly return our calls. Sometimes they would listen to us. Sometimes they didn't. In the Clinton administration, they quit taking our calls. In [George W. Bush's] administration, they call us. They're soliciting our input."[5] This essay argues along these same lines, more specifically that Land has taken the CLC from its status as one of many religious organizations involved in public policy in the George H.W. Bush era, to one of the

most vocal opponents of President Clinton, to one of the most trusted allies of George W. Bush. This effort established Land, the ERLC, and the SBC among the country's most influential actors in presidential politics.

The CLC and George H.W. Bush

Land and President George H.W. Bush ascended to their posts at virtually the same time, but the Texans' relationship actually preceded both of their appointments. A few months prior, candidate Bush sent a delegate—his son, George W. Bush—to Dallas, where Land was working for The Criswell College. The younger Bush sat down in Land's office and asked for Land's pledge of support for the elder Bush in his presidential bid, asking Land to consider coming to Washington to work for the administration if Bush won the election. Flattered by the offer and already favoring Bush, Land endorsed the campaign, but with a caveat: he also told Bush that he was three weeks away from being interviewed for the position at the CLC, which meant that he would have to remove himself from the campaign if he got the job. But Land was doubtful about his chances with the CLC, telling Bush that if hired, he would "have to take it as divine intervention," because that would be the only possible explanation. Otherwise, he would be happy to help in a "significant way" with the campaign and would give "serious and prayerful consideration" to joining the administration in Washington.[6]

Despite this significant overture, Land never gave serious consideration to joining the administration, for in September that "divine intervention" did occur as he was appointed head of the CLC. When Bush won the election in November, it would have appeared by most accounts, based on the prior endorsement, that Land and the CLC had gained an ally in the White House and that Bush had the firm support of Land and his constituents. Soon, however, it became evident that this would not unequivocally be the case, for Land's support came with contingencies, and Bush jettisoned the types of overtures

to Land that he had made during the campaign. The relationship from the outset was rocky and inconsistent, "very different," as Land recalls, "than my relationship with his son."[7] Several instances reveal this.

The Persian Gulf War

One of Land's first significant interactions with President Bush came in the months leading up to the Persian Gulf War. After Saddam Hussein's invasion and annexation of Kuwait led to speculation that he intended to invade Saudi Arabia and take over control of the region's rich oil supply, Bush threatened to use force against Hussein's regime. Initially implying that Bush's primary intention might be to safeguard the American economy, Land warned, "Let it be stated here emphatically that jobs and oil are not a sufficient or legitimate motive [for war]."[8] Elaborating further, Land offered Bush his own version of just-war theory, saying that only if the criteria in this model were met could war be a proper response to Hussein's actions. These criteria, modeled after St. Augustine's and tweaked by Land to fit the situation, were just cause, just intent, last resort, legitimate authority, limited goals, proportionality, and noncombatant immunity.[9]

The only information available to Land and the public relating to the question of just war was what came from Amnesty International reports of widespread atrocities against the people of Iraq and Kuwait. To Land, these reports certainly gave Americans a just cause, but beyond that, only Bush and his intelligence sources had enough information to determine whether the other criteria were met, so Land encouraged Bush to act only in the event that they were.[10]

Beyond his just-war criteria, Land made one other demand of Bush, issued in a tangible threat when he told Bush advisor Leigh Ann Metzger that he would personally demonstrate against the war if Bush failed to get a joint resolution through Congress.[11] This was important to Land, who stated:

> The lessons of Vietnam endure. For many of us, with the names of friends, relatives, and playmates inscribed on the onyx marble of the Vietnam memorial embedded in the hallowed ground near the Lincoln Memorial—a promise has been made, a vow taken—'Never again!' Never will we allow our soldiers to be placed at the uncertain end of a long tether without sufficient support and resolve at home to give them all necessary means to do the job. If it is worth American soldiers dying, it is worth winning. And unless our survival or liberty is at stake, it must be winnable. If it is not worth winning (including the just-war criteria), it is not worth the shedding of our citizens' blood. For this Christian, for this American, for this father, these are serious questions with the gravest repercussions. To our elected leaders, I say, 'If you send our young people to war, you must have firm, acceptable answers to these questions. We are accountable for asking. You are accountable for your answers.'[12]

When Metzger heard this, she promised Land that if he could draft his thoughts in a letter to the president by four o'clock that afternoon, she could guarantee that Bush would have the letter waiting for him on his helicopter to Camp David. As Land remembers, "you talk about writing under a deadline."[13]

Having invaded without a protest from Land, Bush evidently met all of Land's just-war requirements. But what is interesting is the tenor in which the situation unfolded: Land was curt and specific in his demands of Bush, at the very least implying doubts about Bush's integrity in invading. Still new to the national political scene and perceived as something of a Bush ally, it is surprising that Land would use this first important exchange as a forum to cast doubt on the president's intentions. Interestingly, Bush returned to Land after the war with goodwill, beginning what would become a trend in their relationship, whereby Land criticized and made demands of Bush, and the president often returned to Land with gestures of inclusion when seeking to appease Washington's religious lobby. In this case, after the war was over, Bush included Land as part of a consortium of twelve religious leaders from various faiths to meet in the White House to discuss religious freedom in the Middle East. Along

with Land, SBC president Morris Chapman represented the denomination, and the group suggested to Bush that the best starting point would be greater freedom of religion for foreign employees who were working in Saudi Arabia.[14]

Further Grievances with Bush

Land's first opportunity to address the President with his own concerns came in October 1991, when he helped to arrange a meeting involving himself, seventeen other evangelical leaders, Bush, Bush's chief of staff, and several senior advisors. Land personally used the meeting to air grievances to the President on several topics, including homosexual rights, federal funding of "sacrilegious and obscene art," and abortion.[15] Namely, Land and his cohorts relayed concerns about Bush's invitations to homosexual rights activists to attend bill-signing ceremonies at the White House, his administration's failure to seek restrictions on controversial National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grants, and the need for stronger, more visible presidential leadership on abortion issues. Although Bush did not agree to all of Land's requests, he did pledge to consider them. "There was a receptivity expressed to that desire for ongoing, official dialogue," Land recalls.[16]

Land's portion of that dialogue did not end at the October meeting, as he continued to voice his opinion to the President, the Vice President, and even the Congress about the NEA issue, calling the objectionable grants given to various artists an explicit "misuse of tax money." Land appealed first to the holders of the purse strings, the Interior Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations, in order to quell what he perceived as government funding of obscenity. Soon after this House briefing, Land returned to the executive for leadership, exhorting Bush at a White House briefing, that as the chief executive, he alone should be responsible for bringing the NEA under control by firing its chairman, John Frohnmayer. Land's outrage brought attention to the CLC—its most prominent

publicity to date—from media outlets such as *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times*, and even *Entertainment Tonight*.[17] As in other instances, Bush was tepid in dealing with the issue—that is, until his reelection effort required him to act. He did finally force Frohnmayer's resignation, but not until February 1992, three days after Bush won what Land called an "unimpressive victory" over his more conservative opponent, Pat Buchanan, in the Republican primary in New Hampshire.[18]

Bush Courts Southern Baptists

Although Land's working relationship with the Bush administration often resulted in disagreement, Bush continued to show interest in Southern Baptists, addressing them at their 1991 meeting in Atlanta. On the tail end of the Southern Baptist controversy, the Convention meeting by this point consisted mostly of SBC conservatives and, as one pundit put it, resembled a conservative political rally as much as a denominational meeting for conducting business.[19] This reading has merit, for alongside Bush at the meeting were non-Southern Baptists and well-known Republicans such as Oliver North, Charles Colson, and Jerry Falwell, and each of these men was given opportunity to address the messengers in a crescendo toward Bush's speech. In his address, Bush shed tears as he recalled praying at Camp David before ordering the start of the Persian Gulf War, saying his reliance on prayer during the war relieved him of his Episcopalian worry about "how it looked to others" to pray in public.[20] He also played to his conservative audience when he reiterated his support for a voluntary public school prayer amendment and the rights of parents to send their children to the schools of their choice, including a bill that would provide tax vouchers for private religious schools.[21]

As the 1992 presidential election drew near, it became evident that the Republicans had successfully courted most of

the conservative Southern Baptist leaders.[22] Having already included SBC president Morris Chapman and his wife on a private jet flight to a political event that year, Vice President Dan Quayle followed Bush's lead from 1991 when he addressed the Convention messengers in his native Indianapolis in June of 1992. Quayle spoke of moral and family values to the receptive Southern Baptist audience, a theme echoed at the 1992 Republican National Convention (RNC). He criticized abortion, homosexual parents, and sex education, portraying the 1992 election as a war between those who held to traditional values and a group of cultural elites who mocked patriotism, families, and religion.[23]

Two months later, Bush addressed an audience of 10,000 at the National Affairs Briefing in Dallas, the first event following his nomination at the RNC. Sharing the rostrum with Bush at the event were Jerry Falwell and Southern Baptists W.A. Criswell, Joel Gregory, and Land, each of whom preceded Bush's speech with a speech of his own and a welcome to the President. When it was then Bush's turn to speak, he began his address with a word of thanks for each of the men who had just welcomed him—each man, that is, except Land. Curiously, Land was excluded from Bush's short list of people to thank. However, the way Land remembers it, he was not at all surprised when this happened, for before the event began, several leaders—particularly Falwell, who at that time was heading the Evangelical Coalition for Bush-Quayle—attempted to exclude Land from the program altogether because of his frequent criticisms of the Bush administration.[24] "We are going to praise people when they do the right thing, and we are going to criticize them when they do the wrong thing, whoever they are," Land has since said in defense of his criticism of Bush.[25] But apparently, based on the "nasty" letters he received from various conservative leaders,[26] the barrage of phone calls to the CLC offices regarding a perceived Land endorsement of Clinton-Gore that July,[27] and the attempts of

Falwell and others to expel Land from the National Affairs Briefing program, Land had criticized the President enough to warrant Bush's scowl at the Briefing, despite later charges that Land's speech introducing the President had been a thorough endorsement.[28]

These events, in turn, were symbolic of Land's relationship with the Bush administration altogether, in that Bush expressed interest in Southern Baptists, and many Southern Baptists showed support for Bush. Yet Land's criticism of the Bush administration had left him and the CLC on the periphery of Bush's favor, in many ways giving truth to Land's statement that "The CLC serves God and Southern Baptists, not any candidate or political party. We deal with issues and values, and we encourage Southern Baptists to involve themselves in the political process on an issues, values basis."[29]

Ultimately, it was these issues that Bush would use to try to secure reelection, but to no avail. It was, perhaps, too little too late, for Bush attempted to rally a conservative religious base on "family values" issues, against the famous charges of the opposition party that said, "It's the economy, stupid."[30] And ultimately, it was the economy that won the election for Clinton, a centrist Democrat who had an uncanny ability, even more than Bush, to speak the language of conservative evangelicals. Alongside his fellow Southern Baptist running mate Al Gore, Clinton focused his campaign on sweeping changes, but won only by a slim margin in the crowded field. Land was concerned about what Clinton's election might mean to the "family values" issues, issues that all Republicans since Reagan used to court evangelicals. Thus, he responded to Clinton's election in this way: "Make no mistake, the economy was the determinative factor in this election…. Bill Clinton sought only an economic mandate, and that's what he achieved. There is no mandate for sweeping values change."[31] Land's statement, in turn, marked the beginning of a long battle.

Bill Clinton was an active Southern Baptist. He grew up in Bible Belt Arkansas in a family that was nonreligious, save only his maternal grandparents, who partly raised him. His stepfather was a heavy drinker and often beat Clinton's mother when he was drunk, and in part to escape this domestic bedlam, Clinton began attending Park Place Baptist Church in Hot Springs, Arkansas, at age eight.[32] He would don a suit and walk the mile from his home to the church, and at age ten, Clinton made a public profession of his Christian faith and was baptized. In 1958, at age eleven, one of Clinton's Sunday School teachers took him to Little Rock to hear Billy Graham preach, and observing Graham's insistence that his crusades be racially integrated, Clinton grew enamored with the evangelist, regularly sending part of his allowance to support Graham's ministry.[33] Many of Clinton's schoolteachers thought Clinton himself might grow up to become a traveling evangelist.[34]

Having remained active at Park Place until the time he left for Georgetown University in 1964, Clinton stopped attending church regularly in his young adult years until 1980, when, as governor of Arkansas, he joined Immanuel Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation pastored by W.O. Vaught. He joined the church and experienced what he calls a spiritual renewal as he began serious Bible study for the first time in his life.[35]

By the time he was elected President in 1992, a number of evangelical leaders were suspicious of Clinton's faith, many of them attributing his religious rhetoric to mere political platitudes. And even those evangelicals who believed his faith was sincere usually also believed that it had no bearing on his politics. Ed Dobson, for instance, who was editor of the *Fundamentalist Journal*, captured this sentiment well:

> Is Bill Clinton a Christian? I don't know. I'm not God. How do you know I'm a Christian? We look at clues and evidences. Does Clinton know the Scriptures? Is he affected emotionally by things

> like prayer? Does he go to church every week, carry his Bible, claim to have a relationship with Christ? The answer to all these questions is yes. I believe he's more deeply spiritual than any President we've had in recent years. Next question: How can I reconcile Bill Clinton's faith with his policies? I can't.[36]

In an open letter Land sent to evangelical leaders early in Clinton's term, he too observed the deep reservoir of distrust about Clinton:

> While the policies of [Clinton], especially the advocacy of abortion on demand and special homosexual rights are part of this distrust, it is both broader and deeper than that. The President's personal and financial life are a cause of grave concern for many evangelicals as well. . . . While the President is a charming and persuasive man, his actions are the ultimate test of his sincerity.[37]

Clinton first heard directly from Land only eight days after he was elected President, when Land sent a letter expressing—authoritatively—the issues Southern Baptists wanted the President-elect to consider in his upcoming administration. After committing to follow the Bible's exhortation to pray for leaders, Land's message to Clinton was forthright:

> We earnestly plead with you prayerfully to reconsider your stated positions on abortion on demand and special civil rights status for homosexuals. We urge you to affirm those moral values which have made America great. We appeal to you to be tolerant of all people, but not tolerant of wrong-doing. Accord dignity and worth to all, but do not dignify sin and vice, no matter how common. Please do not treat immoral human behavior as being of equal worth to right conduct and virtue. America needs moral conviction, not moral neutrality. America's children need a model of leadership committed both to excellence and to virtue.[38]

Land's whole message was laden with concern for Clinton's stances on abortion and homosexual rights. Southern Baptists, he said, were unalterably committed to the protection of unborn human life, believing that euphemisms that Clinton and others used like "choice" and "reproductive freedom" were disguises

for killing babies. Government's role, to Land, was to protect life, and with Southern Baptists on record opposing abortion on demand and calling for public policies that severely restrict abortion, Land was convinced that Clinton "would receive a warm response among Southern Baptists" if he affirmed this stance in his public policy. Moreover, Land expressed fear of the wrath of God if Clinton pursued public policy that would add sexual orientation as a protected status under civil rights laws. "We oppose public policies which use the moral influence of law to establish homosexuality as the moral equivalent of heterosexuality," he said, stating also that Southern Baptists deplored the treatment of biblical morality as if it were hatred and bigotry.[39]

To be sure, Land did not disagree with all of Clinton's stated positions at the outset of the administration. For instance, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), which was a response to the Supreme Court's 1990 *Oregon v. Smith* decision striking down the "compelling state interest" standard for laws and policies restricting religious liberty, was a common point of interest for Clinton and Land. Furthermore, Land supported Clinton's pledge to give attention to the ethnic cleansing taking place in Yugoslavia and the human rights issues in China. He supported Vice President-elect Al Gore's legislation requiring health warnings on alcohol advertising and Hillary Clinton's "warm response" to the goals of the women's "Enough Is Enough" anti-pornography campaign.[40] In other words, at the outset, Land certainly expressed optimism in some facets of Clinton's campaign pledges and stated positions, but on the whole, he believed the sweeping changes that might occur in abortion and homosexual rights laws made for a dim outlook of Bill Clinton's presidency.

Any twinge of this optimism was quickly squelched when Clinton, on the first day of his presidency, acted to ease abortion restrictions and expand homosexual rights. On January 22, 1993, Clinton signed an executive order lifting Title X regulations, allowing federal taxes to go to family planning

clinics such as Planned Parenthood. That same day, he also signed an order lifting the moratorium on federal funding of transplantation experiments using fetal tissue from elective abortions. He lifted the ban on abortions at overseas military medical facilities and also lifted the so-called "Mexico City Policy," allowing federal aid to the International Planned Parenthood Federation overseas. Furthermore, he issued a directive to the Food and Drug Administration to restudy the issue of importing RU 486, a French abortion pill, which had previously been banned in the United States.[41]

A week later, Clinton sent a directive to the Secretary of Defense to study how to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military while suspending the ban in the interim. Within six months, Clinton instituted the famous "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, in which homosexuals were allowed to serve in the military and military officials were ordered not to inquire about a soldier's sexual orientation. Clinton also ordered protections for homosexuals employed by federal government agencies and the White House, while he also oversaw the launching of a federally funded ad campaign promoting the use of condoms in preventing HIV and AIDS.[42]

Southern Baptists responded quickly with disdain to Clinton's actions, using their annual gathering that June to admonish the President. As Land recalls, Clinton saw it coming, for when Land arrived at his hotel before the meeting, there was a "Dear Richard" telegram from the president waiting for him at the front desk. The message was colloquial, as Land recalls—"classic Clinton. He's a very charming guy." Clinton asked Land to express his sentiments to his fellow Southern Baptists and convey that the president was thinking about them as they served the Lord at the annual meeting.[43] Land ignored the message, using his first opportunity to address the gathered messengers for a fifteen-minute message that never once mentioned the telegram.[44] In fact, Land made no mention of the telegram to anyone, until he was approached by a colleague who had caught wind of it after the speech.[45]

Later that morning, Bo Hammock, an SBC messenger from Florida, presented a motion to unseat messengers from Immanuel Baptist Church, Clinton's home church, because they had not exercised church discipline on the President based on the abortion and homosexual rights policies he had put into place.[46] Then, that afternoon, the whole Convention voted to pass the first of six resolutions related to Clinton, separating itself from the president's politics. Both he and Gore were called by the messengers of their denomination to "affirm biblical authority in exercising public office," strong words with little effort at conciliation.[47]

These first resolutions in 1993 set the tone for the next several Convention meetings. In 1994, the messengers opposed Clinton's efforts toward health care reform, mostly because the plan would allow coverage for abortions, would pay for condom distribution to teens, and would violate the so-called "Baptist heritage of insistence on limited government."[48] They also passed a resolution on Clinton's "blatant" advocacy for legalizing RU 486.[49] In 1995, the Convention passed a resolution opposing Henry Foster as Clinton's Surgeon General nominee, citing a list of grievances for Foster's "controversial ethical and policy positions."[50] In 1996, it passed a resolution on Clinton's veto of a partial-birth abortion ban. In it, the messengers disapproved of Clinton's suggestion that God had revealed to him in prayer that the legislation was wrong. The Convention expressed that any abortion method, especially one as "barbarous" as partial-birth abortion, would never have God's approval.[51] In 1998, as the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal mounted, the SBC passed a resolution on the moral and legal misconduct of "certain public officials."[52] In 1999, Southern Baptists admonished the president for his proclamation of June 1999 as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month.[53]

On the whole, this pattern showed not only an unprecedented interest in presidential politics for the denomination, but it also left no doubt about how the Convention felt regarding one of its own members in the Oval Office. Not surprisingly,

these SBC resolutions on Clinton provide an accurate pulse of the CLC's work throughout the Clinton years, as much of the CLC's activity centered around the same political issues addressed at the annual meeting. Inasmuch as Land sees his job as advocating the public policy positions of the majority of Southern Baptists, he did his job well.

The CLC's Work with Clinton

First, when Clinton's intention surfaced to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military, the CLC joined the Coalition to Maintain Military Readiness, a group of more than forty military and religious organizations formed to defend the prohibition of homosexuals against Clinton's intention to integrate the military. The CLC tried to mobilize Southern Baptists quickly against Clinton's policy, devoting an entire issue of its journal *Salt* to the issue of homosexual rights.[54] Referencing Jesus' command to be "the salt of the earth,"[55] the CLC, as "salt", made known its opposition to homosexuality "because it is clear in the Bible God condemns [homosexuality] as a sinful lifestyle harmful to the individual and society. Therefore, the CLC opposes the granting of civil rights normally reserved for immutable characteristics, such as race, to a group based on its members' sexual behavior."[56] Land decried homosexual rights activists' efforts to "camouflage" homosexuality as a civil rights movement, seeking to normalize homosexuality as healthy behavior, and he echoed *Nation* magazine's proclamation that Clinton's was the first "pro-gay White House."[57] Land summoned Southern Baptist churches to pray, call, and write the President and representatives, and to distribute the pamphlet the CLC put together on the issue.[58] Then, in August 1993, Land, alongside Clinton's new Little Rock pastor Rex Horne and SBC president Ed Young, met with Clinton and Gore as fellow Southern Baptists to discuss differences over abortion and homosexuality. Ultimately, of course, Land and his delegation felt their exhortations had fallen on deaf ears.[59]

Health care also became an important issue to the CLC under Clinton. In October 1993, the CLC held a press conference in Washington about Clinton's proposed health care plan, marking the first time the Southern Baptist Convention had ever officially spoken on the issue. Land vehemently opposed Clinton's plan, saying it would lead to an expansion of abortion in the United States. It would also mean citizens would underwrite the killing of unborn children through insurance premiums and taxes.[60]

> It is unfortunate that the President is apparently so committed to the pro-abortion lobby that he seems willing to jeopardize the most significant social policy legislation this century. . . . There can be little doubt that, in spite of the President's professed desire that abortion be "safe and legal, but rare," the killing of unborn children will vastly multiply as a result of his national health care plan.[61]

The CLC outlined its six concerns with Clinton's plan, stating that: (1) it would include abortion and possibly assisted suicide; (2) it would result in the radical revision of the physician-patient relationship; (3) it would undermine religious liberty for religious hospitals; (4) it would restrict access to some citizens based on age or disability; (5) it would include family planning services, which included distribution of contraceptives to minors; and (6) Southern Baptists, "along with most Americans, may be worse off under the Clinton blueprint."[62] The CLC's opposition to abortion and family planning clinics was not surprising, although other facets of Land's criticism of the plan seem ambiguous. To assert, for instance, that a group as diverse as Southern Baptists—not to mention "most Americans," as Land said—would be worse off under the Clinton plan leads one to think that the CLC was working to turn Southern Baptists against Clinton in an effort to fuel a culture war. After all, nuanced positions are typically the first to be eschewed in a culture war, and in this particular press conference no positive aspects of the Clinton plan were unveiled or supported.[63] This was uncharacteristic of Land, whose tendency was usually to pick apart issues with surgical precision, especially on "the

most significant social policy legislation this century," which was important enough to warrant an unprecedented CLC press conference. Here, though, he stated in no specific detail that Southern Baptists and "most Americans" may be worse off under the plan, implying that it was altogether imprudent in an effort to turn Southern Baptists against it, which, on the grander scale, created momentum for his side of the culture war. Vague oppositions to some of the other issues detailed below certainly lend evidence to this idea.

The CLC entered uncharted territory again when Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders resigned in 1995, and the CLC led Southern Baptists in a campaign to oppose Henry Foster's nomination as her replacement. As mentioned earlier, the entire Convention voted to pass a resolution regarding Foster's nomination, and at the Convention's charge, the CLC involved itself in great detail in trying to block Foster's nomination. Land cited several reasons for opposing Foster's nomination: changing accounts of how many abortions he had performed; distribution of condoms to minors in his "I Have a Future" teenage pregnancy prevention program; his representation on boards of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America; his supervision of a study in which more than fifty women and girls had abortions by use of experimental vaginal suppositories; his sterilization of mentally impaired women in the 1970s; and questions about when he knew of the experiments on African-American men with syphilis at Tuskegee, Alabama.[64] The CLC encouraged Southern Baptists to contact their senators to urge opposition to Foster's nomination by voting to support a filibuster in the Senate. It also hosted another major news conference to broadcast its opposition to Foster, which C-SPAN aired in its entirety. Almost every major news medium reported on the conference, again placing the national spotlight on Land.[65] Land was pleased when Foster failed to receive the votes necessary for confirmation, although what is more significant is Land's increased exposure as an opponent of Clinton. Here again, the reasons why Land opposed Clinton's

nominee are not surprising, but the fact that the CLC's voice was broadcast so prominently for something it had never before spoken about lends more validity to the assertion that Land was trying to lead Southern Baptists toward the frontlines of the American culture war.

In 1996, the CLC became outraged, perhaps more so than ever, when Clinton vetoed the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act (H.R. 1833) calling him "The Abortion President."[66] Clinton's primary reason for vetoing the bill was that in it the mother's health was not given enough priority, but Land and the CLC refused to acknowledge this as valid reasoning. In a statement released after the veto, Land said that he was encouraged only in the fact that Clinton's veto had spawned outrage across the nation and the world. Calling on Southern Baptists to contact the President regarding his veto, Land expressed Clinton's need to repent of his actions.[67]

When the issue came across Clinton's desk again the next year, after the Senate failed to get the two-thirds majority needed to override Clinton's veto, SBC president Tom Elliff, in conjunction with former SBC presidents W.A. Criswell, Adrian Rogers, Bailey Smith, James Draper, Charles Stanley, Jerry Vines, Morris Chapman, Ed Young, and Jim Henry, sent Clinton a letter opposing his position. To release the letter, Elliff hosted a press conference at which Land spoke out against Clinton's policy.[68] Once again, when national media chronicled Land's opposition, the surprising part was not that Land opposed the policy, but rather that he was giving Southern Baptists such a loud voice on public policy issues.

Land and Clinton Find Common Ground—Briefly

More than any legislation besides RFRA, the CLC, which had in 1997 changed its name to the ERLC, lobbied Congress and Clinton to pass legislation banning international religious persecution. Following the SBC resolution "On Religious Liberty and World Evangelization," Land testified before the

Committee on International Relations in the U.S. House of Representatives and asked House members to take action on behalf of the 200 million Christians who faced torture around the world.[69] Following Land's testimony, the Committee passed the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act 31 to 5, followed by a 375 to 41 passage in the entire House. The Senate passed its own version of the act, the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, with a 98 to 0 vote, and in October Clinton signed the bill into law. Following the bill's passage, Congress established the Commission on International Religious Freedom, a committee to which Land would later be appointed under George W. Bush.

As Land remembers, however, he lost respect for Clinton as a result of the President's behavior regarding the International Religious Freedom Act. According to Land, the Clinton administration did everything it could to block and emasculate the legislation simply because it was a turf issue with Congress, challenging executive prerogatives. Clinton fought the bill until it passed through the Senate, after which he signed it late at night with no press conference. The next morning, Land attended a prayer breakfast at the White House at which Clinton boasted about the legislation, "lying through his teeth" about how proud he was for having signed it, according to Land.[70]

The ERLC in Clinton's Last Days

In 1998, Clinton found himself embroiled in controversy over an alleged affair with Monica Lewinsky, a White House intern. As one might imagine, based on Land's history with Clinton, the ERLC was vocal during the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal and Clinton's impending impeachment hearings. Land released a statement prior to and following Clinton's August 17, 1998, speech to the nation, in which Clinton addressed the nature of his relationship with Lewinsky for the first time. Suspicious of wrongdoing, Land called on the President, before and after the speech, to tell the truth. Before

Clinton's speech, Land begged for the truth "as a Christian, as a pastor, as an ethicist, as a husband, as a father and as an American," and was disappointed when he felt Clinton evaded it.[71] Following the speech, Land released a statement calling Clinton combative and angry, and Land quickly began demanding Clinton's resignation.[72] As soon as Clinton was impeached, Land said Clinton got what he deserved.[73] When Clinton was acquitted, Land released another statement saying that the verdict would have grave consequences for the nation.[74] He also likened Clinton's evasion of the truth to the lies told to the nation during the Vietnam War, in which thousands of Americans died as the result of government lies—doubtless a bold assertion.[75]

Land's actions throughout this entire debacle were in line with what one might expect. Having already established himself as a leader among evangelicals, speaking out whenever Clinton breached a so-called "Southern Baptist" standard of morality, Land reacted with the same disdain as most everyone who had generally opposed Clinton throughout his tenure in office. To be sure, America as a whole was divided on the issue of whether Clinton should step down as President, with those saying he should not contending that his private morality had no bearing on his ability to lead the country. Conversely, most of those calling for Clinton's ouster did so saying that a man who would lie, not only to his family, but to his country, was not capable of leading the American people.[76] In line with most of conservative America on this side of the debate, Land's vocal opposition of Clinton was as one might expect.

In summary, the Clinton years were among the ERLC's most important in its history, in that its consistent and vocal opposition to the President gave the agency frequent exposure to the American public as a proponent of specific moral concerns. It became more active than it ever had been in speaking about specific legislation and presidential policies, but more importantly, its frequent, prominent prophecy, usually

on the issues of homosexuality, abortion, or the President's morality, conveyed to the general public that the ERLC was a leader among evangelicals on the "orthodox" side of the culture war.[77]

The ERLC and George W. Bush

As mentioned previously, Richard Land and George W. Bush met in 1988 when the young Bush came to Land's office in Dallas to seek support for his father's presidential bid. The two became fast friends. Although Land never came to work for George H.W. Bush, as George W. Bush had earlier suggested, he and George W. kept in contact after Land left for Nashville and the CLC. They came to know each other better through their mutual friend, Karl Rove, a political adviser to Republican politicians in Texas. Land and Rove met in the early 1980s, when Rove was working as a consultant in Austin trying to get Republicans elected to offices, and Land was a pro-life activist trying to get pro-life candidates elected. The two showed up in many of the same circles and eventually worked together as advisors to Governor Clements and became close friends.[78] As the CLC's head, when Land would visit Austin, he would usually make a point to see his friend Rove, and when George W. Bush was elected Governor of Texas and had Rove join his staff, Land would visit with the two of them together while in town. Land was happy that George W. Bush was governor, having "liberated" his native state from what he called "that despicable woman, Ann Richards."[79] He closely identified with Bush's approach to governing, particularly the "compassionate conservatism" Bush espoused.[80]

As political scientist James Guth points out in his quantitative study on Southern Baptist ministers, this group has shifted in the last thirty years to become a solid bloc of Republican voters. He notes that it is difficult to envision this group collectively leaning any further in the direction of conservative ideology and Republican electoral choices.[81] It

is no surprise, then, that George W. Bush attempted to rally the support of Southern Baptist elites across the country, including Land, in his 2000 bid for the White House. It is no surprise that the ERLC appeared to favor Bush heavily in the election. To be sure, the ERLC never endorsed a candidate. It did, however, devote an entire issue of its journal *Light* to the 2000 election, in which it authored a voter's guide for Southern Baptists, compiling its own carefully selected excerpts of certain Bush and Gore platforms.[82] Analysis of this guide indicates that the ERLC clearly favored Bush. For instance, the excerpt appearing in the guide about Gore's stance on human embryo research was only the summary phrase in support of research, while the excerpt from Bush's stance was much longer and more nuanced, showing the ERLC's obvious lean toward Bush.[83] The "Election 2000" issue also contained an article about the character a president should possess, with strong overtones linking Gore to Clinton and calling for change. Character, it said, was more important than the nation's strong economy. "If there had been a Dow Jones average in Sodom," the guide read, "it would have been up, too—" the implication being that America under Clinton/Gore was like the biblical city condemned by God for its immorality.[84]

The 2000 election was unusual, to say the least, with the nation split, Florida in turmoil for weeks over who had won the state, and the Supreme Court in *Bush v. Gore* left to make the final decision on who would be the forty-third president. When Bush won, Land made clear that he would do anything he could to help the administration, except to come work for it.[85] Soon after Bush was inaugurated in 2001, he and his White House staff began contacting Land weekly because, Land believes, "this president's heartbeat is close to the heartbeat of Southern Baptists when it comes to the very serious and important public policy issues" of Southern Baptists. Land calls Bush a politician who endorses Southern Baptists, rather than vice versa.[86]

Unexpected to the president and to many Southern Baptists, the ERLC's relationship with the Bush administration actually got off to a shaky start in early 2001, when the ERLC vocally disassociated itself from Bush's faith-based initiatives plan. At the annual National Prayer Breakfast that year, Bush expressed his support for the policy as part of his "compassionate conservative" approach to governing, saying:

> My administration will put the federal government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion. Our plan will not favor religious institutions over non-religious institutions. As president, I'm interested in what is constitutional, and I'm interested in what works. The days of discriminating against religious institutions simply because they are religious must come to an end.[87]

This sat well with many evangelicals, but invoking a Baptist heritage of church-state separation,[88] Land expressed his own hesitation about the policy, saying that, "with the government's shekels, sooner or later come the government's shackles."[89] The White House, Land remembers, was blindsided and irked by this opposition, having simply assumed that the ERLC would support the policy.[90] John DiIulio, director of the newly established President's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, characterized scathingly the ERLC's opposition as part of a long-standing insensitivity to the poor.[91] Land, offended by the accusation, called for and was immediately granted a private meeting with DiIulio about the policy. In the hour-and-a-half meeting with Land and Shannon Royce, the ERLC's Director of Legislative Concerns, DiIulio apologized for his comments. After the meeting, Land did not change his mind on his personal stance on faith-based initiatives, but he did soften his criticism.

To Land, a church-state accommodationist,[92] the faith-based initiatives policy did pass constitutional muster, although he personally "would not touch [government] money with a proverbial 10-foot pole" because of the government oversight that comes with government funding.[93] This position surprised the Bush administration initially, but Land eventually sang the

policy's praises, encouraging its enactment because religious initiatives are almost always more effective than their secular counterparts, and because religious groups should not be discriminated against by the government.[94]

Despite this rocky start to their professional relationship, Bush sought Land's advice on a controversial piece of legislation soon after in the summer of 2001. Perhaps the ERLC's biggest impact to date on presidential policy came then, when the ERLC closely advised Bush on the issue of federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. In the weeks leading up to Bush's decision about his position, the calls from the President to Land increased drastically, from weekly to daily, as Bush sought counsel from Land about the ethical implications of this legislation. Bush had promised in his campaign that he would not allow federal dollars to be used for abortions, and when the issue of federal funding for embryonic stem cell research came before Congress that year, Bush toiled over what stance to take, contacting Land every day with a detailed list of questions about the issue. The ERLC drafted its strongest argument against the use of government dollars spent to *generate* embryonic stem cells, an argument that closely resembled the stance Bush eventually laid out. Having kept his position secret until his first ever prime-time speech to the country, Bush ultimately decided that only a certain number of *existing* embryonic cells could be federally funded for research, and no new embryos could be created for use. He reassured Congress that any piece of legislation that would undermine what he thought was right would be subject to veto.[95]

Land was pleased with Bush's final decision, confident that he had impacted it.[96] He was also pleased that Bush's speech had been so well received, calling it the most important speech to humanize unborn babies since *Roe v. Wade*.[97] He was proud that Bush's support on the issue swelled from one-third of Americans before the speech to two-thirds afterward.[98] And by helping Bush so willingly, Land certainly secured his status as a trusted friend of the President.

Possibly one of the biggest indications that the ERLC was indeed one of Bush's insider organizations came when Bush appointed Land to serve on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Although he had promised to help Bush from day one of his presidency, Land was surprised when Bush asked him in the fall of 2001 to serve. As stated earlier, the Commission was the result of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, which was passed unanimously by the Senate and signed into law by Clinton. Land had been instrumental in lobbying for the bill, testifying before Congress on the issue. The Commission consisted of nine members—three presidential appointees, and with a Republican in office, two appointees from the House Democratic leadership, two from the Senate Democrats, and one each from House and Senate Republicans, for a 5-4 balance. Land was Bush's choice, and thus he fulfilled his earlier promise to help the administration in any way he could.

Using as its guideline the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights (1948), which calls for freedom of conscience for all, the Commission, in conjunction with the State Department, forced each American embassy to submit an annual report on the status of religious freedom in its country. Because this mandate resulted in a whole cadre of State Department employees who were consciously concerned about the state of religious freedom around the world, Land believes the International Religious Freedom Act and the Commission on International Religious Freedom have been effective in raising concern for religious liberty worldwide.[99] Bush later honored Land for his work in 2003, appointing him to an unprecedented second term on the Commission.

The ERLC and the Iraq War

When Bush made controversial threats to invade Iraq in 2002, he had a trusted ally in Land when Land made headlines in October as one of a very few religious leaders to endorse Bush's

authority to use preemptive military force against Saddam Hussein's regime. Land authored a letter to Bush, also signed by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship Ministries, D. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Ministries, and Carl Herbster of the American Association of Christian Schools, outlining the reasons why the United States should strike. Just as he had done before the Persian Gulf War in 1991, Land submitted to the President his version of just-war theory, nuanced to fit the situation in Iraq, saying "We believe that the cost of not dealing with [the threat of Hussein's regime] now will only succeed in greatly increasing the cost of human lives and suffering when an even more heavily armed and dangerous Saddam Hussein must be confronted at some date in the not too distant future."[100] The cause for war was just, he said, as to disarm Hussein was to defend freedom. The intent was just, as the United States had no intention of destroying, conquering, or exploiting Iraq. Believing that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and had been sufficiently warned to dispose of them, Land said that striking was America's last resort. Bush's goals of disarming Hussein, dismantling his weapons, and freeing the Iraqi people, he said, "more than meet" the criteria of just war theory's limited and achievable goals. Finally, he said that the human cost would be proportionally greater in the future than the human cost of striking preemptively.[101]

Land's stance gave him national attention, as he appeared in various media outlets following his letter to Bush. He appeared in a "town meeting" on ABC's *Nightline* alongside prominent Republican Senator John McCain and former CIA director James Woolsey in debate against Democratic Senator Carl Levin; former Ambassador to Iraq, Joseph Wilson; and Chicago Theological Seminary president Susan Thistlethwaite. Land was also a guest on C-SPAN's *Washington Journal*, defending Bush's stance.[102]

Although many of Land's criteria—and Bush's, for that matter—were later proven false, he never wavered in his agreement with Bush's foreign policy in Iraq and the broader notion of spreading

freedom around the world. "[Bush] is sort of betting the farm on the truth of our founding document," Land has said, "that all men are endowed by God with certain unalienable rights—and when people are given the choice, they will choose freedom and liberty. And I think he's right."[103] Having done his own research on the issue, Land agrees with the democratic peace theory that free societies never attack free societies, and he therefore believes that Bush's entire Middle Eastern policy of spreading freedom means maximizing peace. He conveys his support on this issue to Bush every time they meet together.[104]

What makes this support most interesting is that Land was one of very few religious leaders to come out in favor of the preemptive strike. Based on his standards of just-war, Land appears justified in his support. Although it was later determined that Saddams' weapons of mass destruction did not exist, therefore undermining one of Land's just-war standards, Land still unwaveringly believes the preemptive strike was the correct decision. His reason? On January 30, 2005, Iraq held peaceful elections, which, to Land, signified that the world is a safer place.[105]

Election 2004—Land's Biggest Public Role Yet

Having supported Bush almost unequivocally during his first term, it is no surprise that Land wanted to help ensure a second term for the President. Consequently, he was active in encouraging people to vote during the 2004 election. While he never endorsed a candidate, following the ERLC's precedent, he was, for all intents and purposes, the public spokesperson for Southern Baptists and conservative evangelicals who were credited by many for winning the election for George W. Bush.[106] The ERLC developed an extensive voting guide and campaign called "I Vote Values," which had the long-term effect of helping to establish the moniker "Values Voter." The initiative included a tour across America in an eighteen-wheeler displaying the "I Vote Values" logo, as well as an

elaborate website and paper materials devoted to educating Christians on the importance of connecting "biblical values with healthy democracy."[107] Land appeared on *Meet the Press*, *Larry King Live*, *Frontline*, and many other prominent television shows, expressing the need for Christians to vote biblically, particularly in reference to abortion and same-sex marriage—issues front and center on the Bush campaign.

After Bush won the election, "moral values" became "the hanging chad"[108] of the election, as exit polls credited "moral values" as the determining factor for many voters, particularly the evangelical Christians, whom Land called "the driving engine" of Bush's victory.[109] Having encouraged so many people to vote on moral values in his "I Vote Values" campaign, Land's visibility in popular media increased quickly following Bush's victory. With this visibility, Land became an unofficial spokesperson for the President on values issues, telling stories about personal encounters with Bush and his deep faith.[110] Many journalists looked to Land to piece together the puzzle of Bush's faith. To the countless Southern Baptists Land spoke with in churches each week, he became like a presidential pastor, being told by Southern Baptists, as he recalls, "Please, tell the President and Mrs. Bush that we're praying for them, and how much we support them and how much we're praying for their safety and for his wisdom and guidance."[111] In many ways, Land became a religious intermediary between the President and the media and general public—a remarkable new role when one views it, as this essay has, through the lens of Land's much smaller stature when he took over the CLC in 1988.

As for his exhortation for Bush's second term, Land simply offered this in 2004: "Stay the course, Mr. President."[112]

Conclusion

Historian Barry Hankins has argued that the cultural program is the glue that holds Southern Baptist conservatives together today much in the same way that the inerrancy of Scripture

did during the SBC controversy of the 1980s.[113] If this is the case, then it is no surprise that Land has emerged as the most popular public Southern Baptist figure, representing the public policy interests of a remarkably cohesive bloc. As has been shown here, Land's aggressive approach to representing these interests has placed him on a fascinating journey, particularly when these interests have come to bear in presidential politics. Still new to the game when George H.W. Bush was in office, the CLC was simply another participant in the conversation, often heard, but rarely listened to. During the Clinton years, the agency usually shouted, and was ignored more often than not by the President, but not by the media. During Bush's tenure, Land and the body he represents have been given a warm reception in the Oval Office, often invited for intimate chats by a president who identifies closely with Southern Baptists.

Certainly, the journey is not over for Land and the ERLC in presidential politics. While the agency may not always be as well-received by other presidents as it has been by George W. Bush, it certainly appears that as long as Southern Baptists remain an important constituent group to presidential candidates, the ERLC will enjoy an important place in public policy conversations. How it uses this position remains to be seen, but it is evident that certain issues will always remain on the agenda—abortion, homosexual rights, church-state relations. In each of these, with Land at the helm, the ERLC is helping Southern Baptists to lead the evangelical charge in what it perceives to be an intensifying culture war, and presidents, of whatever stripe, are forced to pay attention.

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NOTES

[1]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1853, 24.

[2]Merrill Hawkins, Jr., "Attitudes Toward the White House," *Baptist History and Heritage* XXXII, 1 (1997): 5-17. Significant portions of the below description of the Social Service Agency's relationship with the presidency belong to Hawkins.

[3]Richard Land, interview by author March 15, 2005.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Richard Land, "The Crisis in the Persian Gulf and 'Just Wars,'" *Light,* April/June 1991, 4.

[9]Just War Theory, as outlined by Land, appears as follows:

1. *Just Cause*. War is only permissible to resist aggression and defend those victimized by it. Only defensive war is acceptable.
2. *Just Intent*. The only acceptable motive must be to secure justice for all involved. Revenge, conquest and economic benefit are insufficient, illegitimate and unacceptable motives.
3. *Last resort*. Resort to arms can only be morally legitimate when all other avenues of conflict resolution have been rebuffed or have demonstrably failed.
4. *Legitimate authority*. The use of military force is only the prerogative of governments. Consequently, only the duly constituted civil authority can legitimatize military action. However helpful a United Nations Security Council vote may be, for Americans the duly constituted authority is the government of the United States, and the authorizing vehicle is a declaration of war or a special joint resolution of Congress.
5. *Limited goals*. If the purpose is peace, then annihilation of the enemy or total destruction of his civilization is not acceptable. "Total war" is beyond the pale. Also, unless one's survival or liberty are imperiled, it is not acceptable to resort

to war unless the goals are achievable.

6. *Proportionality*. Will the human cost of the armed conflict to both sides be proportionate to the stated objectives and goals? Does the good gained by resort to armed conflict justify the cost of lives lost and bodies maimed?
7. *Noncombatant immunity*. No war can be just which does not disqualify noncombatants as legitimate military targets and which does not seek to minimize collateral, inadvertent civilian casualties. No one has the right to make war on civilians. This outline appears in Land, "The Crisis of the Persian Gulf and 'Just Wars,'" 4.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Land, interview by author.

[12]Land, "The Crisis in the Persian Gulf and 'Just Wars,'" 4.

[13]Land, interview by author.

[14]Louis Moore, "CLC director, others express concern to Bush about religious liberty," *Salt* 1, no.1 (May 1991), 2.

[15]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1991, 232.

[16]Tom Strode, "CLC executive director meets with President," *Light*, Jan/March 1991, 14.

[17]"CLC seeks reformation of NEA," *Salt* 1, no. 1 (1991), 1.

[18]"White House Forces out NEA Chairman," *Salt* 2, no. 2 (1992), 2.

[19]See David T. Morgan, *The New Crusades, The New Holy Land: Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1969-1991* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 177.

[20]See Oran Smith, *The Rise of Baptist Republicanism* (New York: New York University Press), 1997, 225.

[21]Morgan, 178-79.

[22]This is according to Jesse C. Fletcher, The *Southern Baptist Convention: A Sesquicentennial History* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers), 1994, 328.

[23]See Smith, 225.

[24]Land, interview by author.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Tom Strode, "Political activity charges against Commission not new," *Light*, November/December 1992, 7.

[28]Strode makes mention of this charge. See Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]This was a popular phrase used by the Clinton campaign in 1992.

[31]Richard Land, "A Mandate?" *Salt* 2, no. 6 (November-December 1992): 2

[32]Phillip Yancey, "The Riddle of Bill Clinton's Faith," *Christianity Today* 38, no. 5 (1994), 26.

[33]Ibid. See also Bill Clinton, *My Life* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York: 2004), 39.

[34]Yancey, 26.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Edward Dobson, quoted in Yancey, 27.

[37]Richard Land, "An Open Letter to Evangelical Leaders Visiting the White House," appeared in *Light*, November/December 1994, 6.

[38]Richard Land, Letter to President-elect Bill Clinton, November 12, 1992, copy in author's possession.

[39]bid.

[40]Ibid.

[41]"Clinton delivers on abortion promises," *Salt* 3, no. 3 (1993), 4.

[42]"The 'Gay' '90s? Oval Office meeting, March Push Homosexual Movement into Limelight," *Salt* 3, no. 3 (1993), 1-2. See also Richard Land, "The 'Gay' '90s or the Godly '90s?" *Salt* 3, no. 3 (1993), 2.

[43]Land, interview by author.

[44]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1993, 30.

[45]Land, interview by author.

[46]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1993, 90-91. The motion read, "Last year the Southern Baptist Convention took a biblical and historical stance against the sin of homosexuality. It is time for us to take another stand. We have a Southern Baptist who is doing more to promote and encourage homosexuality than any one in the history of the United States. His church has not taken biblical action as is described in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. Therefore, I believe it is our responsibility to take action. I, therefore, move that we, the Southern Baptist Convention, unseat messengers from Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, because due to their lack of action they are by their silence supporting Bill Clinton's endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle." The motion failed to receive enough votes for passage.

[47]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1993, 95-96.

[48]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1994, 100.

[49]Ibid., 101-102.

[50]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1995, 88-89.

[51]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1996, 86-87.

[52]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1998, 88.

[53]*Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 1999, 100-101.

[54]*Salt* 3, no. 3, 1993.

[55]See Matthew 5:13.

[56]"How CLC addresses homosexual rights," *Salt* 3, no. 1 (1993), 1.

[57]Richard Land, "The 'Gay' '90s or the Godly '90s?" *Salt* 3, no. 3 (1993), 2.

[58]Ibid. See also "Alert on homosexuals in the military: What can concerned Christians do?" *Salt* 3, no. 3 (1993).

[59]See Smith, 228.

[60]"Health, death and taxes: President Clinton's reform proposal would fund and expand abortion," *Salt* 3, no. 5 (1993), 1.

[61]Richard Land, "Health care reform and human life," *Salt* 3, no. 5 (1993), 2.

[62]"Health Care Reform: A Statement of Concerns," *Salt* 4, no. 2 (1994).

[63]See Barry Hankins, *Uneasy in Babylon: Southern Baptist Conservatives and American Culture* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002), 163.

[64]"Why CLC opposes nomination," *Salt* 5, no. 3 (1995), 1.

[65]"News conference gains attention," *Light*, May/June 1995, 11.

[66]"Clinton protects partial infanticide," *Salt* 6, no. 2 (1996), 1.

[67]Richard Land, "The President's Terrible Veto," *Salt* 6, no. 2 (1996), 2.

[68]"SBC presidents plead with Clinton," *Salt* 7, no. 3 (1997), 1.

[69]Richard Land, "Stop the Persecution of Christians," *Salt* 7, no. 5 (1997), 2. This text is an edited version of Land's testimony at the hearing before the Committee on International Relations.

[70]Land, interview with author.

[71]Richard Land, "Truth Telling, Forgiveness, and Consequences," *Salt* 8, no. 4 (1998), 2.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Richard Land, quoted in "House impeaches President," *Salt* 8, no. 5 (1998).

[74]Richard Land, "Impeachment verdict has grave consequences." Statement republished in *Salt* 9, no. 1 (1999), 1.

[75]Richard Land, "When Leaders Lie, People Can Die—A Lesson From Vietnam," *Salt* 9, no. 1 (1999), 2.

[76]Ibid.

[77]One of the sides as argued by James Davison Hunter. See James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (U.S.: BasicBooks, 1991).

[78]Land, interview by author.

[79]Ibid.

[80]Ibid.

[81]James Guth, "Southern Baptist Convention," in *Pulpit and Politics: Clergy in American Politics at the Advent of the Millennium*, ed. Corwin E. Smidt (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2004), 111.

[82]ERLC voter registration guide for 2000 election. Appears in *Light*, Election 2000, 5-8.

[83]Ibid., 8.

[84]Adrian Rogers, "Does Character Count: Building One Nation Under God," *Light*, Election 2000, 10.

[85]Land, interview by author.

[86]Richard Land, "The Jesus Factor," interview by Public Broadcast System, November 18, 2003 and February 4, 2004, 2; available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jesus/interviews/land.html; Internet; accessed April 1, 2005.

[87]George W. Bush, quoted in Richard Land, "Constitutionally Safe, Religiously Dangerous?" *Light*, Convention 2001, 2.

[88]To be sure, Land is not a church-state separationist as that position is usually defined. Rather, he calls himself an accommodationist who believes in a church-state separation unlike that defined by the Supreme Court from 1947 to 1980 or so.

[89]Land, interview by author.

[90]Ibid.

[91]*Light*, Convention 2001, 3.

[92]For a description of the accommodationist position, see Carl Esbeck, "Five Views of Church-State Relations in Contemporary American Thought," *Brigham Young University Law Review* 2 (1986): 371-404.

[93]Richard Land, "Constitutionally Safe, Religiously Dangerous?"

Light, Convention 2001, 2.

[94]Land, interview by author.

[95]George W. Bush, speech on federal funding for stem cell research, 9 August 2001, available from http://archives.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/08/09; Internet; accessed April 1, 2005.

[96]Land, interview by author.

[97]Land, "The Jesus Factor."

[98]Ibid.

[99]Land, interview by author.

[100]Richard Land, Bill Bright, Charles Colson, D. James Kennedy, and Carl Herbster, quoted in "Land Supports Bush Policy in Iraq," *eSalt* 3, no. 12 (2002), 2.

[101]Ibid.

[102]"Hussein's 'Evil' Calls for Use of Force, Land Says," *eSalt* 4, no. 5 (2003), 2.

[103]Land, interview by author.

[104]Ibid.

[105]Ibid.

[106]Hanna Rosin, "Beyond Belief: The real religious divide in the United States isn't between the churched and the unchurched. It's between different kinds of believers," *The Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2005, 117.

[107]Party Platform Comparison Resource, available from http://www.ivotevalues.com; Internet; accessed April 4, 2005.

[108]Rosin, 117. A "chad" is a tiny bit of paper that is punched from a ballot in an election to signify the candidate for whom an elector intends to vote. A "hanging chad" is a chad that did not completely detach from the ballot. This was a particular issue in the 2000 presidential election, when in Florida a number of hanging chads forced election officials to examine voter intent.

[109]Land, quoted in Rosin, 117.

[110]See Land, "The Jesus Factor." In this interview, Land is inquired in great detail about the link between Bush's faith and the faith of the evangelicals who elected him.

[111]Ibid.

[112]Richard Land, "Stay the Course, Mr. President," *Faith and Family Values*, January/February 2005, 4.

[113]See Hankins, 276.

BOOK REVIEWS

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A Faithful Fellowship. By Bryan Baggett and the Church. Linden, TX: 2003.

In *A Faithful Fellowship*, Pastor Bryan Baggett has written a brief account of the fifty year history of the Pinecrest Baptist Church in Linden, Texas. The volume depicts a church born out of the work of the "preacher boys" from East Texas Baptist University who led revivals in the area, serving the needs of Linden while attempting to remain financially solvent. The three major aspects that stand out in Pinecrest's history are the steady change of pastors, slow but steady growth, and debt. During its fifty year history, the church has had sixteen pastors with none staying more than nine years. They have completed three major building programs during these fifty years. The church was almost consolidated with First Baptist Linden and has been debt-free only during two very brief occasions. The most stable period of Pinecrest's existence occurred during the nine-year tenure of its ninth pastor, H.S. Morris. Morris was one of Pinecrest's more experienced pastors and already had grown children. This tenure stands in contrast to that of most of the church's other pastors. Morris, because of personal

finances, was able to stay at Pinecrest longer than any other pastor. He provided needed stability and became the only paster to retire while at Pinecrest.

Baggett tells the story of Pinecrest by depicting the events that occurred during the ministries of its sixteen pastors. All the pastors were sincere men and worked hard for God and their church. However, all the pastors except Morris were called away to larger churches. To Baggett's credit, he updates the lives and ministries of former pastors long after they left Pinecrest. Using mostly church minutes and interviews, Baggett provides details concerning missions giving, staff members, building programs, and baptisms. Though Pinecrest never grew any larger than one hundred and fifty in attendance on Sunday morning, the church's giving to the Cooperative Program and numbers of baptisms demonstrate its viability and absolute service to God. The book concludes with six excellent appendices that provide further detail to the story. The one glaring weakness in *A Faithful Fellowship* is its lack of description of its members and events within the church. Information concerning worship services, revivals, and biographical anecdotes of members would have added color to the Pinecrest story. Still, I commend Pastor Baggett for his excellent work on this text and Pinecrest Baptist Church for her service to Christ.—*Reviewed by Joe Early, Jr., Assistant Professor of Religion, University of the Cumberlands*

God Has Planted Good Seed: The 100th Anniversary of the Del Rio-Uvalde Baptist Association, 1903-2003. By Pam Benson. San Antonio, Texas: 2003. 255 pp.

In *God Has Planted Good Seed: The 100th Anniversary of the Del Rio-Uvalde Baptist Association, 1903-2003*, Pam Benson has written an outstanding history of the Texas Baptist Association. Every topic that should be covered in a well-written history is covered in this text. Benson begins by providing background

for the original work of Baptists in Texas before launching into her account of the Del Rio-Uvalde Association. This work is very detailed, well documented, and well researched. The text contains accounts of the Alto Frio Camp, a year-by-year synopsis (where records are available) of the associational meetings, and a detailed record of every church that has ever been a member or located within the confines of the Del Rio-Uvalde Association. The histories of the individual churches are made even stronger by the inclusion of photographs of the churches, many of which were taken by the author. In many of the histories of the member churches, Benson also provides brief discussions of the founding of the town and provides interesting anecdotes concerning events that occurred in the town. Another strength of this book is the appendixes. In the first appendix, Benson has provided a listing of all the pastors of the association, the churches in which they served, and their dates of their service. A second appendix is a time line from 1624-2003 of Baptist, world, and Uvalde Associational events. The third appendix contains the minutes from the organizational meeting of the Uvalde Association in 1903. This is one of the best, if not the best, associational histories I have had the privilege of reading. Benson is very thorough and accurate, and the text is well-written. This work should serve as a model for all future associational histories. I recommend God has Planted Good Seed: The 100th Anniversary of the Del Rio-Uvalde Baptist Association, 1903-2003, without reservation and with highest regards.—*Reviewed by Joe Early, Jr., Assistant Professor of Religion, University of the Cumberlands*

God's Plan in the Wilderness: First Baptist Church of Anson, Texas, 1880-2005. By Rita Jones. Abilene, Texas: H. V. Chapman and Sons, 2005. 197 pp.

Most church histories are written primarily for the members of the congregation. Consequently, these works tend to be celebrative in tone, glossing over conflicts and describing

storms in the church's history in victorious terms. Moreover they tend to be limited by the nature and availability of their sources, often limited to materials such as the minutes of business meetings, membership rosters, and reminiscences of long-time members. While the former is the case with respect to God's Plan in the Wilderness, the work evidences anything but a scarcity of source material.

While the work is quite long, it reflects meticulous and exhaustive research. This fact demonstrates the benefit of good record keeping on the part of the church, which has apparently been the case throughout the history of the First Church of Anson.

With the fruit of her research Jones weaves a strong narrative; the book flows well. She highlights pastors and other significant church leaders, as well as building programs, mission work and other ministry initiatives. Rather than merely chronicling these items, the narrative unfolds in the context of events in town, state, Baptist life, and country.

As one may infer the work is not critical. Its celebrative tone is reminiscent of Routh's biography of Gambrell or James's biography of Truett. One type of reference to difficulties in the church is notable, however. During its first ten years in existence the congregation regularly practiced church discipline in response to behavior such as drunkenness, dancing, and profane language (pp. 14-15). Jones describes the disciplinary actions as evidence of conflict, failing to note that the practice of church discipline was common in Baptist churches at the time.

The book contains four appendices that include selected membership rolls from various periods of the church's history, lists of all the pastors, deacons, other staff members, photographs of the church buildings, church covenants old and new, and the constitution and bylaws. A researcher of West Texas Baptist congregational life may find these resources helpful. Moreover, of particular interest to students of Texas Baptist history is the treatment of the church's first pastor, G.W. Scarborough, father of Lee Rutland Scarborough of the

Southwestern Seminary's "Chair of Fire" fame, as well as the second president of that institution.

The book is overly dramatic at places, for example, its editorial comments concerning certain events such as the 1962 U. S. Supreme Court decision to prohibit official public school prayer, yet it nevertheless epitomizes a celebrative, yet well-researched history. Overall, therefore, the work serves as a beneficial model and source for students of local church life and ministry.—*Reviewed by Marshall Johnston, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Aransas Pass, Texas*

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minutes
2005 Annual Meeting
November 14, 2005

The Texas Baptist Historical Society met Monday, November 14 at 10:00am at the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Austin, Texas, with 52 people present.

Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, presented the annual membership and financial report. For 2005 the society had a membership of 103. During the year, the Society received income from journal sales and dues totaling $1142.00 with expenditures of $2,889.75. On November 14, the checking account balance was $17,513.49.

The Society members endorsed the recommendations of the Nominating Committee and elected the following officers for 2005-2006: Van Christian, Comanche, President; Ellen Brown, Waco, Vice-President; and Alan Lefever, Fort Worth, Secretary-Treasurer. Mark Bumpus, Mineral Wells, was elected to serve a two-year term on the Executive Committee.

Lefever presented the following budget for 2005-2006:

INCOME

Historical Committee, BGCT	$5,800.00
Membership Dues & Journal Sales	3,000.00
Luncheon	300.00
Transfer from reserves	-0-
Total Income	$9,100.00

EXPENSES

Journal Printing	$4500.00
Journal Postage	400.00
Journal Labor	2000.00
Journal Supplies	300.00
Newsletter Printing	100.00
Newsletter Postage	300.00
Awards	600.00
Speaker's Honoraria	600.00
Miscellaneous Supplies	50.00
Luncheon	300.00
Total Expenses	$9,150.00

Van Christian presented the 2005 Church History Writing awards:

Billye Freeman Pratt for *Spreading the Light: First Baptist Church Kingsville, Texas 1904-2004*

Ronald C. Ellison for *Calvary Baptist Church Beaumont, Texas: A Centennial History 1904-2004*

Lefever announced the program for the Spring meeting with Texas State Historical Association, Austin, March 2, 2006: "Influential or Irrelevant?: The Impact of Religious Beliefs on the Political Careers of Richard Land and Bill Moyers."

Butch Strickland, Independence, presented a paper on "The Foundations of the Lord are Sure: An Early History of Independence Baptist Church." The meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

Respectfully submitted,
Alan J. Lefever
Secretary-Treasurer
Texas Baptist Historical Society