



1992: A Year to Look Back

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Announcement: 1992 Southern Baptist Founders Conference

Announcement: 1992 Southern Baptist Founders YOUTH Conference



The Founders Journal



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Richard Fuller (1804-1876); early Southern Baptist leader; 3rd President of the Convention

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1992: A Year to Look Back

Tom Ascol

There is great value in taking note of significant anniversaries. Very often they provide occasion for remembrance of unusual blessings of God in the past. Such memories can challenge us to greater faithfulness in our present tasks as we are reminded of the gracious ways of God in using men and movements in history.

Other anniversaries evoke less pleasant memories, but may, nevertheless, help us understand more of our present situation by reminding us of people and events whose shadows still loom large over the contemporary scene.

The anniversary of Charles Spurgeon's death on January 31, 1892 fits into the former category. Though Spurgeon's beliefs and labors are more admired than accurately understood by modern evangelicals, his memory provides a lasting reminder that it has pleased God to use the foolishness of preaching (not foolish preaching!) to save those who believe.

This year also marks the two-hundredth anniversary of Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti's birth in Italy. Better known by his papal title, Pius IX, his memory would be placed in the latter category by evangelicals. During his reign as pope (the longest in history) two important Roman Catholic doctrines were officially created: the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary (1854), and papal infallibility (1870).

These dogmas live on in Roman Catholic theology. We should be reminded of the need to contend just as strongly in our day as the Reformers did in their day for the principle of *sola scriptura*.

Another birth, of far greater significance to Baptists (and one which affords them much more pleasant memories), took place in 1792. This beginning was not that of a man, but of a movement. It occurred in the little English town of Kettering. There, on October 2, in the home of a deacon's widow, the "Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen" was duly formed. Thus the Calvinistic Baptists of England gave birth to the modern foreign missions movement.

This move marked the culmination of much prayer and effort which began many years earlier. In 1894 the Scottish minister John Erskine sent to the British Baptist pastor, John Ryland, Jr., a copy of *Humble Attempt*, Jonathan Edwards's famous call to prayer (the full title of the treatise is, *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer, For the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, Pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies Concerning the Last Time*). Ryland passed the treatise on to his fellow pastor and friend, John Sutcliff.

Sutcliff was so challenged by Edwards's words that at the next meeting of the Northamptonshire Association of Baptist churches he made a motion for the establishment of regular prayer meetings for revival. The proposal was approved and the association sent out a circular letter calling for one hour on the first Monday of each month to be set aside for corporate prayer for revival.

Though this right use of appropriate means was enjoined, revival did not immediately come. In fact, the moral and spiritual life in the land had grown so dim that in 1785 Ryland lamented to his colleague Andrew Fuller (whose church was also a member of the Northamptonshire Association), "[there is] scarcely anything worth the name of

religion left upon the earth."

During this same time, in addition to the associational concert of prayer, several ministers began to fast and pray the second Tuesday of every other month. They met together, in Fuller's words, "to seek the revival of real religion, and the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world."

This common burden for revival resulted in the development of an intimate fellowship among Fuller, Ryland, Sutcliff, and William Carey, who also pastored a church in their association. Later, Samuel Pearce joined them in their concerns so that together they comprised a sort of pastoral quintet of prayer for a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit upon their generation.

On May 30, 1792, at the spring meeting of the Northamptonshire Association, Carey preached a moving sermon from Isa. 54:2-3,

Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your habitations; do not despair; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.

From this text Carey developed two points: "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God."

The force of the message was so great that John Ryland claimed he would not have been surprised "if all the people had lifted up their voice and wept." A resolution was passed instructing the next minister's meeting (in the fall) to consider developing a plan to propagate the gospel among the heathen.

It is against this backdrop that the historic event of October 2, 1772, must be viewed. The resultant missionary service of William Carey in India so provoked others to venture forth into new regions with the gospel that he is generally regarded today as the "father of protestant missions."

Certainly the memory of Carey and the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society should encourage us to remain faithful in gospel labors today. There is undoubtedly much which tempts us to be disheartened and despondent over present spiritual conditions. The world in which we live has little regard for God or righteousness. Our denomination is an easy target for justifiably severe criticism. Our own churches seem to make little difference in their communities and we ourselves are far from what we know we should be. Any honest believer could provide a detailed list of specific examples which demonstrate the spiritual and moral decadence of the hour.

Is it naive to follow Carey's admonition in a day like ours? Is expecting great things from God folly, and is attempting great things for God presumptuous? Is it pointless to continue praying for revival? Not unless Carey's God has changed.

To "expect great things" involves having faith in that which God has said that He will do. To "attempt great things" involves yielding obedience to that which God has called us to do.

*What He says we will do,
Where He sends we will go;
Never fear, only trust and obey.*

The darker the hour, the greater the need for an increased measure of both ingredients in our lives and ministries.

Two hundred years ago God established a work whose impact extended around the world. He burdened his people to pray and then answered their prayers. He convicted his people to work and then blessed their labors. He revived his work in the midst of their years.

The spiritual and moral decay in twentieth-century America is not less than it was in eighteenth-century England. Their need of revival was not greater than ours. Neither was Carey's and Fuller's God any greater or more merciful than ours. These are truths worth remembering.

May our faith in and obedience to God begin to approximate more closely that which was demonstrated by the pastors and churches of the Northamptonshire Association in the late 1700s. May their legacy encourage us to persevere as we seek to recover and proclaim the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.



John Bunyan's Preaching

John Brown

Though Bunyan's first appearance as an author was in the region of controversy, it was not along this line his best work was to be done. He was to win the homage of men's hearts by holding up those central verities on which Christians are mainly agreed, and by unfolding the fairer aspects of that life from God which makes them one. Preaching became the passion, as it had become the work, of his life. He gave himself wholly to it, in the sense that he was a whole man in it. At a later time, as he lay a prisoner in Bedford Gaol, he went back in thought over the five years between 1655 and 1660, when he was at large, and laid bare for us the heart-experiences to which he was no stranger as he pleaded with men. More than most, he compassed the range, ascended the heights, and sounded the depths of the preacher's life. Sometimes, he says, he would start with clearness, evidence, and liberty of speech, and before long become so straitened before the people that it seemed to him as if his "head had been in a bag all the time of the exercise." Sometimes he would be seized with a strange faintness and strengthlessness of body on his way to the place of meeting, and afterwards be "tempted to pride and liftings up of heart" at his hold over the people. With the instinct of a real prophet of God, he wished to see the truth, not through other men's eyes, but through his own. He could not use other men's lines, finding "by experience that what was taught him by the Word and Spirit of Christ could be spoken to, maintained, and stood to by the soundest and best established conscience." No preacher of doubts was he, but of assured verities. He felt, he says, "as if an Angel were at his back"; that which he spoke lay with such power and heavenly evidence upon his soul that he could "not be contented with saying I believe and am sure; he thought I was more than sure (if it be lawful so to express myself) that those things which then I asserted were true."

With the true preacher's passionate longing, he strove to get firm grip of the souls of his hearers. "In my preaching I have really been in pain, I have, as it were, travailed to bring forth Children to God." If his work were fruitless it mattered little who praised, or if it were fruitful, who condemned. He often noticed that "when he had a work to do for God in a place, there was a great going of God upon his spirit, leading him to desire to go there." He also observed that such and such souls in particular were strongly set upon his heart, and these very souls afterwards given him as the fruits of his ministry. It was not always his best preparation he found to be most effective. "A word cast in by the by hath done more execution in a Sermon than all that was spoken besides." Sometimes, when he thought he had done no good he did most, and at other times, when he thought he should catch men, he . . . fished for nothing. Occasionally he has been about to take up some smart and searching portion of the word, when up starts the Tempter and asks him if he really is going to preach a Truth which so plainly condemns himself; but he thanks God, who helped him to put down these horrid suggestions, and to bow himself with all his might to condemn Sin and Transgression wherever found, even upon his own conscience. "Let me die, thought I, with the Philistines, rather than deal corruptly with the blessed Word of God."

When tempted to vanity over his success, "the Lord of his precious mercy hath so carried it towards me that for the most part I have but small joy to give way to such a thing. For it hath been my every day's portion to be let into the evil of my own heart, and still made to see such a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein that it hath caused hanging down of the head under all my Gifts and Attainments. I have felt this thorn in the Flesh the very God of mercy to me." He saw that, if he had gifts, but wanted saving grace, he was but as a tinkling cymbal. "This consideration was as a maul on the head of Pride and desire of vain glory. What, thought I, shall I be proud because I am a sounding brass? Is it so much to be a Fiddle?" Love will never die, but gifts will cease and vanish; gifts are not our own, but the Church's, and to be accounted for in stewardship. Gifts, indeed, are desirable, but yet great grace and small gifts are better than great gifts and no grace. At sight of this the snare was broken and he escaped. The enemy not being able to overthrow him by inward temptations set about outward opposition. Bunyan noticed, and

could "instance particulars" to show, that "where the Lord was most at work Satan was busiest, hath there begun to roar in the hearts, and by the mouths of his servants; where the world has raged most there souls have been most awakened."



Unconverted Church Members

I am convinced that one of America's greatest problems is that of unconverted church members. Our churches are filled with people who profess Christ, but who do not possess Him. They claim His name, but they have never submitted to His Person. They want His blessings without His authority. They want His favor without His leadership. They want Him to accept their will for their lives instead of submitting to His will for their lives.

-Bailey Smith



Lordship, Experience, and Interpretation

Ernest Reisinger

There is a danger of forming any doctrine from our experience. Many say, "When I was young I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour and that experience had some influence on my life for a time, but I did not really live an active Christian life for years. Later I was taught that Christ must be my Lord and that the problem with my defeated life was because I had not submitted to Christ as my Lord when I trusted Him as my Saviour. So I did just that-- submitted to Christ as my Lord. Since that experience I have been living the Christian life on a different plain."

We have heard this kind of a testimony in many forms. It has been described in many different ways. Whatever it is called, or however it is described, it affirms a second conversion or a step of consecration. Some may describe it as being filled with the Spirit. Some call it the "deeper life," "higher life" or "victorious life." The Bible knows nothing about these terms.

Whatever it is called, this teaching draws a deep, wide and distinct line between those who have been "consecrated" (having attained the so-called higher life) and other Christians. There is nothing new about this teaching. It is well known. The Roman Catholic writers often maintain that the church is divided into three classes: sinners, penitents and saints. The non-lordship teachers tell us there are three classes of people: the unconverted, converted and the partakers of the "higher life" of complete consecration. They also make distinctions between "natural men," "carnal Christians" and "spiritual Christians" (I will deal with this later). But whether this teaching be old or new, Roman Catholic or Protestant, it is utterly impossible to find it in the scriptures.

The Word of God speaks of two, and only two, great divisions of mankind. It distinguishes between those who are spiritually alive and those who are dead in sin--the believer and the unbeliever, the converted and the unconverted, the travellers in the narrow way and the travellers in the broad way, the wise and the foolish, the children of God and the children of the devil. *Within* each of these two great classes there are, doubtless, various measures of sin and of grace; but it is only the difference between the higher and lower end of an inclined plane. *Between* these two great classes there is an enormous gulf. They are as distinct as life and death, light and darkness, heaven and hell. But of a division into three classes the Word of God says nothing at all! I question the wisdom of making new-fangled divisions which the Bible has not made, and I thoroughly abhor any notion of a second conversion.

That there is a vast difference between one degree of grace and another, that spiritual life admits of growth, and that believers should be continually urged on every account to grow in grace, all this I fully concede. But the theory of a sudden, mysterious transition of a believer into a state of blessedness and *entire consecration* at one mighty bound, I cannot receive. It appears to me to be a man-made invention and I do not find a single plain text to prove it in Scripture.

Gradual growth in grace, growth in knowledge, growth in faith, growth in love, growth in holiness, growth in humility, growth in spiritual-mindedness -- all this I see clearly taught and urged in Scripture, and clearly exemplified in the lives of many of God's saints. But sudden, instantaneous leaps from conversion to *consecration* I fail to see in the Bible. I doubt, indeed, whether we have any warrant for saying that a man can possibly be *converted* without being consecrated to God! More consecrated he doubtless can be, and will be as his grace increases. But if he was not consecrated to God in the very day that he was converted and born again, I do not know what conversion means.

Are not men in danger of undervaluing and underrating the immense blessedness of conversion? Are they not, when they urge believers on to the "higher life" as a second conversion, underrating the length, breadth, depth and height of that great first change which Scripture calls the new birth, the new creation, the spiritual resurrection?

I have sometimes thought, while reading the strong language used by many about "consecration," that those who use it must have a singularly low and inadequate view of "conversion," if indeed they know anything about conversion at all. In short, I have almost suspected that when they were *consecrated*, they were in reality converted for the first time! I decline to tell any converted man that he needs a *second conversion*, and that he may some day pass by one enormous step into a state of entire *consecration*. I cannot see any warrant for such teaching in Scripture. The tendency of this doctrine is thoroughly mischievous, depressing the humble-minded and meek, puffing up the shallow, the ignorant, and the self-conceited, to a most dangerous extent. (I am indebted to Bishop J.C. Ryle for much of the material in the last five paragraphs).

Most, if not all, of the non-lordship teaching includes this two-stage theory of the Christian life.

There are several possible interpretations of these second step, crisis experiences. On the one hand it is possible that the person was never truly saved in the first place. On the other hand, it is possible that such a person did not have biblical assurance when he "accepted Christ as his personal Saviour" (language which is foreign to the New Testament and which means different things to different people).

The point I wish to make is this: *we must interpret our experience by the Bible and not interpret the Bible by our experience*. Likewise, we must never invent some doctrine from our experience. I keep waiting for someone to come up with the following description of this so-called second experience of grace: "I made Christ my personal Prophet," or "I made Christ my personal King, and that is when I started living the real Christian life."

Misinterpretation of experience often results in confusing testimonies. I have heard many testimonies which evidently described real and genuine experiences. The interpretations of those experiences, however, were woefully unbiblical. Most of the second-work-of-grace testimonies come under this error of misinterpreting one's experience. Many times the testifier does not interpret his first experience biblically, and, consequently, fails to interpret the so-called second experience biblically as well.

Most Christians have many deep experiences subsequent to conversion, but the wise ones neither give their experiences some name nor form a doctrine on the basis of them. Lack of wisdom at this point is very dangerous and has caused no small amount of harm and confusion.

It is true that the difference between non-lordship teachers and Lordship teachers is not semantics. It is equally true, however, that, in many instances, it is the interpretation of experiences that is faulty. This is especially true where the second experience conveys the idea of two-level Christianity -- the have's and the have nots. The truth of the matter is that there are as many levels of Christianity as there are Christians. The Bible recognizes these differences as degrees of sanctification.

One caution that I wish to urge is applicable to both non-lordship and Lordship teachers. Both should be very slow to question different experiences. Rather, with the Bible in hand, each should seek to correct the erroneous interpretation of what may well be a genuine experience. It is therefore very important in both speaking and writing to distinguish clearly between experience and the interpretation of the experience. In some cases both may be erroneous and unbiblical, but in many cases it is the interpretation that is unbiblical when the experience may be genuine.

The Lordship controversy is just one of many "two-step salvation" errors. There are not just two steps. There are many, many steps. A better way to express it is "many degrees of sanctification." Submitting to Christ's Lordship is not a one-time experience. Rather, it is a life-long experience. No Christian can claim to be fully yielded in this world, otherwise he or she would be sinless.

This two-step salvation, or second conversion, error has done great damage and caused many divisions in the Christian church. It has produced a generation of antinomian, self-deceived church members and has done great harm to true conversion and true religion.

Many Christians can point to times of fresh commitment, to fresh surrender, to stronger and joyous assurance. They can also point to some backsliding in heart, periods of coldness and indifference. Some have lost their assurance (not their salvation--if they ever had it). Many of us can relate times of crisis, some of which knock us backward and some of which move us forward. But there is never a time in the true Christian's life when Christ is not his Lord.

There is another area that both Lordship teachers and non-lordship teachers need to be very cautious in judging. Specifically, we must all remember that many true Christians have a far better experience with God than their understanding of divine truth about God.

Let me illustrate this by a personal story. I was preaching at a retreat in Harvey Cedars, New Jersey. My topic was Christ our Prophet, Christ our Priest and Christ our King. A young lady about eighteen years old came to speak to me at the end of the service. She told me that her father was a missionary and that he never told her that she must trust Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. She had come to Christ for forgiveness and salvation several years before, but she did not consciously trust Him as Prophet or King. I asked her about her experience. "Did you desire to be taught the will of Christ?" She answered, "Yes." "Did you desire for Him to reign over you and protect you from your enemies and His?" Again, she answered that she had. After talking with her a few minutes it was apparent that she was a devout Christian. And this is what I told her: "I believe from what you tell me that you have every reason to believe that your experience with Christ is real and genuine and that tonight your understanding caught up with your experience."

We all know Christians who give every evidence of being born again, yet they know nothing about the theological term "regeneration." Their experience is better than their understanding. John says in his little epistle, "He that has the Son has life." When we have Christ we have Him in all of His offices--all of His person and all of His saving work--though one may not ever fully understand it.

It is important to make a distinction between: (1) a person who claims to be saved and lives like a saved person, yet does not fully understand the implications of Christ's Lordship, and (2) those who reject the will of Christ, who have no desire or intention to follow Jesus, who quarrel with any submission to Christ and His authority as Teacher and King, who refuse to bow to His claims, and yet who, all the while, claim to be saved and satisfied. This is antinomianism.

There should be no argument that in the first example the person has bowed to the Lordship of Christ, whether he understands it or not. But the second example is entirely different, and this person has no reason to believe he is a Christian at all. Notice I said, "no reason to believe" (assurance). That is as far as we can go in judging the matter. We cannot look into the Lamb's Book of Life. We cannot have Christ in halves or in parts.

I am sorry that the phrase, "trust Christ as your personal Saviour," has crept into the Christian church in the last 100

years and has become common in present-day evangelism. It did not come from the New Testament, the apostles, the respected church fathers or the reformers. It is not found in the Westminster standards or in the Old Baptist Confessions. You will not find it among the great preachers of the past--men such as Bunyan, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, etc.

It is obvious that this terminology and idea which it conveys have contributed to the Lordship controversy. I personally do not like it nor do I use it. It is true that, if we have Christ, then He is our personal Saviour, our personal Prophet, our personal Priest, our personal King. He is all of that together or none of it at all.

Many times those who testify of this second experience refer to their first experience as "before I made Christ Lord." There is not a line in the Bible that will support such language or such a doctrinal concept.

I cringe at the thought of any "supposed convert" of the non-lordship teaching saying, "I am saved but Jesus is not my Lord;" or "I am saved but I have not submitted to Christ's Lordship" or, "I am saved but I have no desire to be taught of Christ." This kind of thinking is preposterous and totally foreign to Bible salvation. It is essentially different from the case of a new convert who does not realize all the implications of the Lordship of Christ in every area of his life. There is a clear teaching in the Bible of growing in grace, and it is a lifetime process.

Yes, our gospel is a gospel of belief. It is also a gospel of obedience. Obedience is one of the tests that John makes clear in his first epistle that believers might KNOW that they have eternal life.

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him" (1 John 2:3-5).

Paul, also knows of the relationship between true believing and evangelical obedience.

"And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

We see it taught in Hebrews 5:8,9: "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." Yes, it is also a gospel of obedience.

The hymn writer had it straight when he wrote, "Trust and Obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey."

Jesus' statement is very concise and succinct: "If you love Me keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

This is not works-salvation but works as a result of true believing, as a result of regeneration. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

This passage does not say that only some are new creatures, or that it would be nice if they were new creatures. Neither does it say that this new creation is optional or reserved only for those who make Christ Lord of their lives.

To be in Christ is to be a new creature. It is to have Christ as Saviour and Lord.



Idleness

Some temptations come to the industrious, but all temptations attack the idle. Idle Christians are not tempted of the devil so much as they do tempt the devil to tempt them. Idleness sets the door of the heart ajar and asks Satan to come in; but if we are occupied from morning to night, should Satan get in, he must break through the door. Under sovereign grace, and next to faith, there is no better shield against temptation than obedience to the precept, that ye be "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

-Charles Spurgeon



The Sovereignty of God and the Killeen Massacre

Fred A. Malone

(This sermon was prepared on Eph. 1:11 and Rom. 8:28 after the week of the Killeen, Texas, massacre. On Wednesday, October 16, 1991, George Hennard, Jr., of Belton, Texas, drove through a window at the Luby's Cafeteria in Killeen and proceeded to murder 28 innocent people, wounding many others. This event was the worst one-time mass murder in American history.)

All week I prepared a different message for you today. At the last minute I realized that I could not preach it to you. There are too many questions left hanging in the air. Too many questions which some of you are asking.

Why did the Killeen massacre happen? Why did God not stop it? How could He allow such evil to exist in this world if He is so sovereign and good and rules all things? Why do innocent people die? Why is there suffering in this world? How can parents treat their poor children so abusively? How can husbands and wives do the things they do to each other? How could a man like George Hennard, Jr., do such a thing as cold-blooded murder of innocent people, unless he were less than a man? Was there something wrong with him or with God for letting it happen? Most of you have gone through tragedies, abuses, sufferings, and trials which cause you to ask "Why?" or "Why me?"

These questions and many more revolve around a central issue which has plagued philosophers and theologians and humble Christians for centuries:

If God is a loving God *and* a sovereign God, how could He have allowed sin to enter this world which He made? And if He did allow it to enter, why does He allow it to continue? Is He out of control? Is He too weak to handle it? Does He exist?

The answer to this issue involves several truths which need to be understood before a final answer comes forth.

First: If Adam, our first parent, had not sinned against God, the massacre at Killeen. would never have happened.

Whenever you ask the question, "How could God allow sin and evil to exist in this world?", you are asking the wrong question biblically. Do not misunderstand me. We *must* ask God the hard questions in order to have integrity in our faith. David did so in the Psalms. However, questioning God about the existence of sin often presumes that evil's presence proves that something is wrong with God and His eternal plan which allows evil to exist.

The Bible traces the existence of sin in the men of this world to Adam, our forefather:

Therefore, just as through one man sin *entered* into the world, and death through sin, and so death *spread* to all men, *because* all sinned (Rom. 5:12).

The Bible teaches that Adam represented every member of the human race in his actions. If he had never believed Satan's lies nor chosen to disobey God, sin would not have entered God's world and death would not have spread to all men. But God cursed Adam's sin by allowing his choice of rebellion against God to spread to all His descendants. Sin, death, pain, tears, all came upon the whole human race because perfect Adam represented us and chose to sin

against God.

The resulting condition of man's heart, now made in Adam's fallen image (Gen. 3:5), explains the source of all the evil in this world as it comes from men. Adam's sinful nature passed on to all of us. That is why David said "In sin my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5b), "Those who speak lies go astray from birth" (Ps. 58:3b). God's opinion of man's nature is what some would describe as pessimistic:

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5).

If you say that it is not fair for God to let one man represent you and all men, so that Adam's sinful nature and the curse for his sin spread to others, then you also have a biblical problem with the representation of Jesus Christ for sinners in the Gospel:

So then as through *one* transgression there *resulted condemnation to all men*, even so through *one* act of righteousness there *resulted justification* of life to all men. For as through the *one* man's disobedience the many were *made sinners*, even so through the obedience of the *One* the many will be *made righteous* (Rom. 5:18-19).

You cannot have it both ways. If it is right for God to allow our perfect Jesus Christ to bear your sins and to represent you upon the Cross, then it is right for God to allow perfect Adam to represent you in the garden. And if it is just for God to impute and to impart to the Christian the righteous nature of Jesus Christ, then it is just as right for God to impute and to impart to all men the sinful nature of Adam your father.

Our forefathers at Southern Seminary understood this biblical teaching. That is why the article on the fall of man in the *Abstract of Principles*, signed by every professor since 1858, reads:

God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but through the temptation of Satan, *he transgressed* the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; *whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt* and wholly opposed to God and His law, *are under condemnation*, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors (Art. VI).

The Bible is very clear. All sin in this world begins in the heart of Satan and of man. The harsh truth is that if Adam had not sinned, Killeen would never have happened.

Second: Killeen is a testimony to the goodness of God.

Yes, I said that Killeen is a testimony to the goodness of God. Follow my reasoning. The existence of evil in men is far worse than we imagine. If you want to know what men really are like, look at the Bible and then read the newspapers. There is no contradiction between them unless you choose to ignore the newspapers. *"Every thought and intent of man's heart is only evil continually."*

The miracle of Killeen is that it does not happen every day! Every day God restrains men from their impulses to kill, to hate, to rape. If He allowed some of you to follow the imaginations and temptations in your hearts, you would be in jail now. This is true even for Christians.

God is not unjust to allow the human race to live with the sins they chose in Adam and still choose every day. The truth is that God restrains all men from their sins. God restrains men every day. It is when men turn from Him and then He removes His restraining hand that we see things like Killeen:

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are *without excuse*. . . . Therefore, *God gave them over* in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them, For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, *God gave them over* to degrading passions. . . . And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, *God gave them over* to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper. . . . (Rom. 1:20, 24,26,28).

God restrains men every day. But whenever we see a Killeen, it is God giving men over to what is *really* in their hearts. Many who knew George Hennard, Jr., repeatedly said on camera and in the newspapers: "I knew something was going to happen; it's a miracle it hasn't happened before now." That is a biblically accurate analysis. God restrained George Hennard many times.

It is only the goodness and sovereignty of God joined together which restrains sinful creatures every day. Killeen ought to remind us of that. Killeen is a testimony to the goodness of God.

Third: God would have been justified to allow every man to suffer at the hands of every other man.

We grieve over the innocence of those slain; they did nothing to George Hennard, Jr., personally. And God is angry with him. Even now he tastes of the burning wrath of God. These people were innocent of sins against George Hennard, Jr.

But it was not unjust of God to allow this to happen. Because of Adam's sin, and our sinful nature, we all live on time borrowed from God's patience and mercy. The fact is that everyone born into this world deserves the wrath of God (Eph. 2:1-3). It is a miracle of patience that God lets any of us live one day!

Now you may say:

Let us suppose man is as sinful as you say. If God knew Adam would sin and bring this curse upon all of us, then why did He go ahead and make him? If He did not know, why did He not stop him? And if He could not stop him, why did he let him live and pass on this terrible curse of sin and death and pain to all men . . . to me? In other words, is there not something wrong with a God who still allows sin and pain to enter and to stay in this universe? Why did He not just kill Adam and save us all this sin and pain? If Total Depravity is true, it is unfair of God to let it continue.

Let me allow Paul and Peter to answer. The Bible clearly teaches that God is kind and wants to show mercy and love and grace to many descendants of Adam whom He has chosen and redeemed in Jesus Christ. He is patient to endure the sin of mankind to do this:

Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, *endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for*

destruction? And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles (Rom. 9:21-24).

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is *patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish* but for all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

The answer to the question of why God allowed Adam to make his own sinful choice and to pass it on is that God wants to show mercy and love and grace to many descendants of Adam. Would you rob them of eternal life by wrongly blaming God for sin? Would you accuse God of evil because He would let sinners live in order to shower His love upon a multitude no man can number?

God could have killed Adam. He could have spared you of others' sins toward you and your sins toward others. But you would never have lived to know Jesus Christ and His grace. Would you belittle God because He chooses to change human hearts and make new creatures who hate sin and love righteousness? Because God's plan is more good and merciful and gracious than yours? Because God is more gracious than you are?

Conclusion

The Killeen massacre shows what man is really like and how evil sin is. But it also shows how merciful God is to let this world go on -- how gracious He is to send His Son to die for sinners; how patient He is to let this world go on to bring many sons to glory; and how much we ought to trust Him and His goodness with whatever happened in our past at the hands of men, whatever is happening now in our lives, and with whatever we face in the future.

If you have trouble with believing in God's sovereignty and goodness in the face of Killeen (and your own personal Killeens), then you need to look again at the cross of Jesus Christ. There all confusion about man's evil and God's goodness is settled. There, Peter said, Jesus was nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men, yet He was delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). God's sovereignty and goodness overruled man's sin and rebellion at the cross. Later, Peter wrote that Jesus opened not His mouth when suffering from men because He entrusted Himself to Him who judges righteously (1 Pet, 2:23). Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Believe God knows what He is doing and has already proven it at the cross and the empty tomb. Then and only then will you find hope in the face of this heinous crime.

If Killeen still bothers you, you need to hear and believe the words of the Apostle Paul:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "FOR THY SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." But in all these things we

overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:28-39).



Preparation for Hearing God's Word

We are told that men ought not to preach without preparation. Granted. But, we add, men ought not to hear without preparation. Which do you think needs the most preparation, the sower or the ground? I would have the sower come with clean hands, but I would have the ground well plowed and harrowed, well-turned over, and clods broken before the seed comes in. It seems to me that there is more preparation needed by the ground than by the sower, more by the hearer than by the preacher.

-Charles Spurgeon



Richard Fuller, Pt. 1 -- A Biographical Sketch

Don Whitney

Historical Context

What first attracted me to Richard Fuller was the unusual and evident blessing of God upon his pastoral ministry during the War Between the States. In 1847 Fuller left his native South Carolina to become pastor of the Seventh Baptist Church in Baltimore. Before and during the war, Maryland was divided in its sympathies. In the presidential election of 1860, it was the Southern candidate, John Breckinridge, who carried the state, not Abraham Lincoln. The first Union soldiers on their way to Washington were mobbed in Richard Fuller's city. Maryland might have seceded had not Governor Thomas Hicks established martial law and called on Federal troops to help maintain order. Consequently, it did stay in the Union.

Now imagine pastoring not only when there is a War Between the States of your country, but also when your own state is divided over that war. Worse than that, imagine pastoring a church in which some of the members have sons fighting in one army, and others have sons fighting in the opposing army.

Consider what it must have been like in mid-September, 1862, on the first Sunday after the Battle of Antietam. At Sharpsburg, less than 60 miles from Seventh Baptist Church, more than 28,000 soldiers were killed or wounded in one of the bloodiest days of the war. Half of the dead wore blue, half of them wore gray. Imagine walking into the pulpit on that Lord's Day and having a congregation looking at you, many of them feverishly wondering if a notice was on its way informing them that their son had been killed. Imagine the task of preaching to and pastoring the people that Sunday when they are glancing across the aisle and wondering if that man's son had killed their son that week, and if not, will he kill him next week.

That's what Richard Fuller did. That was his task Sunday after Sunday through thirteen tense years before the war, and then week after bloody week during those agonizing and anxious years of the war itself.

But the most amazing thing of all is that during more than two decades when the entire nation was torn asunder, and especially during those four years when every emotion in the hearts of parents and wives and sisters and sons and daughters tempted them to harbor bitterness and a divisive spirit, the fellowship of Seventh Baptist Church in Baltimore, under the preaching of Richard Fuller, not only failed to divide, it actually *grew*, from 87 members to an astonishing 1,200!

There is much we can learn from the life and preaching of a man like that.

Early Life and Student Days

He was born in April, 1804, in the town of Beaufort, which is near the coast at the southern tip of South Carolina. Richard was the ninth of the ten children given to Thomas and Elizabeth Fuller, and all ultimately gave evidence of salvation. His father was converted only the year before Richard was born, but he developed a Godly heritage into his family. For example, the third child, Harriet, "lived so constantly in prayer, that, in the preparation of her body for burial they found her knees to have become hardened from habitual kneeling, as tradition reports that the knees of the beloved John were callous like those of the camel."[\[1\]](#)

Fuller grew into an athletic man. He loved the outdoors -- he was a hunter, a fisherman, and an excellent horseman. He reveled in the opportunities he had to be on the ocean, whether it was crossing the Atlantic to Europe or sailing up the eastern seaboard. Throughout his life he loved walking, which was his daily exercise.

He enrolled at Harvard in 1820 at the age of 16, which was considered an unusually young age for acceptance even then. Despite his age, Fuller became one of the best students in his class. One of the evidences of his scholarship was his ability to take part in a dialogue in Greek at the beginning of his junior year. But at the end of that semester he developed what was described as a hemorrhage of the lungs. It was apparently a case of tuberculosis and it affected him the rest of his life. He was forced to leave school, but he stayed in Massachusetts, spending a year recuperating at Northampton, the town made famous by Jonathan Edwards.

There in the winter of 1823 he first experienced what Edwards would have called the first awakenings of the soul. He wrote about it to Dr. W. B. Sprague, author of a well-known volume on revival, saying his mind "awoke from its oblivious sleep."[\[2\]](#) It would be some nine years later before Fuller was converted, but the Holy Spirit continued to manifest occasional evidences of His convicting power. One such occurrence happened after Fuller had returned home to South Carolina. He was lying on a couch in his mother's room when one of the family members saw him "convulsed with weeping." When asked if he was hurting he replied, "No, I am overpowered with a sense of the goodness of God to me."[\[3\]](#) Would to God that we would see more such work of the Holy Spirit in our day!

Although able to attend Harvard for only two and a half years, his academic standing with the faculty was so high that they voted, in an unusual action, to give him a degree with the class of 1824. He was not, however, an unbalanced intellectual, too serious for fun. After his death, one friend wrote, "I went with Dr. Fuller to his old room at Harvard, which he had not visited since he left college. He was, as he always was, 'grave and gay,' -- sad as he recounted old memories, and then bright and cheerful as he told of his college-scrapes. 'See!' said he: 'there are the very shot-holes where I used to sit and amuse myself with a pistol at the mice as they ran across the room.'"[\[4\]](#)

Of his days back in Beaufort, Fuller's biographer, nephew J. H. Cuthbert, says of him, "He was always a gentleman, easy in manner, ready in wit, brilliant in conversation. In dress he was scrupulously neat. He loved horseback-exercise as much as Napoleon did, and was an excellent rider. . . . With these advantages and equipments, it is not surprising to learn that young Fuller was a great favorite with the (fairer) sex. One of his sisters reported some little maneuvers of his, which his biographer must record, -- how Richard would get her to ask some girls to spend the evening, when, dressing himself with great neatness and care, he would stroll out, and, after the party had assembled, stroll in and surprise them with an easy, nonchalant air, as if it were all a matter of moonshine; a little light skirmishing, as to which let him that is without sin cast the first stone."[\[5\]](#)

Through self-study, Fuller was admitted to the bar at age 21. He established his own practice and was quite a successful attorney. He married his wife Charlotte in August, 1831, when he was 27. They would have three daughters. He loved his girls dearly, and their love for him testifies to his faithfulness to his responsibilities as a father. On his deathbed, his youngest daughter Florence, now grown, said to him, "My darling father, I will die for you." Fuller said, "No, my child, live for me and for Jesus."[\[6\]](#)

Conversion

A few years before his conversion Fuller had been called by a Baptist minister named Benjamin Scriven to come to his bedside as he lay dying. Scriven pleaded with the young lawyer to come to Christ, and Fuller was deeply moved. He made a profession of faith and joined the Episcopal Church, the most influential church in Beaufort. After a study of the subject he became convinced that New Testament baptism was by immersion, so he was baptized in a river by the Episcopal rector. A day or two after his immersion, a fellow townsman said to him, "So, Fuller, I see you are a kind of mongrel Baptist." In a reaction quickly regretted, Beaufort's newest church member knocked the man senseless with one punch. This created, as Cuthbert says, "no little stir in the quiet little town."[\[7\]](#)

But in October, 1831, shortly after his marriage, Fuller experienced genuine conversion and its fruit -- a changed life. During that year and the next, revival swept through the Carolinas and Georgia. Cuthbert described it as "a work of great

power, that moved whole communities 'as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind'." [8] In the midst of that movement of God, an evangelist named Daniel Baker came to Beaufort. According to Fuller's biography, "When Mr. Baker came to town, it was the same extraordinary influence. . . . The whole town was a holy place. The meetings were held alternately in the Episcopal and Baptist churches. . . . The work was remarkable, not only in the number and soundness of the conversions, but in its triumphs among the higher classes of society. Men of talent, culture, and wealth were brought to Christ." [9] One of those men was the successful attorney, Richard Fuller.

In the family Bible, Fuller wrote this account of his conversion: "R. Fuller, 'born again' Thursday, 26th October, 1831. I had from childhood (long before I attached any definite meaning to the words) prayed to God for this change,--for a new heart. During a severe fit of illness (in the year 1827, I think) I felt what I now believe to have been the working of God's Holy Spirit; and, for a while after convalescence, I took pleasure in the service of the dear Redeemer. I also made a profession of religion. The work, however, if begun, was imperfect. The world soon re-asserted and resumed its control. My life for years was now spent amidst vanity and folly and sin. Pride and evil passions prevailed. Nay, in my heart I attempted to vindicate them; though I *felt* the folly and guilt of such pleas, even when reason would seem to have approved them. All this while my 'goodness' was like Ephraim's. I felt satisfied I had never experienced that change without which a man cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. For this I prayed without ceasing. Glory to God! I found at last what I sought, and was filled with a joy which I can never express, -- 'unspeakable, and full of glory.' Creation seemed full of God. The trees, the leaves, the earth, the sky, all things seemed to utter his praises. For days I could neither eat nor sleep. I lived upon the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and the name of Jesus shed light and fragrance over every thing. These ecstatic feelings have now passed away (they would have rendered me unfit to live in such a world); but I am still filled with the peace of God, which 'passes all understanding.' This change (the new birth) I felt under no excitement, but while on my knees in the company of many gathered for prayer. I knelt down trembling, but in a moment was so melted and filled with wonderful emotions, that I did little more than sob and weep. When I arose, I was hardly conscious of what had passed. My heart and soul were running over with love and joy and praise. *I make this record, in hopes, when I am gone, it may cause a serious thought in those who read it.*" [10]

Pastorate at Beaufort

Afterwards, Fuller quickly came to the conviction that baptism was not only by immersion, but that it was for believers. So he presented himself for baptism in the Baptist church and announced his sense of call into the Gospel ministry. He was ordained quickly, within a year. Later that same year, 1832, he was called as pastor of the Beaufort Baptist Church where he labored for fifteen years.

The church flourished during Fuller's ministry there and a large, new building was erected. He soon developed a reputation as one of the most influential preachers in the southeast. Young men preparing for ministry surrounded him and were trained by him. But the two best-known events during his ministry in South Carolina were written debates involving Catholicism and slavery.

In 1839 Fuller, who had visited Rome three years earlier, responded to a letter in the *Charleston Courier* by Catholic Bishop John England. This inaugurated a newspaper debate over some claims of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Their letters to each other were read in many newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. But even while the controversy raged, both men were able to maintain a friendship on matters outside the debate. And when England died shortly thereafter, *The Catholic Mirror* of Baltimore noted how Fuller came to Charleston to view the body.

Debate on Slavery

Unfortunately, the event for which Fuller is remembered most today is his newspaper debate in the mid-1840's with fellow-Baptist Francis Wayland over the subject of slavery in the Scriptures. The debate was published in the book *Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution*. Like George Whitefield, Richard Fuller was a slaveowner. In this public discussion between friends, Fuller argued -- and Wayland conceded -- that the Bible nowhere prohibits slavery. Wayland

was surely right, however, in asserting that there are principles in the New Testament which necessitate the extinction of the practice.

As misguided as some of this thinking was, however, Fuller's heart was always in the right place. Surely not even a slaveowner in Scripture could be named who was kinder to those slaves in his household than was Richard Fuller. Many of his slaves were inherited, and he was much loved by all of them. In one of the letters of the debate he offered to free his slaves to Wayland or any other reader who could give him "bond and security" that their condition would be improved, but no one took up his offer. Furthermore, there are some other facts that are never mentioned in this connection. According to Thomas Armitage's *History of the Baptists*, when Fuller became pastor of the Baptist church in Beaufort its condition was described as "feeble. But under his faithful care it increased to about 200 white persons and 2400 colored."[\[11\]](#) Shortly after he entered into the pastorate of that church he wrote to a friend, "I had resolved, when first called to the ministry, to confine my labors wholly to our colored population. I was prevented by the hand of God."[\[12\]](#) Most remarkable of all, throughout his entire fifteen-year ministry in Beaufort he never accepted the salary offered to him, devoting all of it when allowed to do so, for what he called "the spiritual instruction of the slaves."[\[13\]](#)

Pastorates in Baltimore

In 1847 Fuller accepted the pastorate of the Seventh Baptist Church in Baltimore. He accepted the call on the condition that the church buy another piece of property and begin construction on a new building before he came. This they did and the church thrived, as mentioned earlier, throughout those turbulent years before and during the War. In 1871 Fuller led the church to build a building in the northwest part of Baltimore for the establishment of a new mission, the Eutaw Place Baptist Church. As soon as the building was dedicated the new group extended a call to Fuller to be their pastor. So he left the 1,200 member Seventh Baptist Church after twenty-four years and was one of the 131 charter members of the new fellowship. At the end of his final five years of ministry, the church had a total of 452 members.

He preached his last sermon at Eutaw Place on September 24, 1876. He had endured for some time what he called a fire in his shoulder which would probably be diagnosed today as cancer. In his last weeks one growth was removed but another lump quickly appeared. On the morning of October 20, Richard Fuller entered the Celestial City of his God. His last words were, "Who'll preach Jesus?"[\[14\]](#)

[\[Go to Part 2\]](#)



A Crisis in Baptist Doctrine

The most superficial observer must perceive that in our day the sound doctrine of our churches is much imperiled. Campbellism, though checked in every direction in which it attempted to develop itself, has left no little of its leaven among us and exerts no inconsiderable influence. The distinctive principles of Arminianism have also been engrafted upon many of our churches; and even some of our ministry have not hesitated publicly to avow them. That sentiment, the invariable precursor, or accompaniment of all heresy -- that the doctrines of theology are matters of mere speculation, and its distinctions only logomachines and technicalities, has obtained at least a limited prevalence. And the doctrinal sentiments of a large portion of the ministry and membership of the churches are seen to be either very much unsettled or radically wrong. . . .

A crisis in Baptist doctrine is evidently approaching, and those of us who still cling to the doctrines which formerly distinguished us have the important duty to perform of earnestly contending for the faith once

delivered to the saints. Gentlemen, God will call us to judgment if we neglect it.

- James Petigru Boyce

in an address before the Furman University Board of Trustees, July 31, 1856



¹J.H. Cuthbert, *Life of Richard Fuller* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 63.

³Ibid., p. 63.

⁴Ibid., p. 43.

⁵Ibid., pp. 44-45.

⁶Ibid., p. 61.

⁷Ibid., p. 65.

⁸Ibid., p. 67.

⁹Ibid., pp. 67-68.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 69

¹¹Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists*, vol. 2, (New York: Bryan, Taylor and Co., 1890; reprint ed., Watertown, WI: Baptist Heritage Press, 1988), p. 760.

¹²Cuthbert, p. 105.

¹³Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 157.



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¹J.H. Cuthbert, *Life of Richard Fuller* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 25.

²*Ibid.*, p. 63.

³*Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69

¹¹Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists*, vol. 2, (New York: Bryan, Taylor and Co., 1890; reprint ed., Watertown, WI: Baptist Heritage Press, 1988), p. 760.

¹²Cuthbert, p. 105.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 157.



News

Nesom Joins Planning Committee

The Southern Baptist Founders Conference welcomes the addition of Joe Nesom to the planning committee. Dr. Nesom is Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Jackson, Louisiana. He currently serves as moderator of the William Wallace Baptist Association. He and his wife, Janice, have two daughters. He received the MDiv degree from New Orleans Seminary where he also taught theology while pursuing doctoral studies. Dr. Nesom completed the Ph.D. degree in theology from Smith Baptist University in Garden Grove, California.

Sound Word Acquires Lloyd-Jones Tapes

Sound Word Associates announces the acquisition of cassette tapes of messages by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. These tapes, copied from the Martyn Lloyd-Jones Recording Trust, will be available for purchase beginning March 1. Sound Word Associates also has available tapes of sermons which have been preached at various conferences (including the Founders Conference) throughout North America. For catalogs and information write them at:

P. O. Box 2035, Mall Station
Michigan City, Indiana 46360



Book Reviews

The Gospel According to Jesus by John F. MacArthur, Jr. 1988, 237 pp, Zondervan, \$8.95

Reviewed by [Bill Ascol](#)

Under the heading of "Lordship salvation," a controversy is raging in evangelical Christianity. James Montgomery Boice says that at its very heart the controversy concerns "What does it mean to be a Christian?" (p. xi). J. I. Packer asserts "the gospel really is at stake in this discussion" (p. ix).

John MacArthur has made a valuable contribution to the continuing debate in his book, *The Gospel According to Jesus*. MacArthur is the pastor-teacher at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, as well as President of The Master's College and Seminary. This book is a culmination "of seven years of study in the gospels" (p. 15) and "nearly four years" of study on the subject (p. xiii). MacArthur charges that "most of modern evangelism -- both witnessing and preaching -- falls short of presenting the biblical evangel in a balanced and biblical way" (p. 15). He further charges that "By separating faith from faithfulness. . . . The church's witness to the world has been sacrificed on the altar of cheap grace" (p. 16). This book is written as a corrective to that dangerous error.

The book is divided into five parts. Part One (Today's Gospel: Good News or Bad?) is a brief consideration of the issues involved in the controversy. This section quotes several prominent Bible teachers who oppose the idea of "Lordship salvation." Two of the chief opponents are Zane C. Hodges and Charles C. Ryrie. Hodges believes that coming to salvation in Jesus Christ involves "no spiritual commitment whatsoever" (p. 22). Ryrie teaches "There need be no turning from sin, no resulting change in life-style, no commitment -- not even a *willingness* to yield to Christ's lordship" (p. 22).

Part Two (Jesus Heralds His Gospel) involves eight episodes in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Including Jesus' encounters with Nicodemus, the woman at the well and the rich young ruler, this section (as well as the two that follow) shows something of the expository genius of MacArthur. Anyone who has heard him preach or has read his printed expositions knows that he is one of the premier expositors in Christianity today. He is truly gifted in opening a text up with simple, penetrating clarity. Throughout this section MacArthur demonstrates the connection that Jesus makes between faith and obedience.

Part Three (Jesus Illustrates His Gospel) contains expositions of several parables taught by Jesus Christ. MacArthur demonstrates again the inseparable relationship between free grace and costly discipleship as set forth by Jesus in such parables as the Sower and the Soils, the Wheat and the Tares and the Hidden Treasure.

Part Four (Jesus Qualifies His Gospel) begins with an expository discussion on Jesus teaching concerning repentance and concludes with an expository discussion on Jesus' teaching concerning His Lordship. MacArthur acknowledges "It is not fashionable in the twentieth century to preach a gospel that demands repentance" (p. 159). In a clear and unmistakable way he shows that the preaching of repentance is woven into the warp and woof of the gospel message.

Part Five consists of two appendices: The first concerns "The Gospel According to the Apostles," while the second focuses on "The Gospel According to Historic Christianity." The two appendices form a fitting conclusion to the book. The former appendix demonstrates that the apostolic writers, like Jesus, invited sinners to come to Christ in terms of faith and obedience. The latter appendix demonstrates that throughout the history of Christianity men of faith (such as Augustine, the Reformers and the Puritans) have taught and preached that Jesus Christ must be

received as both Savior and Lord, or He is not Savior.

This is an excellent book to put into the hands of a Southern Baptist pastor or layman. Not only will it help him to avoid the pitfalls of "easy believism" and the "carnal Christian" teaching, it will instruct him in the glorious truths of God's sovereign grace shown to sinners. Furthermore, this book exposes some of the dangerous errors of extreme dispensationalism. God continues to use this fine book to recover the truth that "The gospel Jesus proclaimed was a call to discipleship, a call to follow Him in submissive obedience, not just a plea to make a decision or pray a prayer" (p. 21).

Praises for the King of Kings by Walter Chantry; 114 pp, 1991, The Banner of Truth Trust, \$5.95

Reviewed by [M. Marvin Jones](#)

Pastor Chantry, by means of this slender volume, dedicates himself to assist "the searching heart which acknowledges that it is worth giving time and extended thought in order to see the King in his beauty" (p. 9). Toward that end he quite ably covers expositions of three psalms in which he explores a Christian philosophy of life, the King's coronation, and the King's coming again. Chantry displays an admirable grasp of each psalm's cultural setting, thus enlivening each chapter by drawing the reader into the excitement of the original coronation and marriage ceremonies. Particularly in the last chapter, the author splendidly carries us from the Middle Eastern marriage betrothal to the marriage feast itself. By the end of the journey, one's love and adoration of Christ should be at full flame.

A secondary, but equally important, aspect of this work is that it draws with broad strokes a biblical view of history. From time past (Psalm 2) to time future (Psalm 45), Chantry properly centralizes the role of Jesus Christ in human history. In the macroscopic vision of human events, God sovereignly and eternally rules in spite of the perverse brilliance of the earth's rulers. Upon a more microscopic inspection, Chantry assures us in his exposition of Psalm 110 that even the most skillful artisans of rebellion individually are made willing in the day of Messiah's power to throw down their weapons and cast their fortunes with the Warrior-King. This grand design of sovereign strength and goodness along with its individual application provides the theological basis for the author's doctrine of praise. Arthur Link, the eminent American political historian, assures us that Christian regeneration frees the individual "from the tyranny of the ego's insatiable demands for its own control and understanding of history." (from "The Historian's Vocation"). I think that Chantry would agree that those who have been freed from such tyranny will find a spiritual liberation which frees the mind of the believer to praise the God from whom the individual blessings of life flow. Ultimately, the believer's proper praise does not spring from the shallow soil of man-made stirrings of visceral melodic incitement but from the deep, fertile soil of a redeemed mind that is filled to overflowing with the contemplation of a benign Despot who is approachable by pardoning mercy.

In conclusion, this book might prove to be a disappointment to those pastors who are looking for a blueprint for implementing a program of "praise worship" in their churches. Pastor Chantry does not offer a balanced program of singing and preaching sure to evoke fervent response from the congregation. I rather think that Chantry would offer the simple exaltation of Christ as solid counsel to the shepherd who desires to see in public worship the movement of God's Spirit among his flock. What better way is there to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit of whom Jesus said, "He shall glorify me; for he shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (John 16:14)?

Apostasy by Dale Moody; 1991, 73 pp, Smyth & Helwys, \$9.95

Reviewed by [Hershael W. York](#)

Long the center of controversy and contention in the Southern Baptist Convention, Emeritus Professor of Christian Theology of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Dale Moody needs little introduction. When his book, *The Word of Truth*, was published in 1981 a storm of disputation developed over chapter fifty-five on which the author stated that the Scriptures indicate that a person who is truly born again can subsequently lose the eternal life that he possesses and apostatize. Now, a decade and forced retirement later, Moody has written a book of brief belligerent blasts intended to support his views.

The book is intended to be a perusal of the five exhortations in the epistle to the Hebrews, all of which, according to Moody, teach that one can lose salvation. The most obvious and fatal of the book's weaknesses is that the author simply does not adequately interact with the biblical text. He merely cites the passage and then launches into personal polemics and anecdotes. The introduction is entitled "A Very Personal Word," but that really should be the title of the book. The author unfortunately found it impossible to discuss a theological point without bringing up some great scholar he knew who remarked that he was correct.

What is absent is a grammatical examination of the text. Moody never discusses, for instance, the perfect tense of Hebrews 3:14, "For we *have been made* partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." He largely ignores textual and grammatical analysis. His discussion would have been far more profitable with more exegesis and less experience.

Another historical point that Moody attempts to make is that Southern Baptists did not really believe in Eternal Security until J.R. Graves, B.H. Carroll, and particularly J.M. Carroll popularized it and transformed it into a "Baptist Cliche." Moody goes so far as to assert that a single sermon by J.M. Carroll preached at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, popularized the term "eternal security" among Southern Baptists. He offers no historical proof one way or another for this statement, only his opinion.

Finally, Moody also incorrectly states in the brief book that no one has yet interacted with his views and answered them. This, too, is incorrect since Tom Nettles directed much attention to Moody's views in *By His Grace and for His Glory*.

The only thing to commend this work is that it is revealing in its lack of depth and its emphasis on experience. It is unfortunate that a biblical scholar of Moody's stature cannot deal strictly with the Word in a book with such an important subject matter and exclude all immaterial matters.

The Wounded Heart by Dan B. Allender, 1990, 255 pp, Navpress, \$9.95

Reviewed by [Fred A. Malone](#)

It is often estimated that more than 30% of all women and a lesser number of men have been sexually abused by the

time they graduate from high school. They sit in our church pews, often suffering secret life-long struggles known only to themselves. Some of them are our best workers. Some of them are our personality and discipline problems. Some of them have assurance problems, marital problems, child-raising problems, depression problems, etc. All of them need help to overcome the devastating effects of sexual abuse.

Should the pastor just give them a "pep talk," read a few Scriptures, pat them on the back, and exhort them to forget the past and move ahead? Should he turn them over to the secular and/or Christian "professionals?" Or does God's Word offer any guidance through the ordinary means of the pastoral ministry of the church to help these people squarely face the remaining effects of the past and overcome them?

It is the pastor's job to help these Christians through the careful application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He came to bind up the broken-hearted. Allender cautions the pastor about becoming too involved in heavy counseling because of the pressures of the ministry. I simply thank Dr. Allender for giving pastors another good tool to perform our God-given ministry.

There are only a few "Christian counseling" books I recommend. This is one of them. Having been trained in the admirable counseling tradition of Jay Adams, I am very sensitive to the final authority of God's Word for pastoral counseling. Many try to meld a compromise between Scripture and humanistic psychology with Scripture often "suffering much at the hands of many physicians."

The Wounded Heart is no pop psychology with a little Scripture mixed in. It is a theologically sound application of Reformed principles to the terrible issue of sexual abuse and its long-term effects upon the heart.

Allender, an associate of Larry Crabb, is a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Michigan State University (Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology). He teaches, holds seminars, and counsels out of Colorado Christian University.

The theologically-oriented pastor might be tempted to overlook this book at first. It is no theological tome. It is a narrative-based exposition of the problem of and the solution to sexual abuse. The sound, Reformed theology which underlies the narrative, counseling-language style may be missed by a mere cursory reading.

Believing in the total depravity of the natural man and the remaining sin of the Christian, Allender argues that the victim of sexual abuse typically copes by building a defensive mechanism which is usually sinful. While never ignoring the 100% responsibility of the abuser in the abuse itself, Allender does what most psychology-based counselors will not do. He makes the victim responsible for his/her actions in response to the abuse and in recovery.

Never wanting to be hurt, violated, betrayed, and controlled like that again, the victim wrongly institutes a complex of self-protective behaviors which range from a "back-off buddy" aggression to a "hide-from-attention" passivity to a "do-good-for-everybody-to-keep-control-and-build-esteem" works-performance (statistics indicate that a higher than average percentage of doctors, pastors, helping professionals, etc., were abused). Each pattern is an attempt to live off of others' responses, to build safe boundaries, and to control the situation for self-protection. Even after conversion, this defensive mechanism usually stays as part of the remaining sin complex.

Allender calls this idolatry because it makes self and others the center of life instead of God. Symptoms of sexual (and other) abuse include compulsive/obsessive behaviors like workaholism, sexual addictions, sexual avoidance, obsessive cleanliness, counting compulsively, TV/Book/Music/Sports/Hobby obsessions, controlling personality, withdrawing personality, refusal to take compliments, self-contempt, other-contempt, excessive anger, marriage and

child-raising problems, and depression.

Contrary to self-protective, boundary-building psychology, Allender uses the Gospel to find the solution in knowing Jesus Christ. The way to healing the wounded heart is the way of facing the terrible reality of abuse, repenting of self-protective patterns, and learning how to boldly love others without fear. He calls the victim to quit living off of the fear of what others may do to you again and to find acceptance, forgiveness, and security in Jesus Christ alone. He exhorts the victim to repent of sinful anger (revenge, personal hatred, etc.) toward the abuser while believing in God's righteous anger toward him/her.

Sinful anger is manifested in self-contempt and other-centered contempt as a pattern of life and perpetuates the abuser's control over the life. The Christian must repent of this abuser-centered life and turn to Christ. It is finding our acceptance in Christ, and not in others, which enables us to live without fear of what men can do to us.

This enables the damaged soul to open itself again to feel, to give, and to love those who may hurt them yet again. We are not called naively to trust others unconditionally, but neither are we called to mistrust them. We are called by the Gospel to care, even for our enemy. We are called boldly to love others while finding our completeness and happiness in Christ alone. As the Christian does this, his/her wounded heart is healed and he/she becomes a genuinely unselfish person as was our Lord, overcoming the pains and fears of abuse.

One final word about this book. It is not only for those who have been sexually abused. Most other forms of abuse have the same effect upon the soul. Physical, emotional, verbal, and other forms of abuse cause the victim to respond to betrayal, powerlessness, and ambivalence with self-protective patterns. That is why I believe that this book is so helpful to pastors in ferreting out remaining sins in believers and helping them to recover by the power of the Gospel.

Experience and testimony of colleagues teach that the inward struggles of a pastor to overcome hurt and to love his flock are very similar to recovering victims of various forms of abuse. Words do hurt more than sticks and stones. Pastors often deal with verbal and emotional abuse, not to mention the threat against their family's welfare if they stand for truth against much opposition. Many pastors have benefitted personally from reading this book in this light and have found new power to love their people without fearing what they can do to them.

With the exceptions of writing style and the need to make his theological foundations more clear for us "hard-to-convince" types, I recommend highly this book for the pastor's heart and ministry.

Stolen Childhood by Alice Huskey, 1990, 181 pp, InterVarsity Press, \$8.95.

Reviewed by [Fred A. Malone](#)

This book is a clear, concise introduction from a Christian nurse, herself a victim, into the issues surrounding childhood sexual abuse. It is an easier-to-read introduction to the issue and an excellent companion volume to *Wounded Heart*. The latter deals with the effects of childhood abuse upon adults, but *Stolen Childhood* also deals with what the Christian should do when he/she suspects or discovers the sexual abuse of children. What is considered sexual abuse anyway? Is it only touching, or can it be verbal, visual, emotional, etc., as well? What are symptoms of sexual abuse? What kind of homes may set up sexual abuse? What legal responsibilities and liabilities do professionals (including ministers) have in the case of suspicions and/or discovery? Alice Huskey deals with these

questions and many more.

One of the sobering truths of this book is that the Christian community is by no means exempt from the existence of child sexual abuse. It may be under the pastor's nose, even in the homes of church leaders. It may be the reason for long-standing marital problems. It may explain bizarre, undisciplined, or extremely conforming behavior in children.

When one gets involved in the study of sexual abuse in our society, he must not begin to see abuse behind every rock. But neither must we be ignorant of a very widespread sin nor unequipped to deal with it when it bursts its way into our ministries. Some child may suffer long or be treated with harmful recovery methods because the pastor was too ignorant of the issues to recognize the symptoms or too inept to deal with the problem when it arose.

I recommend this book as an excellent introduction to the problem, but it is only an introduction, not a complete solution. Read *Stolen Childhood* to face the issue, then read *Wounded Heart* to discover the ministerial solution.



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