



SBAOC Weekly Update

NEWS & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Some of the SBFYC sessions are available now on the “SBFYC Official” YouTube channel. You can find a link in the announcements at www.sbaoc.org.
- While the Spurgeon Baptist Association wholeheartedly supports the international, national, and state mission offerings of the SBC (Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, & Viola Webb), we have a fourth annual offering. The Isaac McCoy Associational Mission Offering is gathered each summer. 100% of the proceeds are used to fund new works and strengthen churches within the Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches. Promotional materials are available to download at www.sbaoc.org under the Church Planting tab.

If you have any news, prayer requests, or events that you would like to have included in this update, please call us at 785-456-8513 or email the information to spurgeonassociation@gmail.com.

WHY WORK FOR REFORMATION WITHIN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

By Thomas K. Ascol

PASTORS AND CHURCH MEMBERS who are committed to historic Southern Baptist principles regularly find themselves confronted with the question, "Why stay in the SBC?" After all, when many denominational leaders have made it very clear that you and your theological convictions are suspect at best and unwanted at worst, why put up with the headaches and animosity that often accompany SBC affiliation? Wouldn't it be easier and even better to disassociate oneself from a convention of churches that has deviated so far from its doctrinal roots? Isn't staying in the SBC compromise-making truth secondary to denominational loyalty?

These questions cannot be answered simplistically. Good men will no doubt disagree on the value/wisdom/legitimacy of working for reformation within the Southern Baptist Convention. Ultimately, every person and every congregation must seek to address this issue individually before God. No one can dictate to another what course to chart and we

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PURPOSE STATEMENT:

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

“If there is no church... should you not commence one?” C. H. Spurgeon

COMMENTS ON OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

"We should resolve that we will quote more of Holy Scripture. Sermons should be full of Bible; sweetened, strengthened, sanctified with Bible essence. Bible hearers, when they hear indeed, come to be Bible lovers."

—The Greatest Fight in the World, C. H. Spurgeon's Final Manifesto p. 24

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should be willing to grant those who disagree with us the same right that we request for ourselves, namely, to be true to one's conscience. With that consideration clearly before us, I am convinced that there are several good reasons for those who believe the doctrines of grace to stay in the Southern Baptist Convention .

One consideration is that our theology is that of the founders of the denomination. We are historic Southern Baptists. This point is often ignored, occasionally begrudged, but can never be disproved.

Further, every Southern Baptist is a member of a local church, not a denomination strictly speaking. Each local church is autonomous and can cooperate with other churches as it believes best. Every Southern Baptist church is an independent church. No one dictates to it (officially, at least), and no one can coerce the collective conscience of its membership.

The SBC has its problems. We have lots of blemishes and shortcomings, lots of needs. But that is true of my life individually and every congregation I know. Real problems are not an immediate excuse to disassociate from a church or fellowship of churches-especially when there is real opportunity to address the problems and see them corrected.

Would you want to pastor or even to remain a member of a church that nauseates Jesus, or is self-deceived, or is spiritually lukewarm, or has a prominent member who is a known adulterer and promotes fornication and adultery, or is blatantly hypocritical, or is spiritually dead? Yet, all of these maladies and more are found in the churches of Revelation 2-3. Jesus speaks very plainly about the sinfulness of five of them. The charges are incredible. Yet, He comes to them to warn them and call them to repent. He has not yet given up on them, though He does indeed threaten to remove the lamp stand from among them (2:5) unless they repent.

I think we are far too quick to give up on local churches in our day-especially when we think deeply about Jesus' response to those congregations. I heartily encourage a study of those seven letters in the light of the important question of staying affiliated with the SBC. Our Lord's example provides the basis of the sixteenth-century battle cry to be "reformed and always reforming according to the Word of God." Staying in a Southern Baptist church may provide an opportunity to pursue such a course while "strengthening the things which remain" (Revelation 3:2).

Reformation has never been neat or easy and that certainly remains true in our day. Luther was part of a "church" that was corrupt and by its very polity, unreformable-in my opinion. That is, I cannot conceive of a reformed Roman Catholic Church. Were it to be reformed by the Word of God, it would necessarily be dismantled and rebuilt without its false dogmas and practices. It is at just this point where the genius of Baptist polity shines brightly. Our polity makes reformation always a prospect because we do not have a "topdown" structure of government. Every church is independent. This is why from our beginning in 1982 Founders Ministries has focused on local churches and pastors. A local church can be reformed according to the Word. In fact, every church worth the name should be

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Encouraged to Endure

Conference—July 25-27, 2019.

Second Baptist Church, West Frankfort, IL. Speakers: Joseph Mahlaola, Larry McCall, & John Snyder. Worship Leader: Tom Clay.

2019 KNCSB Annual Meeting—

October 14 & 15. Parkview Baptist Church, 803 W. 18th St., Lexington, NE 68850. For more information contact Peg Davis at pdavis@knscsb.org.

Reformation Weekend

Conference—October 25-27.

Trinity Baptist Church, Wamego, KS. The SBAOC annual business meeting will be held on Saturday, October 26.

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always striving for that—never thinking that they have arrived at some level that puts them beyond the need of further conformity to Scripture. Our efforts have been focused on helping churches see this and strive for it. For the same reason we have particularly aimed our efforts at pastors, convinced that if we help a pastor then we have helped a church.

In this sense we are not trying to "reform the SBC." We are trying to help churches become more biblical in faith and practice. The denominational structure can be either helpful or hurtful to a church's pursuit of this goal. But never should it be allowed to dictate a church's life. When this happens (and I know that it often does both in subtle and overt ways), the church has abdicated its authority and responsibility before God, and should repent.

What this means, in part, is that a pastor must be willing to die to denominational favor if he is determined to work for reformation in a church. After all, the work of a pastor in building Christ's church is more important than any denominational approval or position. And a church must be willing to pursue its calling with a similar indifference about whether or not it ever receives denominational approval or recognition. It is accountable to Christ Himself as its Head and must live to please Him.

One of the great needs for local churches and pastors today is the restructuring of church polity and authority to the degree that their ministries are consciously governed by Scripture, not some outside program (whether denominationally inspired or not). We must realize that all denominational servants are just that—servants of the churches. All denominational institutions and agencies exist to serve local churches. That is necessarily true in theory or else our polity is abdicated. I recognize that this is sometimes not true in fact where denominational politics or bureaucratic inertia exert them-selves. But, where our practice (church life) does not live up to our theory (polity) the fault lies primarily with the local church, not the denomination. A church must not abdicate its calling regardless of internal or external pressures.

With this perspective, I have been able to live within the SBC and encourage the church I serve to follow God's Word to the best of our ability. We have a very amiable, beneficial relationship with many denominational entities, including a local association and state and national conventions. These relationships work because we have entered into them and continue to cultivate them with a firm commitment to our Baptist conviction that every local church is autonomous.

Here is a good question to ask when considering a break with the SBC: "What could I do tomorrow that I cannot do today if I were to leave tonight?" At this point my own answer is, "Nothing." On the other hand there are many things that we are doing today which we could not do tomorrow if we severed ties with the SBC tonight. Opportunities of genuine fellowship around common gospel causes would be lost or at least greatly hindered. Participation in some amazing developments in world missions as well as cooperation in a variety of ministries of mercy (children's homes, medical care, hunger and disaster relief, etc.) would be lost as would opportunities to

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Check out the "SBFYC Official" YouTube channel to watch the 2019 sessions.



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be useful in the lives of other Southern Baptist ministers and churches.

Unless a church pursues a cultic isolationism it will inevitably be identified or associated with some other group that is itself less than perfect. Such identification may be more perception than reality but it is inevitable. An important point for Baptists to remember is this: a church's autonomy and independence are not compromised by its association with other churches. There is no coercion to participate in any activity or cause and each church is not only free but is indeed obligated under God to exercise discernment and care in determining how and on what to expend its energies and resources.

God is doing an amazing work among the churches known as Southern Baptist. In the mid-1970s many were saying that liberalism was too strongly entrenched in the SBC ever to be rooted out. Through the influence and determination of conservative churches and leaders who chose not to abandon the denomination, today the SBC is known for its strong commitment to biblical authority. Had the mentality of these churches and individuals been simply to separate because of all that was wrong, think of all of the present gospel opportunities that would have been lost.

With the return to and reaffirmation of the full authority of Scripture has come a growing awakening to the supremacy of God in salvation and the glory of God that should be displayed in local churches. By God's grace the reformation for which those affiliated with Founders Ministries have long worked and prayed is happening. If the next twenty years are marked by the same kinds of advances which have been seen since 1982, who can estimate the eternal good which could be done for the

cause of Christ across the earth?

In Josiah's day the rediscovery of God's Law was followed by sweeping reformation. The same thing happened in the sixteenth century. And it is happening again today. As the inerrant Scriptures are honestly searched God is opening the eyes of a growing number of men and women to the riches of sovereign grace. They are rediscovering the "faith once for all delivered to the saints," including those saints who founded the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. This revival of historic Southern Baptist conviction about the grace of God in the gospel has continued to grow so that today, unlike twenty years ago, we have leaders at every level of denominational life and untold scores of pastors, missionaries and church leaders who are returning to "the old paths."

During his third missionary journey the Apostle Paul wanted to leave Ephesus and travel to Corinth. But he judged it better not to do so. When explaining his decision to the Corinthian believers he gives two reasons: "For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries" (I Corinthians 16:9). Opportunities to be useful in God's kingdom (the "great and effective door" that has opened) coupled with significant and numerous trials ("many adversaries") made Paul determined to stay the course. Many historic Southern Baptists can identify with the Apostle.

Now is not the time to quit. Difficulties, struggles, blemishes, hardships, weaknesses and desperate needs are not in and of themselves reasons to leave. Rather, such realities are a continual call to arms, a plea to maintain our battle stations and press on for the cause of God and His truth. The goal is too great, the prize is too valuable, our Lord is too faithful and His promises too true to allow frustration and disillusionment to rule our thinking. Much already has been accomplished and by God's grace reformation will continue. But God uses means and the means that He has been pleased to use in advancing the work of His kingdom on earth is people—people who are willing to walk through the doors He opens even while facing the adversaries He refuses to remove.

The challenge is great. The need is great. And for those who have eyes to see it, the opportunity is great. In Spurgeon's famous words, "Here is the day for the man, where is the man for the day?"

The Founders Journal, Spring 2002, Issue 48,
wwwFOUNDERS.org

Isaac McCoy Associational Missions Offering

Associational Goal: \$5000.00

"Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore I came forth."
Mark 1:38

The Isaac McCoy mission offering is gathered each year to promote mission causes within the Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches. 100% of the proceeds will be used to help associational churches with outreach and strengthening as well as starting new works.

"If there is no church, should we not commence one?"
C.H. Spurgeon

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PRAYER MEETINGS FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND REVIVAL

- Fellowship Baptist Church in Onaga, Kansas—5:00 pm on Sundays
- Trinity Baptist Church in Wamego, Kansas—8:00 pm on Saturdays

The Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches is an association of Southern Baptist Churches that are united to manifest the glory of God above all. We set out to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. As an association of churches we are bound in mutual covenant to strengthen and support one another - motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture - by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

We are a non-geographic association seeking to include any like-minded body of believers so that together we might better fulfill the great commission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our intent is to lean on His instruction and not our imaginations so that He is honored in all that we do. We welcome churches who adhere to the confessions of faith accepted by Southern Baptists throughout their history, including, but not limited to, the Second London Confession (1689) and the Baptist Faith and Message.



Baptist Association of Churches