



SBAOC Weekly Update

NEWS & PRAYER REQUESTS

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.

ALWAYS REFORMING

By J.D. Meredith

J. GRESHAM MACHEN ONCE SAID, "An account of personal experiences may be interesting for one of two reasons: (1) because the writer is in some way remarkable; (2) because, not being remarkable at all, he may be able to set forth in a concrete way the experience of a considerable body of men."¹ I submit this treatise in hopes that it may fulfill the latter purpose.

God has been very gracious to me. As a teenager, I was convicted of my sinful condition and need for Christ, and I rejoice that I now stand justified before God in Christ alone. I was reared in a theological tradition vastly different from the one that I now confess. During my university studies, God wonderfully challenged my thinking concerning the doctrine of man. This led to a theological journey that has driven my wife and me to embrace the doctrines of grace.

My adherence to these doctrines did not immediately affect vital decisions concerning church fellowship. Instead, I slowly began to see how much of our contemporary worship misrepresents the God of the Bible and the gospel of grace. During this time, my ministry goals changed dramatically. For many years I desired to serve in the pastorate, believing that the evidences of God's call upon my life was undeniable. The desperate state of the church, however, compelled me to pursue another avenue of ministry. In all of my wisdom, I determined that God had called me to a career in the academy. I concluded that this would allow me to continue a preaching ministry without having to deal with people. All of this I now attribute to a selfish desire to preach without the nuisance of pastoral ministry.

While I attended seminary in Florida, my wife and I visited many churches

(Continued on page 2)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Always Reforming.....	2-4
Comments on our Purpose Statement.....	2
Conferences.....	3
Contact Us	5
Pulpit Supply.....	5
Prayer Meetings	5

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.

“Whether you are Calvinists, or Arminians, or anything else, dear friends, be first and chiefly Christians—Christians—following Christ, receiving him as the great Expositor to you of God, and of the great truths of revelation. You will tell me you have your ‘bodies of divinity;’ there never was but on ‘body of divinity,’ and that was the ‘body’ of the man, Christ Jesus; do you, abating all prejudices and self-formed opinions, receive our Lord as the great embodiment of the truth.”

*C. H. Spurgeon
Sermon #669, page 15*

(Continued from page 1)

as we endeavored to find a congregation with a confessional theology. This venture ended in our arrival at Grace Baptist Church in Cape Coral. Words cannot express the profound gratitude we have for the ministry of that church in our lives. I must convey deep appreciation to the body as a whole, for the blessings of that ministry were not in any way limited to those received from the pastors. Still, Tom Ascol and Steve Haines (two of the men for whom I am most grateful to God) invested themselves in my preparation for the ministry through their commitment to the internship ministry at Grace. I had been at Grace for nearly a year when I took part in this program. Although I profited greatly as an intern, I had already been experiencing the benefits of their wisdom before my formal participation. Fellowship in a church like Grace and involvement in an internship program should be a priority in the preparation of ministers who desire to see reformation in the Baptist churches of the twenty-first century.

One of the most important influences of Grace Baptist Church in my life involves my ministry goals. As I have indicated, I was somewhat disturbed by the state of the church at large and had decided to remove myself from immediate pastoral involvement. During the two years at Grace, God wonderfully reinvigorated my vision for the church and fueled my passion for reforming the church through the faithful preaching of the Word. Through my association with Grace, I have gained a new appreciation for the church as the institution ordained by God for the proclamation of the gospel around the world.

Several convictions have radically altered my vision for the church. First, I believe that the church must reclaim her place as the proper training field for pastors. In a significant way, the church has defaulted on this task relinquishing it to the seminary. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul instructs Timothy: "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Educating future ministers of the gospel must be viewed as a pastoral duty. I fear that in many instances pastors have relegated this work to a place of insignificance believing that the seminary will fulfill the responsibility. D. G. Hart addresses this topic explaining: "Theological educators, pastors, and church members need to remember that seminaries don't have a legitimate monopoly on theological education, though such a monopoly does exist. That so many people equate the word seminary with the words theological education is an unhealthy situation not only for seminaries but also for churches and families."² This does not mean that the seminary has no place in theological education, but the seminary does not function as an indispensable institution for training ministers. Undoubtedly, a heavy dose of expositional preaching and catechetical instruction would alleviate much of the widespread ignorance that pervades the church today and better facilitate the process of continuing theological education.

Second, I am greatly concerned about the professionalization of the ministry in our day. The cultural irrelevance many ministers feel has led them to seek solace in a professional ministry. David Wells contends: "Insecure ministers

(Continued on page 3)

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

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.

Southeast Founders

Conference—December 5-7.

Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, FL. Speakers: Tom Ascol, Jared Longshore, Tom Nettles, Tom Hicks. Theme: Law & Gospel.



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



THE SPURGEON CENTER
for Biblical Preaching at Midwestern Seminary

Making visible the *life, legacy and library* of
Charles Haddon Spurgeon

www.spurgeon.org

5001 North Oak Trafficway
Kansas City, Missouri 64118

(Continued from page 2)

who are stripped of importance hope to be elevated through professionalization to the same social standing as other professionals, such as physicians and lawyers."³ One of the clearest examples of this pursuit involves the desire for academic respectability. Spurgeon comments on the value of academic degrees declaring: "I used to think, sometimes, that if they had degrees who deserved them, diplomas would often be transferred, and given to those who hold the plough-handle or work at the carpenters bench; for there is often more divinity in the little finger of the ploughman than there is in the whole body of modern divines."⁴ He continued explaining that "D.D." often appears to mean "DOUBLY DESTITUTE."⁵ Rather than seeking satisfaction in social standing, pastors ought to view themselves as humble servants of Christ and his church. Our Lord provides the ultimate picture of what ought to be the meek servant-spirit of every minister of the gospel. After washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus interprets His action, "So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them'" (John 13:12-17). When we fail to recognize the servant nature of our office and seek standing among other professionals, we exalt ourselves above our Master.

Third, I am concerned that those of us who desire reformation would maintain faithful and powerful voices in this difficult hour. We must not succumb to the temptation to seek conciliation with those who deny the sovereign God of the Bible and cheapen the gospel of grace. David Wells accurately identifies the weakened leadership within the church. Explaining a false appeal to servant leadership, he opines: "Contemporary servant leaders are typically individuals without any ideas of their own, people whose convictions shift with the popular opinion to which they assiduously attune themselves, people who bow to the wishes of 'the body' from whom their direction and standing derive. They lead by holding aloft moist fingers to sense the changes in the wind. In all this they show themselves to be different indeed from the One who embodied what servanthood was intended to be and who never once tailored his teaching to what he judged the popular reception of it would be—unless he was an exceedingly poor judge of what the crowds and religious leaders had in mind when they heard him."⁶ A great temptation faces those seeking reformation in the Southern Baptist Convention. Will we stand for a "big-tent" theology that downplays doctrine, or will we graciously stand for truth? I pray that God will grant great courage that we may fight for truth despite the cost.

In the last year, God has wonderfully provided a place for my pastoral ministry. In March 2001, I was called as pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church, Edinburgh, Indiana, and I rejoice daily in the privilege that I have to serve the flock of God. This opportunity has forced me to reflect on my goals and ambitions for the ministry. Although it would be impossible to enumerate all of

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

them, several emerge as dominant themes for my ministry.

First, I desire to see reform in the churches of our day. I believe that the faithful preaching of God's Word is the foundational element in accomplishing this goal. Paul commissions Timothy with this very specific task: "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:1-2a). In eschewing the professionalized ministry, we should wear proudly the title, "preacher of the gospel of Christ." To many, we may be viewed as simplistic or ineffectual because of faithfulness to the Word, but we ought to rejoice that we are in fact citizens of another world. A recovery of expositional preaching and teaching of God's Word, accompanied by sound theological instruction, must take place if we are to see a reformation in our day. A second goal for my ministry involves faithful service to the flock of God. Whereas, I once sought a vocation that would allow me to avoid the difficulties of the church, God has created in me an intense love for both the people and the pastorate. In 2 Timothy 4:2b, Paul continued his admonition to Timothy, " ... correct, rebuke, and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction" (NIV). This comprehensive responsibility requires a sincere devotion to the people of God. Without it, the charge becomes not only difficult but virtually impossible. I pray that God will continue to grant me this grace and trust that He will keep this goal before my eyes as I seek to serve His church.

A third goal for my ministry entails training others for the ministry in accordance with 2 Timothy 2:2. My desire to devote my life to the church includes a deliberate investment in the lives of other gospel ministers. In his introduction to Spurgeon's *All Round Ministry*, Iain Murray notes: "While C. H. Spurgeon is still remembered as a popular preacher, it has generally been forgotten that the influence he exercised on ministers and theological students was possibly an even greater factor in his life than his own personal ministry."⁷ Spurgeon understood the importance of training those who would faithfully continue when his ministry ended. I pray that one day God may enable me to disciple those who will remain on the front lines of the gospel ministry in the next generation.

Finally, I will endeavor to remain aware of those trends that are important in contemporary discussion. God has afforded me with a tremendous opportunity to pursue

theological education. I do not believe that a minister of the gospel should lay aside the tools that he acquires for service. To the contrary, he should continue to hone them and stay abreast of those currents that threaten to produce discord and heresy in the body of Christ. For they who declare that theology should be confined to the academy and is not necessary for the preacher, I point to the proclamation of C. H. Spurgeon: "Brethren, if you are not theologians you are in your pastorates nothing at all."⁸ Although he had little use for academic attainments, Spurgeon understood the necessity of a theological understanding for communicating the great truths of the Christian faith.

In conclusion, I would like to convey an important concept that I trust will govern my thinking and my ministry. I have heard this idea communicated many ways, but it can be simply stated: "We ought to be reformed and always reforming." I trust that those of us who desire reformation will not become arrogant thinking we have arrived. Instead, I pray that we will understand that by God's grace we have been reformed and we are dependent upon His grace as we are constantly reforming. May God keep us ever mindful that we are utterly dependent upon Him.

Notes

- 1 J. Gresham Machen, "Christianity in Conflict," in *Contemporary American Theology*, vol. 1, ed. Vergilius Ferm (New York: Round Table Press, 1932), 245.
- 2 D. G. Hart, "Overcoming the Schizophrenic Character of Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition," in *A Confessing Theology for Postmodern Times*, ed. Michael S. Horton (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 125. He continued: "Theological education doesn't begin at seminary. It begins in the home, is enlarged and reinforced in the church, and then refined and polished at seminary." Ibid., 126-27.
- 3 David F. Wells, "The D-Min-ization of the Ministry," in *No God but God*, eds. Os Guinness and John Seel (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 175. Wells argues that the professionalization of the ministry has made both God and theology irrelevant.
- 4 C. H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Autobiography*, in *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection* [CDROM] (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998), 1:286.
- 5 Ibid. In another context, he declares: "Our men seek no Collegiate degrees, or classical honors, though many of them could readily attain them; but to preach efficiently, to get at the hearts of the masses, to [evangelize] the poor, [this] is the College ambition, this and nothing else." Ibid, 2:163.
- 6 David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth, or, Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1993), 215.
- 7 Iain Murray, "Introduction," in *An All-Round Ministry: Addresses to Ministers and Students* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), v.
- 8 C. H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, in *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection* [CD-ROM] (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998), 1:83.

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

**SPURGEON
BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION
OF CHURCHES**

**PO Box 155
Wamego KS 66547**

Phone: (785) 456-8513

Email:
spurgeonassociation@gmail.com

Contact Us:

Administrative Council:

J.W. Glidewell
Moderator
Phone: (785) 772-1176
jwglidewell@gmail.com

Tony Mattia
Corresponding Secretary
Trinity Baptist Church
Wamego, Kansas
Phone: (785) 456-3796
spurgeonassociation@gmail.com

Ken Jorgenson, At Large
kjorg@hotmail.com

Robin Jackson, At Large
jacksonrobin@gmail.com

Bill Ascol, At Large
bascol@sbcglobal.net

Paul Walker, At Large
pastorpaul@elmavenuebaptist.org

Lyn Hansen, At Large
pastorlyn@insidenp.com



WWW.SBAOC.ORG

MEN AVAILABLE FOR PULPIT SUPPLY

Kevin Berens
Colby, Kansas
Email: berens.kevin@gmail.com
Cell Phone: 785-332-7184

Nathaniel Penland
Lawrenceville, Georgia
Email: n8penland@gmail.com
Phone: 678-925-7024

Tim Lambert
Lindsborg, Kansas
Email: tlambert@smokyvalley.org
Phone: 785-614-3651

Bake Ottofy
St. Louis, Missouri
Email: bakeottofy@gmail.com
Phone: 636-467-7446

Brad Richardson
Lawrence, Kansas
Email: richbud@hotmail.com
Phone: 785-766-7268

John Grove
Ocala, FL
Email: trsjwg@gmail.com
Phone: 352-286-5494

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