



why I am

NOT
SOUTHERN
BAPTIST



David W. Cloud

Why I Am Not Southern Baptist

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*Why I Am Not
Southern Baptist*

Introduction

I grew up in Southern Baptist churches and many of my friends and relatives are still a part of the Convention, but when I was converted in 1973, I searched for a biblical church and joined a sound fundamental Baptist congregation (not all fundamental Baptists are sound!). I am thankful for the spiritual benefit I received growing up under the sound of the gospel and for the scriptural doctrine I was taught as a boy, and I am thankful for every good thing that God has done through the Convention, but there are some compelling biblical reasons why I never went back. And I have found those reasons more compelling every decade.

I Was Abused in the Southern Baptist Convention

The 2019 annual Southern Baptist Convention was held in Birmingham, Alabama, June 11-12. There were 8,183 messengers from associated churches (meaning churches that contribute to the SBC Cooperation Program). “Southern Baptists acted in support of sexual abuse survivors, embraced ethnic and gender diversity and rallied around the Great Commission” (“Wrap-up: SBC supports survivors, embraced diversity,” Baptist Press, June 13, 2019). An amendment was approved stating that sexual abuse is grounds for a church to be deemed “not in friendly cooperation” with the convention. Recent reports have found evidence of cover ups of sexual abuse in Southern Baptist congregations, and the Convention is trying to deal with it. But they are dealing with it in a typically ineffectual denominational way that fails to address the root causes, which are rampant unregeneracy among the membership, terrible worldliness, lack of courageous pastoral leadership, lack of serious discipleship, frightful biblical ignorance, and the near nonexistence of church discipline.

Thinking back on my childhood and youth in Southern Baptist churches, it is clear that I was terribly abused, but not sexually. I was abused by pastors who didn’t preach the whole counsel of God, who didn’t rebuke sin forthrightly and didn’t warn of error plainly, seemingly fearing man more than God, who didn’t exercise discipline, who received people into the membership who had absolutely no intention of being faithful disciples of Christ, thereby polluting and weakening the spiritual atmosphere of the assembly, who let the deacons and their wives run the church, who didn’t deal with me wisely and carefully about being born again, instead, accepting a flimsy profession as salvation and receiving me into church membership when there was zero evidence that I

had been converted, who never thereafter challenged my empty profession, who didn't teach me how to be a serious Bible student and failed, therefore, to introduce me into the unspeakable beauty of God's infinite Word (the Bible seemed, rather, to be a bunch of old stories that were irrelevant to my life), who depended on weak denominational literature instead of teaching the pure Word of God and all of the Word of God, who never supported a real foreign missionary and never even introduced us to one, leaving that business to a faceless denomination, who didn't preach separation from the world, who allowed worldliness to run rampant among the youth--the youth who attended Sunday services but spent Saturday nights at rock & roll dances and drinking parties. This is wretched abuse. While I can't blame my foolishness and rebellion on a church, there can be no doubt that a more biblical kind of church could have had a great influence on me for good.

Independent Baptists Joining the Southern Baptist Convention

Many independent Baptists are joining the Southern Baptist Convention because they are all moving along with the same spirit of apostasy. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). Following are a few examples:

THOMAS ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, Lynchburg, Virginia. It was founded in 1956. When I was saved in 1973, it was a conservative fundamental Baptist church. It started using CCM in the 1980s. Pastor Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority in the 1980s as political action group, and it was eventually composed of 30% Roman Catholic. In his 1987 autobiography Falwell spoke of “my Catholic brothers and sisters” (*Strength for the Journey*, p. 371). In 1995, Falwell praised Billy Graham for his “long and faithful ministry.” In 1997 Falwell’s paper boasted of three Billy Grahams at his Liberty University: Billy gave the commencement; Franklin gave the prayer; and William Franklin IV graduated that year. Yet Graham’s working policy since the 1950s was to yoke together with all churches and to send his “converts” to any church, including Roman Catholic. “If Catholics step forward there will be no attempt to convert them and their names will be given to the Catholic Church nearest their homes” (David Cline, crusade vice-chairman, *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 5, 1984). In 1996, Thomas Road Baptist Church joined the Southern Baptist Convention. In 2019, Liberty University allowed a group of students to conduct a day-long demonstration in support of homosexual rights. They were protesting the statement made by Jerry Falwell, Jr., and his wife, that they were going to raise their granddaughter “as a girl” because “God makes the choice and God decided she would be a girl.” The demonstrating Liberty students called this “hate speech.”

They want to “create an environment where comments like this aren’t welcome.” No action was taken against the students by the administration.

HIGHLAND PARK BAPTIST CHURCH, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Lee Roberson pastored Highland Park from 1942 until 1983, and it was an old-fashioned fundamental Baptist church. It regularly ran 4,500 on Sunday mornings. There was no hint of theological liberalism. Roberson said, “I believe the Bible from the first word of Genesis to the last word of Revelation! Not a single line, not a verse, not a chapter, not a story, not a miracle, not a parable would I omit from the Word! This is God’s Book, and I believe it.” There was no hint of questioning the substitutionary blood atonement or an eternal fiery hell or salvation being only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. There was a godly emphasis on pilgrim Christian living, separation from the world, being filled with the Spirit, dying to self. The music was conservative and sacred. Hymn writer and evangelist Charles Weigle lived at Highland Park for the last 15 years of his life. He wrote “A Garden of Roses” during that time. Of Weigle’s 1,000 hymns, there was no hint of the world.

A major theme at Highland Park was the imminent return of Christ and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The song “Behold, I Come” was sung every Sunday. The church gave half of its income to missions. Annual conferences featured 80-100 missionaries. It was the home of Tennessee Temple, which had 3,000 students in the 1970s. Temple was founded in 1946 to train preachers and Christian workers for world missions. By the late 1980s the school was changing. They began using soft rock, which is always how it begins. There was strong influence from Liberty University and Word of Life, which were New Evangelical and promoted the modern versions, including the Living Bible. In 2005, Tennessee Temple held a rock concert featuring ecumenical rockers Bebo Norman, Fernando Ortega, and Sara Groves. In

2005 the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* featured a picture of Temple students “worshipping” to contemporary rock music on Wednesday evening. 2006 College Days featured Toddiefunk and the Electric Church, which has produced songs such as “Holy Ghost Thang,” “Naked,” and “Crazy.” In the 2000s, Tennessee Temple Seminary had Dallas Willard for the Spring Lecture Series. He believed people can be saved “without knowing Jesus.” He called the traditional doctrine of Christ’s blood atonement “a theory.” He said the gospel is more about building the kingdom of God than being saved from sin. He promoted Roman Catholic-style contemplative mysticism.

In 2008, Highland Park rejoined the Southern Baptist Convention. In 2013, Highland Park ceased to exist. The church relocated and changed the name to “Church of the Highlands.” It is a rock & roll Southern Baptist church. The new pastor said the Church of the Highlands “will be the funnest church around” (*Chattanooga Times Free Press*, Sep. 10, 2012). In 2018, the property formerly owned by Highland Park was purchased by Redemption to the Nations Church, a charismatic church pastored by a husband-wife team.

TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH, Detroit Michigan. It was pastored by J. Frank Norris from 1936-1950 and by G.B. Vick from 1950 to 1975. In 1990, Brad Powell became the pastor. The church began having CCM concerts in the 1990s. At first it was the softer style CCM like Steve Camp. In 2000 the church changed its name to Northridge Church. In 2010, Northridge had a Hillsong rock concert, demonstrating that it had arrived at a full-blown, charismatic, ecumenical rock philosophy.

HIGH STREET BAPTIST, Springfield, Missouri. This was the “flagship” church of the BBFI. It helped form Baptist Bible College in 1950 and provided classroom space. Today it is into total rock and roll. On August 25, 2019, High Street

hosted comedian Andrew Stanley, The emphasis today is on “kingdom building.” - “High Street Youth ... are kingdom builders.” In 2017, High Street joined the Southern Baptist Convention. The church is dually aligned with the BBFI and the SBC. Pastor Eddie Lyons, who was International President of the BBFI at the time, said, “We have the same heart, the same calling” (*Baptist Press*, Feb. 15, 2017). Pastor Lyons said, “There is no difference between us” (BBFI and Southern Baptists). He’s right.

We could trace the same downgrade in hundreds of other churches that have departed from their founding biblical principles.

Why I Am Not Southern Baptist

Outline

1. The denominational system
2. The churches are not governed scripturally
3. Worldliness is rampant
4. Controlling and Blackballing
5. New Evangelicalism and Ecumenism
6. Modern Bible Versions
7. Women disobeying God's Word
8. Charismatic movement
9. Theological modernism
10. Pagan organizations
11. New Reformed Calvinism
12. No church discipline
13. Church growth philosophy
14. Homosexuality

1. The Denominational System Itself Is Unscriptural.

The denominational system itself is unscriptural. The Lord's apostles planted autonomous congregations and they did not build denominational structures that yoked the congregations together in any way. The New Testament gives detailed instructions for the government and discipline of the assembly, but denominational structures have no biblical pattern or authority.

The denominational system has a big impact on churches in a variety of ways. One is in the area of missions. A large percentage of independent Baptist churches are extremely missionary minded. They support missionaries directly, have a personal involvement with and knowledge of the ministries they support, and pray specifically for individual

missionaries, plus the church members regularly meet “real live” missionaries. The Southern Baptist Convention’s centralized denominational missionary program largely destroyed these things.

2. Most SBC Churches Are Not Governed Scripturally.

SBC churches are not governed scripturally. Though there are some exceptions, they commonly have a deacon board that has authority equal to and even above that of the pastor(s). The Bible gives no authority to deacons. Nowhere does the Bible speak of “deacons who rule well,” because deacons are not rulers. Their qualifications are not ruling qualifications, but are the qualifications of servants to the pastors and congregations. Whereas pastors (also called elders and bishops) must be apt to teach and able to defend the flock from false teachers (1 Ti. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:4-13), deacons have no such requirement (1 Ti. 3:8-13). The common polity among SBC congregations ignores these biblical truths and allows men who are not pastors to have authority equal to that of a pastor. This unscriptural polity creates tremendous potential for abuse. In many SBC churches, the pastor is little more than a hired preacher, who is in danger of being fired at any time if he displeases the deacons or established families in the congregation. In fact, many SBC congregations are ruled, in practice, by strong-willed women who are the wives of the deacons.

3. Worldliness Is Rampant in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Worldliness is rampant in the southern baptist convention. Though there are godly Southern Baptist people, the homes of the average church members are more often filled with rock music (secular and “Christian”), immodest dress, R-rated movies, sensual video games, filthy social media, and other marks of a gross love of the world.

As long ago as the 1980s, Southern Baptist coeds were volunteering to pose for *Playboy* magazine (Mercer University, 1985). Many SBC schools are known as party schools, and the student fornicators and drunkards are not disciplined. Fifty years ago, Evangelist John R. Rice warned, "The lewdness of the modern dance is now excused and the worldly viewpoint accepted in most Southern Baptist colleges" ("Dancing in Southern Baptist Colleges," *Sword of the Lord*, Sept. 5, 1969).

The worldliness in the Southern Baptist Convention has dramatically increased since then and the "conservative renaissance" has done nothing to stem the tide.

Pointed, plain preaching against worldliness is nonexistent in most SBC churches.

In 1986 Southern Baptist-supported Baylor University in Texas began allowing campus dances. Speaking with the *Ft. Worth Telegram-Star*, university President Robert Sloan described the move as exciting and said, "It's done at other universities and we've wanted it for a long time." Baylor sororities, fraternities, and other organizations had held off-campus dances for many years.

First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, had a "Hard-Core-a-Thone concert that kicked off a new youth ministry." A picture in the *Dallas Morning News* showed "young people slam-dancing the night away" (*The Fundamentalist Digest*, September-October 2002).

Dr. John Bisagno's First Baptist Church (SBC) in Houston, Texas, had an Elvis contest and Beatles music at a 1994 event in its Solid Rock Café (*Calvary Contender*, Aug. 15, 1994).

Grace Point Church (formerly known as Castle Hills Church Northwest, founded by Castle Hills First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas area) held a "Dad and Daughter Valentine Dance" on Feb. 8, 2002. A news report indicated the occasion featured "the chicken dance, Macarena and

twist” (*San Antonio Express News*, Feb. 2, 2002, p. 12C; Feb. 14, 2002, p. B6; cited from *The Fundamentalist Digest*, Sept.-Oct. 2002).

Dr. R.L. Hymers, Jr. relates the following in his book *Preaching to A Dying Nation*: “A short time ago I was driving through Houston on a trip with my family. It was Sunday, so we dropped into the First Baptist Church ... since we knew of no independent church in the downtown area. I can only describe this evening service as fully charismatic. The pulsating music went on at a deafening level for nearly an hour. The sermon, by ... Louie Giglio, was replete with charismatic ideas, punctuated by waves of people holding their arms in the air. The ushers were men dressed in shorts and caps with rings in their ears. ... We felt as out of place as we would have if we had entered a night club, a rock concert, or an opium den! ... It is considered one of the conservative churches in the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Consider the growing trend of drinking. In 2007, a Lifeway survey found that 29% of Southern Baptist “laity” drink alcohol. That year, The Journey, a Southern Baptist church in St. Louis pastored by Darrin Patrick, opened its Theology at the Bottleworks, which was advertised as “grab a brew and give your view.” Evan Lenow, an ethics professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, says, “I believe we are seeing a change from total abstinence to a trend of acceptance of alcohol among Southern Baptists. The emphasis has moved from warnings about alcohol to highlighting Christian freedom” (“Baptists & Alcohol,” Baptist Press, Nov. 2, 2018).

At the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, top denominational leaders donned long-haired wigs and performed Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Sweet Home Alabama” for the pleasure of the thousands of SBC pastors in attendance. The Lynyrd Skynyrd wannabes were Kevin Ezell, president of the SBC mission board, Ronnie Floyd, former

SBC president and current president of the SBC Executive Committee, Paul Chitwood, president of the International Mission Board, Jamie Dew, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Adam Greenway, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. There is nothing godly or morally innocent about Lynyrd Skynyrd. Since their debut album in 1973, they have stood for rebellion and moral license. The main message is “live as you please,” which is to shake one’s fist at Almighty God and His holy laws. The band was named to mock a former gym teacher, Leonard Skinner, who had talked to the band members about their long hair and rebellious attitudes. The nearly meaningless song “Sweet Home Alabama” uses the name of the Lord in vain multiple times. Not to be outdone, at the 2019 convention, SBC President J.D. Greear danced onstage with two other men to Whitney Houston’s filthy “I Wanna Dance with Somebody” during a youth event. The crowd “laughed and cheered” to this wicked performance. One viewer described it as follows: “Much of the dancing is sexualized, and one of the males portrays an effeminate male kneeling and dancing in submission to JD [Greear] while singing ‘when the night falls loneliness calls; oh! I wanna dance with somebody. I want to feel the heat with somebody.’ Seriously, why would two ministers be doing this?” Why? 2 Timothy 4:3-4 answers that, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but AFTER THEIR OWN LUSTS shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables;”

The Southern Baptist Convention is largely devoted today to the heresy of “culturalism liberalism,” which is the teaching that the believer can love Jesus and the filthy pop culture, too. Consider three books that teach cultural liberalism that were promoted by the Southern Baptist LifeWay Resources: In *Blue Like Jazz*, Donald Miller describes his unhappiness with

traditional Bible churches, because he wanted to drink beer and watch raunchy movies and talk trashy and hand out with atheists and hippies. He found that “liberty” in the Christian circles that believe in cultural liberalism. In *A Renegade’s Guide to God: Finding Life Outside Conventional Christianity*, David Foster says, “We won’t be told what to do or commanded how to behave.” This book was highly recommended by Ralph Hodge, a regional director for LifeWay. In *The Barbarian Way*, Erwin McManus says that we “are not required to keep in step” and “there is no forced conformity.”

4. The Denomination Practices Controlling and “Blackballing”

It is said that the local church retains its autonomy within the denominational structure, but that often is not true in practice. There are all sorts of pressures brought to bear to push pastors and churches toward compliance with denominational positions and programs. Denominations tend to make men weak, because they aren’t allowed to speak against sin and error in the denomination (or fellowship or association), and abiding by that unscriptural principle weakens men’s convictions. Had Paul been a member of a denomination, he doubtless would have been censured for speaking publicly against the main leader, Peter (Galatians 2:11-14).

We will offer four of countless examples that could be given.

In the early 1920s, First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas, pastored by **J. Frank Norris**, was expelled from the Tarrant County Baptist Association and the Texas Baptist Convention. The cause was not heresy or sin. The cause, rather, was the church’s refusal to use the Southern Baptist Convention’s Sunday School literature (the church determined to use only the Bible), and their refusal to

cooperate in the Seventy-Five Million Dollar Campaign. The denominational preachers “turned on the man himself with full intention to ruin him, and, if possible, to drive him from his church” (George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*). The Convention threatened to destroy Norris’s ministry. Lee Scarborough, president of Southwestern Seminary told him, “If you don’t cooperate ... we will brand you to the ends of the earth as a non-cooperating Baptist, and you will lose out, and will not have any crowds to hear you and your church will disintegrate.” So much for denominationalists believing in the autonomy of the local church! Norris was slandered viciously. He was accused by his fellow Baptists of starting “a new cult.” In radio broadcasts by denominational leaders he was publicly called a liar, thief, dastardly, devilish, reprobate, damnable, scoundrel, malicious, wicked, heinous. Pastor J.L. Ward of Decatur Baptist College said he expected to look down from heaven to see Norris “frying in the bottomless pits of hell.” The Convention tried to pressure the church to get rid of its pastor, but Norris stood his ground, and the denomination was not able to have him removed. Norris certainly had his “issues,” but he was a warrior for the truth, and that is a good thing. It should be said of *every* Bible preacher, “He’s a fighter. He takes his stand for what he believes and he exposes error. You won’t cow him or move him, except by the truth.”

In about 1927, the local affiliate of the Southern Baptist Convention tried to control the ministry of the young preacher **John R. Rice**. He had warned of the evolution being taught by Samuel Dow at Baylor University and had been affiliating with J. Frank Norris and preaching on Norris’s radio station KFQB. A committee composed of two professors of Southwestern Baptist Seminary plus the pastor of the Seminary Hill Baptist Church visited Rice. They gave him an ultimatum to stop warning of error in the Convention and to break off his association with Norris or face being

blacklisted in the county and the state. They said a notice would be printed in the state paper, *The Baptist Standard*, warning pastors not to have him in for revival meetings. “They told him he would not be able to continue his work as an evangelist, could not educate his children, and would be forced out of the ministry” (Robert Sumner, *John R. Rice Man Sent from God*, p. 100). Instead of ceasing to preach on Norris’s radio KFQB, Rice went on the air the next week and told the whole story to the public and announced that he had no intention of following the dictates of the Convention and that he was confident that the God who had called him would open doors for him and provide his needs. That turned out to be true, of course, but the point is that the Southern Baptist Convention tried to blackball a preacher for no other reason than that he was saying true things Convention men didn’t like and was affiliating with men they couldn’t control.

In 1954, the Hamilton County Baptist Association, the local affiliate of the Southern Baptist Convention, tried to control Pastor **Lee Roberson** and the Highland Park Baptist Church of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Highland Park had led the entire Southern Baptist Convention in baptisms since 1944, but without even consulting with the church, the association published a letter in the *Chattanooga News Free Press* claiming that Highland Park was not supportive enough of the Convention. They mentioned the fact that Tennessee Temple College was not approved by the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the church was giving too much money to independent missions and not enough to the Southern Baptist Convention’s Cooperative Program. The letter said that the church “does not promote our cause and program, and has shown a non-cooperative attitude” (James Wigton, *Lee Roberson Always about His Father’s Business*, p. 221). The association also released some false information about the church. When the deacons of Highland Park tried to correct errors in the censure and asked for a retraction, the

denomination refused, so the church left the Convention in 1955.

Nothing has changed. In a Sunday morning sermon on Oct. 20, 2019, Pastor Jeff Noblit told how that the Alabama Baptist Association had criticized and blackballed Grace Life Church of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, for the church's plurality of elders, its Calvinism, and its practice of church discipline.

(https://www.gracelifeshoals.org/sermons#!/swx/pp/media_archives/203615/episode/79777)

5. The Southern Baptist Convention Is New Evangelical and Rejects Biblical Separation.

The Southern Baptist Convention is new evangelical and it rejects biblical separation. If a person can understand New Evangelicalism he will understand the Southern Baptist Convention today. We recommend [*New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics, and Fruit*](#), available at www.wayoflife.org.

The chief error of New Evangelicalism is its positive, non-judgmental focus and its neglect of the “harder” obligations of the Word of God, such as separation from error, plain exposure of false teachers, and unpopular doctrines such as hellfire.

Southern Baptist leaders openly warn against fundamentalism and separatism. Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, warned against “separatism” in his June 2004 message “The Fundamentals of Cooperating Conservatives.” He said:

“There’s a road wrongly taken by many on our left, the road of liberalism. But there is also a road wrongly taken by many others on our right side. It may not be as treacherous as the road of liberalism, but it is just as disabling to the Convention. What is this road? It is the road of separatism -- an ecclesiastical methodology that devalues cooperation in favor of hyper independence. In the past, we have avoided

this road as fervently as the road on the left. If Southern Baptists steer too sharply toward the right, we will end up on the road of separatism. SOUTHERN BAPTISTS HAVE NEVER EMBRACED THE METHODOLOGIES OF SEPARATISM” (Morris Chapman, June 2004, <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/sbvoices/chapman2004.asp>).

The renunciation of separatism was the hallmark of New Evangelicalism from its inception in the 1940s. Harold Ockenga, who claimed to have coined the term “neo-evangelical,” defined the philosophy of this movement as follows:

“Neo-evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. ... The ringing call for A REPUDIATION OF SEPARATISM AND THE SUMMONS TO SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT received a hearty response from many evangelicals. The name caught on and spokesmen such as Drs. Harold Lindsell, CARL F.H. HENRY, Edward Carnell, and Gleason Archer supported this viewpoint. We had no intention of launching a movement, but found that the emphasis attracted widespread support and exercised great influence. Neo-evangelicalism... DIFFERENT FROM FUNDAMENTALISM IN ITS REPUDIATION OF SEPARATISM AND ITS DETERMINATION TO ENGAGE ITSELF IN THE THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE OF THE DAY” (Harold J. Ockenga, foreword to Harold Lindsell’s book *The Battle for the Bible*).

Note that a central aspect of New Evangelicalism is its repudiation of separatism. New Evangelicals desire a more positive Christianity, less theological controversy, less fire and brimstone, less “Bible thumping.”

The Bible doesn’t allow the middle-of-the-road position between theological liberalism and fundamentalism espoused by the Southern Baptist Convention. Separation from doctrinal error is a divine commandment.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Ro. 16:17).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Co. 6:14).

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*” (2 Co. 11:3-4).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph. 5:11).

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Ti. 2:15-18).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5).

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jo. 4:1).

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house,

neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 Jo. 1:8-11).

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3).

Until 2004 the Southern Baptist Convention was one a member of the World Baptist Alliance, an organization almost as radically liberal as the National Council of Churches in America and the World Council of Churches. The Convention did not pull out of the World Baptist Alliance until its enemy the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was accepted as a member, which makes the pull out decision appear political rather than theological.

Regardless of its disassociation with the World Baptist Alliance, the SBC has many other ecumenical associations. It has a relationship, for example, with the American Bible Society and the United Bible Societies. In the book [*Unholy Hands on God's Holy Book*](#), available from Way of Life Literature, we have carefully documented the theological modernism that permeates the Bible societies.

The SBC yokes together with theological modernism through its longstanding alliance with the China Christian Council. In November 1997, Louis Moore, associate vice president for communications with the SBC foreign mission board stated that the Southern Baptist Convention has worked closely with the China Christian Council (CCC) from its beginning and there were eight “career Southern Baptist workers” assigned to the council. K.H. Ting, longtime head of the CCC, was a rank modernist who denied that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, denied that sinful men will be judged by God, praised liberation theology, and believed that truth is found in all religions. Chapter six of the book “Has the Southern Baptist Convention Been Rescued from

Modernism” documents the unbelief that permeates the China Christian Council.

The SBC has also conducted formal dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, and Roman Catholic priests have spoken in many SBC pulpits. The Baptist convention of South Carolina warmly welcomed Pope John Paul II to America in 1987. This has never been repented of or publicly repudiated in spite of the “conservative renaissance.” The SBC has participated in such radical ecumenical crusades and meetings as Key ‘73 and the National Festival of Evangelism in 1988. SBC congregations are constantly hosting, and participating in, ecumenical meetings. In 1980 twenty-five Alabama SBC pastors met with twenty-five Roman Catholic “clergymen” to build bridges “that may help them work together more often than they have in the past” (*Birmingham News*, Aug. 22, 1980). This type of ecumenism has not disappeared from the Convention.

Southern Baptist agencies were active in “Mission 2000,” a consortium of “400 New Evangelical denominations, mission agencies and para-church groups that advocate and adhere to ecumenical evangelism” (*Fundamentalist Digest*, March-April 2001, p. 9).

The Southern Baptist Convention lended strong support to the ecumenical Promise Keepers movement, which had a Roman Catholic on its board of directors and featured Roman Catholic priests as key speakers at some of its events.

Roman Catholic priest Richard John Neuhaus, co-author of *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*, spoke at Beeson Divinity School, October 2-3, 2001. Timothy George, Dean of Beeson, is a signer of *Evangelicals & Catholics Together II*. George joined Albert Mohler, President of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, to speak at “a meeting of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians” on November 8-10, 2001, at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois. Other speakers included Metropolitan Maximos,

Greek Orthodox bishop, and James Hitchcock, professor at Roman Catholic St. Louis University (*The Fundamentalist Digest*, July-August 2001, p. 4).

Eugene Lowery, professor at United Methodist Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri, was a guest lecturer at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in February 2001. That same month, Southwestern featured guest lecturer Peter Toon, executive president of the Prayer Book Society for the apostate Episcopal Church.

In February 2007 Southeastern Theological Seminary featured two Roman Catholic speakers at its 20/20 Conference: Peter Kreeft and Richard John Neuhaus. They spoke in the plenary sessions. Neuhaus is a co-author of *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*, and Kreeft, in his book *Ecumenical Jihad*, says that there is a “hidden Christ” in pagan religions so that Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, etc., will be saved “through Christ and His grace” even though they do not consciously know or worship Jesus Christ (pp. 156, 157).

We could list countless other examples of ecumenical ventures involving SBC congregations and schools.

The Southern Baptist Convention’s ecumenism is clear in that it is the convention of Billy Graham. Billy Graham, the king of ecumenism, did more than any man in church history to build an apostate one-world church. He united every type of “church” in his evangelistic crusades and turned thousands of “converts” over to apostate churches.

As early as September 21, 1957, Graham said in an interview with the *San Francisco News*, “Anyone who makes a decision at our meetings is seen later and referred to a local clergyman, Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish.” This was Graham’s working policy throughout his career.

In 1984, the vice-chairman of the organizing committee of the Vancouver crusade, David Cline of Brighthouse United Church, said, “If Catholics step forward THERE WILL BE

NO ATTEMPT TO CONVERT THEM and their names will be given to the Catholic church nearest their homes" (*Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 5, 1984).

In 1983, the names of 600 who came forward during the Orlando Graham crusade were turned over to Catholic churches (*The Florida Catholic*, Sept. 2, 1983).

Decade after decade, Graham followed this policy, delivering large numbers of seekers over to wolves in sheep's clothing such as Catholic priests and modernistic Protestant pastors. We have documented this in [*Billy Graham and Rome*](#) and [*Billy Graham and the One World Church*](#), which are available as a free eBooks at www.wayoflife.org.

Billy Graham was a member of the late W.A. Criswell's First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and he was never reprovved or disciplined for his disobedience to the Word of God.

Billy's children, Franklin Graham and Anne Graham Lotz, are Southern Baptists and have continued the ecumenical policy. For example, Roman Catholics participated in Franklin Graham crusades in 2000 in Lubbock, Texas, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 2004, in Corpus Christi, Texas, in 2005, in Baltimore, Maryland, in 2006, and in Winnipeg, Canada, in 2006. Franklin attended Pope John Paul II's funeral, and Anne Lotz attended the enthronement of Pope Benedict XVI. Anne indicated to Kyra Phillips of CNN on April 8, 2005, that she believes that Pope John Paul II is in heaven. She applauded the pope's efforts "to bridge the gaps between Protestants and Catholics and Jews and Catholics" (CNN.com, transcripts). She said, "The wonderful thing, in Rome I've heard people say the Holy Father is in heaven and everybody is so confident that the pope is in heaven. And I think it's because he was such a good man." This is in spite of the fact that the spiritually-blind pope held to a false gospel of salvation through Rome's sacraments and devoted himself 100% to Mary.

In 2012, Franklin Graham told CNN that he was shocked when he learned that there was an article at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's web site naming Mormonism as a cult. The article was removed soon after Billy and Franklin met with Mormon presidential candidate Mitt Romney. Claiming that this is "name-calling," Franklin said, "If I want to win a person to Christ, how can I call that person a name? That's what shocked me, that we were calling people names. ... I'm an evangelist and I want to reach as many people as I can. If I'm calling them names, it doesn't work" ("Franklin Graham Was Shocked," *Christian News*, Nov. 15, 2012). By not plainly condemning false teachers, the Grahams are brazenly, presumptuously disobeying the Bible and demonstrating that they are not true Bible preachers. Jesus is the Evangelist of evangelists, yet He denounced false teachers publicly as hypocrites, blind guides, children of hell, fools and blind, serpents, and vipers (Matthew 23). The apostle Paul called them vain babblers, vessels unto dishonor, enemies of the cross of Christ, accursed, false apostles. The apostle Peter called them presumptuous, self-willed, as natural brute beasts, beguiling unstable souls, cursed children, wells without water. John called them deceivers. Jude called them filthy dreamers, clouds without water, twice dead, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever, murmurers. If that is "name-called," then so be it!

The Southern Baptist Convention has never condemned the Grahams' ecumenical heresies.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has a course entitled *Christian Life and Witness*, which trains students in crusade counseling techniques. On May 3, 2001, the Baptist Press ran an article entitled "Hundreds of Southern Students Prepare for Graham Crusade." R. Albert Mohler, Jr., President of Southern Seminary and a "conservative evangelical," served as the chairman of Graham's crusade. He told the Baptist

Press, "Nothing else has brought together the kind of ethnic and racial and denominational inclusivity as is represented in this crusade; nothing in my experience and nothing in the recent history of Louisville has brought together such a group of committed Christians for one purpose" [emphasis added]. In fact, Southern Seminary proudly hosts the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth.

Thus even the allegedly conservative Southern Baptist seminaries at the national level promote ecumenism.

Southern Baptist churches, colleges, and seminaries do nothing to warn their students about the great dangers of ecumenical evangelism. They do not warn that Billy Graham turned thousands of converts over to Roman Catholic and modernistic churches. They do not carry books in their bookstores that warn about ecumenical ventures such as this and that document New Evangelical compromise.

The deeply compromised, ecumenical nature of the Southern Baptist Convention was seen in its support for Mel Gibson and his Roman Catholic film *The Passion of the Christ*. Gibson based his movie partly on Catholic mystic Anne-Catherine Emmerich's "visions," which are recorded in the book *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*. Emmerich (1774-1824) was a German nun who allegedly had the *stigmata* or wounds of Christ in her body. Emmerich supposedly "had the use of reason from her birth and could understand liturgical Latin from her first time at Mass." During the last 12 years of her life, she allegedly ate no food except the wafer of the Catholic mass. Her visions on the life of Christ were published in 1824. Gibson said, "She supplied me with stuff I never would have thought of." Gibson borrowed extra-biblical scenes such as Peter confessing to Mary, Mary appealing to Pilate's wife to protect Jesus, Mary wiping up Jesus' blood with cloths provided by Pilate's wife, and Mary saying to Jesus, "Flesh of my flesh and heart of my heart, let me die with you." Pope John Paul II beatified

Emmerich in a ceremony at the Vatican in 2004. Mel Gibson prays to Mary and believes in salvation through the Catholic sacraments; he accepts the Council of Trent as authoritative, even though it hurled 125 anathemas or curses at those who accept the Bible alone as the Word of God and who believe that salvation is by God's grace alone without works or sacraments. Gibson stated in an interview that he does not believe that people can go to heaven apart from the Roman Catholic Church.

In spite of the clear and present danger of such appalling heresy, Gibson and his movie received thunderous support from the Southern Baptist Convention. Jack Graham, Convention president, said, "The movie is biblical, powerful and potentially life-changing." Morris Chapman, president of the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention said, "I don't know of anything since the Billy Graham crusades that has had the potential of touching so many lives." Not to be outdone, popular SBC preacher Adrian Rogers said this Hollywood movie "is going to bring the Church away from me-ology back to theology" ("Gibson's Words Fuel Controversy," *AgapePress*, Feb. 20, 2004).

The Word of God warns that those who associate with heresy can lose their rewards and become partakers of the evil deeds of those who are committed to false teaching (2 John 7-11).

6. The Acceptance of Modern Versions Has Destroyed the Absolute Authority of God's Word.

Southern Baptist churches have embraced the modern versions.

They have followed the lead of their favorite son, Billy Graham, who promoted every corrupt version, beginning with the Revised Standard Version. In 1952, Graham accepted a copy of the modernistic REVISED STANDARD VERSION and told a crowd of 20,000 people: "These scholars

have probably given us the most nearly perfect translation in English. While there may be room for disagreement in certain areas of the translation, yet this new version should supplement the King James Version and make Bible reading a habit throughout America" (Perry Rockwood, *God's Inspired Preserved Bible*, People's Gospel Hour, p. 15). "THE LIVING BIBLE might be called 'The Billy Graham Bible,' for it was he who made it the success that it is. According to *Time* magazine, July 24, 1972, Billy Graham ordered 50,000 copies of the Epistles, and a short time later ordered some 450,000 more, and still later ordered 600,000 special paperback versions for his autumn television crusade in 1972. From that time on, orders began to pour in" (M.L. Moser, Jr., *The Case Against the Living Bible*, p. 9). In 1987, Graham appeared in television ads for *The Book*, a condensed version of the Living Bible. In 1991, Graham said: "I read The Living Bible because in this book I have read the age-abiding truths of the scriptures with renewed interest and inspiration. The Living Bible communicates the message of Christ to our generation" (*Charisma*, March 1991, p. 98). Graham also popularized the perverted GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN (Today's English Version) by distributing it through his evangelistic association. Graham called it an "excellent translation" over nationwide television from his campaign in Anaheim, California. The *Good News for Modern Man* replaces the word "blood" with "death" in speaking of the atonement of Jesus Christ, and corrupts practically every passage dealing with Christ's deity. The translator of the *Good News for Modern Man*, Southern Baptist missionary Robert Bratcher, did not believe that Jesus Christ is God. Graham printed his own edition of Eugene Peterson's THE MESSAGE, which is the most corrupt version ever made. It even uses the term "as above, so below," which is a New Age expression for the unity of God and man, heaven and earth.

The Southern Baptist Convention published its own edition of the *Good News for Modern Man*.

The modern Bible versions are based on a corrupt Greek text that was created through the modernistic principles of “textual criticism.” Unitarians and theological modernists and men deeply tainted by these heresies had a major role in this process, as we have documented in *The Modern Bible Version Hall of Shame*. Examples are J.J. Griesbach, George Vance Smith, B.B. Westcott, John Hort, Philip Schaff, Ezra Abbot, William Smith, Caspar Gregory, Eberhard Nestle, Hermann Von Soden, James Moffatt, Edgar Goodspeed, Kirsopp Lake, Robert Bratcher, Eugene Nida, Ernest Colwell, J.B. Phillips, Joseph Thayer, C.H. Dodd, Arthur Voobus, Carlo Martini, Bruce Metzger, Matthew Black, Kurt Aland, Allen Wikgrin, and Johannes Karavidopoulos. How is it possible to obey the Bible’s command to mark and avoid heretics while accepting the critical Greek text created by such men?

Textual criticism removes a significant portion of the New Testament. More than 2,800 words in the Received Greek New Testament are removed by textual criticism--the equivalent of 1 and 2 Peter. (This exposes the myth that only 1/2 page of text is in question.) It omits or questions 45 entire verses — Mt. 12:47; 17:21; 18:11; 21:44; 23:14; Mk. 7:16; 9:44; 9:46; 11:26; 15:28; 16:9-20; Luke 17:36; 22:43-44; 23:17; Jn. 5:4; John 7:53--8:11; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29; Rom. 16:24; and 1 Jn. 5:7. In addition, it omits significant portions of 147 other verses.

Modern textual criticism WEAKENS MANY DOCTRINES such as the Deity of Christ. For example, it removes “God” from 1 Timothy 3:16. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **GOD** was manifest in the flesh...” This is documented in many books, such as [*Why We Hold to the King James Bible*](#).

Another major problem with most modern versions is that they **use the corrupt principle of dynamic equivalency**,

which gives the translator frightful liberties. This is true for the New International Version, the New Living Bible, the Today's English Version (Good News for Modern Man), and The Message.

Consider *The Message*, which is Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren's favorite version.

KJV - "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Message - "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule."

The Modern Bible Version position is a slippery slope toward abandonment of any concern about the purity of God's Word. Consider the fact that *The Message* has been recommended by Billy Graham, Warren Wiersbe, J.I. Packer, Joni Earekson Tada, Bill Hybels, Bill Gaither, Chuck Swindoll, Joyce Meyer, John Maxwell, Max Lucado, Focus on the Family, among many others.

The Bible text/version issue is about the Word of God. It is not merely about scholarship and literature. The question is do we have the pure, living, powerful Word of God?

The multiplicity of versions weakens the authority of Scripture in the hearts and lives of individuals and churches. Consider the testimony of a pastor who left the Southern Baptist Convention in 1996: "The problem with the SBC is that they have no absolute authority. The typical SBC church has no less than four different translations in any given service. So it is impossible for the people to hear a 'Thus saith the Lord.' Every issue becomes debatable. Every conviction becomes questionable" (Pastor Marty Wynn, Lighthouse Baptist Church, Columbus, Georgia, May 2011).

The King James Bible is based on the preserved Hebrew and Greek. It is accurate. It is dynamic and powerful. It is convicting. It is authoritative.

It is no small matter that the King James Bible is NOT the Bible of the ecumenical movement, the charismatic movement, the contemporary music movement, the contemplative prayer movement, evangelicalism, and the New Reformed Calvinism.

Consider the testimony of Marybeth Lane: “In my thirties, I was leading several groups of women and teenagers. The main question that I kept hearing from these women had to do with which version of the Bible was the most accurate. I decided I was going to read a new version of the Bible every six months. I read the majority of the popular Bible versions over the next few years. It was interesting to see how my views on God would change with each version. For instance, when I read the The Message version I found myself becoming very mystical in my response to God...sound doctrine was slowly replaced with pseudo-spiritual experiences. Due to my exposure to the Message Bible, along with reading *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer (and other similar books), I found myself studying Roman Catholic contemplative mystics. This ultimately led me into a full-blown contemplative prayer life. Tozer praises the Catholic mystic Teresa of Avila (who levitated and had physically painful visions of demonic entities stabbing her) as a godly example to follow. After reading some of her writings, I began studying the works of other authors. Tozer praises the Catholic mystic Teresa of Avila (who levitated and had physically painful visions of demonic entities stabbing her) as a godly example to follow. After reading some of her writings, I began studying the works of other authors, such as Henri Nouwen, Dallas Willard, and Richard Foster. I continued down this path until I began studying the writings of Thomas Merton (a Buddhist, Catholic monk) and Thomas Keating. These men were clearly both practicing and teaching interfaithism. Finally, after reading through many versions, I was faced with the fact that the only well-known version that

I had left to read was the dreaded King James Version!! I thought the KJV was going to be very difficult to read, but after doing some research on the reason behind some of the language that is used, I began to appreciate the 'ye' and the 'thou.' The most shocking verse for me to read was Acts 8:37. I couldn't believe that the other versions that I had been reading did not include this extremely important passage on believer's baptism. Consequently, I started to research what else was missing, and I was flabbergasted to find all of the changes that had taken place. ... Brother Cloud's writings on the subject were especially helpful to me during this season. My husband, Ed, was supportive of my research yet extremely skeptical of my discoveries. ... Ed had been an attorney for over 20 years and was trained in law school to search for evidence, no matter the cost. Ed started digging into the research that I presented him, and within six months he became convinced of the authenticity and reliability of the King James Version of the Bible. The greatest testimony to me regarding the truth of the King James Bible was far more than simply the facts that I uncovered, but it was the unexpected FRUIT that began to manifest in my life, my husband's life, and in our marriage. This word truly was quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Nothing in the KJV was watered down. My husband was led to give up his full time law practice to become a street evangelist, while at the same time God was leading me to keep my place in the home. ... Our Father truly knows what we need, and we have never been without. The fruit in my life was the greatest convincing factor that I was reading the perfect, infallible word of God. No other version of the Bible yielded the kind of fruit that Ed and I were experiencing."

7. Women Are Allowed to Disobey God's Word in The SBC.

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the

man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:11-14).

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...” (1 Timothy 3:2).

“If any be blameless, the husband of one wife...” (Titus 1:6).

Conventions and associations, being extra-biblical institutions, can only define and enforce doctrine by consensus, and the consensus invariably falls short of the whole counsel of God.

In 2000, the new edition of the SBC’s *Baptist Faith and Message* stated, “While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.”

This doesn’t go as nearly far as the Scripture’s teaching. God’s Word forbids the woman to teach men as well as to have authority over men in the churches.

SBC seminaries and colleges are filled with women who have feminist sympathies and who are training for the ministry. Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, stated that more women are now being trained for ministry in Southern Baptist seminaries than at any other time in the SBC’s history (Southern Baptist Convention web site, June 15, 2000).

On January 15, 2012, Christine Caine, a pastor of the Pentecostal Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia, preached the morning sermon at the SBC Elevation Church in North Carolina (“Word-Faith Pastrix,” *Apprising Ministries*, Jan. 22, 2012).

In 2020, female pastor Hosanna Wong, spoke at the SBC First Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida. Wong is “teaching pastor” at Eastlake Church in San Diego, California.

A 2020 study of the *SBC 500*, the 500 largest SBC churches, found that 10% have female pastors and another 10% or more

have female ministers in various roles, such as “Youth Minister,” “Singles Minister,” or “Ministry Director.” “While some are serving in faithful, biblically appropriate roles (if with loftier-than-needed titles), many who function in their given roles are doing so with the same authority and positioning in the church as the elders and authority of a pastor, but without that specific title. Combine the two groups and at least ONE-THIRD of the top 450 largest SBC churches in the country have women impastors or women ‘Ministers’ employed on staff. ... Many churches are clearly playing games with the titles they give women, even if their role is the same as that of the men. ... In terms of our methodology, we erred on the side of conservatism. If they listed a woman as ‘Youth Minister’ on the pastoral staff page, we did not categorize her as a pastor” (“Outrageous--10% of the Largest Southern Baptist Churches Are Pastored by Women,” *Pulpit & Pen*, Feb. 25, 2020).

In February 2021, it was reported that five churches approved by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the SBC have women pastors (“NAMB Caught with More Women Pastors in Churches,” *Capstone Report*, Feb. 8, 2021). One of these SBC churches, the multi-campus Echo Church of southern California, lists five women as pastors.

In May 2021, Saddleback Church, pastored by Rick Warren, announced on Instagram that it had ordained three female pastors. “Yesterday was a historic night for Saddleback Church in many ways! We ordained our first three women pastors, Liz Puffer, Cynthia Petty, and Katie Edwards” (May 7, 2021). Saddleback is the second largest congregation in the Southern Baptist Convention. Petty said in an interview, “I was honored and felt extremely humbled. And the thing I believe meant the most to me was how this would be groundbreaking for all the younger women ministers on staff who really did have the desire or dream to be a pastor one day! ... This is a new day for women in ministry and I am

honored and blessed to help carry the mantle of being a Pastor and have the title as NextGen Ministries pastor at Saddleback Church!” (Al Mohler, “Women Pastors ... and the Looming Test,” May 10, 2021).

In October 2022, Saddleback’s new pastor, Andy Wood, announced that his wife, Stacie, is the newest “teaching pastor” at Saddleback “(New Saddleback pastor sees women clergy in church’s future,” Associated Press, Oct. 24, 2022).

In October 2022, Pastor Mike Law of Arlington Baptist Church, Arlington, VA, published a motion to amend the SBC Constitution “to include an enumerated 6th item under Article III, Paragraph 1 concerning ‘Composition.’ As offered and referred to you at this past June’s annual meeting, the enumerated 6th item would read: ‘6. Does not affirm, appoint, or employ a woman as a pastor of any kind.’ Pastor Law continues, “Personally, I felt the need to offer this amendment because five Southern Baptist churches, roughly within a five-mile radius of my own congregation, are employing women as pastors of various kinds, including women serving as ‘Sr. Pastor.’ Many others have found that a number of Southern Baptist churches appoint, affirm, or employ women as pastors in their areas, too. These churches often use a modified title – co-pastor, worship pastor, women and children’s pastor, discipleship pastor, or youth pastor – but all trade on the office of ‘pastor.” As of October 26, 2022, there were 646 supporting signatures of pastors and SBC seminary professors. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yR4GD03KD2842r3RFlfJL-WX2CFRABLTp5O592twPSw/edit>

While most of the ordained females in Southern Baptist congregations are not senior pastors, they are disobeying the Bible by assuming leadership roles in other ways and by teaching and preaching to men. “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in

silence” (1 Timothy 2:12). Note that *both* teaching men and usurping authority are forbidden.

There are large numbers of Southern Baptist churches that allow women to teach adult Sunday School classes and otherwise openly disobey 1 Timothy 2:12. It is just as unscriptural for a woman to teach a class of men or a mixed class of men and women as it for a woman to be a senior pastor.

W.A. Criswell’s wife, Dorothy, taught a mixed Sunday Class for many years composed of men and women at First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. Some of those who sat under her teaching were students and trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (“Pastor’s letter challenges seminary’s proposed stance,” Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006).

Paige Patterson’s wife, Dorothy, spoke as the principal speaker at the Sunday Morning worship service at Concord Missionary Baptist Church in Dallas (Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006).

Billy Graham’s daughter, Anne Graham Lotz, who frequently preaches to mixed crowds of men and women, is a member of a Southern Baptist congregation. Texas Southern Baptists featured Lotz’s “stirring preaching” at their Evangelism Conference in 1996 and she was again featured as a preacher at a Sunday morning worship service June 15, 2003, sponsored by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (*Ohio Baptist Messenger*, July 2003).

Feminist philosophy and attitude has spread throughout the Southern Baptist Convention and it is growing bolder each decade. In 2019, popular Southern Baptist preacher Beth Moore said that she has come to the conclusion that men who oppose women preachers are jealous and carnal. The following is excerpted from “Beth Moore Challenges Theologian,” *ChristianHeadlines.com*, May 14, 2019:

“Prominent Southern Baptist Bible teacher Beth Moore has ignited a firestorm on Twitter after challenging a theologian who singled her out in a blog post for encouraging women to preach. Owen Strachan, associate professor of Christian theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, said in the May 7 post he was surprised that both Moore and SBC President J. D. Greear support ‘a woman teaching and preaching to the corporate body.’ He followed that up on Twitter the next day, saying, ‘One thing we [complementarians] have massive agreement on: women do not preach on Sunday to the church. Doing so is functional egalitarianism. We will not capitulate here.’ Complementarians embrace the Scriptural view that the role of men and women is distinct and complements one another within the home and church ... Moore responded to Strachan with a series of tweets. ‘Owen, I am going to say this with as much respect & as much self-restraint as I can possibly muster. I would be terrified to be a woman you’d approve of. And I would have wasted 40 years of my life encouraging women to come to know and love Jesus through the study of Scripture. I am compelled to my bones by the Holy Spirit—I don’t want to be but I am—to draw attention to the sexism & misogyny that is rampant in segments of the SBC, cloaked by piety & bearing the stench of hypocrisy....’ She wrote, ‘I had the eye opening experience of my life in 2016. A fog cleared for me that was the most disturbing, terrifying thing I’d ever seen. All these years I’d given the benefit of the doubt that these men were the way they were because they were trying to be obedient to Scripture. ... Then I realized it was not over Scripture at all. It was over sin. It was over power. It was over misogyny. Sexism. It was about arrogance. About protecting systems. It involved covering abuses & misuses of power. Shepherds guarding other shepherds instead of guarding the sheep.’ For Strachan and other complementarians, though, that path to serving is clearly defined in Scripture and is not

negotiable. 'For a woman to teach and preach to adult men is to defy God's Word and God's design,' Strachan wrote in his blog post. 'Elders must not allow such a sinful practice; to do so is to bring the church body into disobedience against God.'"

8. The Charismatic Movement Is Growing Rapidly Within the Southern Baptist Convention.

Though a few churches and individual missionaries have been put out of the Southern Baptist Convention for charismatic doctrine and practice, many others remain, and the number is increasing.

Charisma magazine, March 1999, contained a report entitled "Shaking Southern Baptist Tradition," which gave many examples of charismatic Southern Baptist congregations.

In 1995, two professors at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, told Baptist Press that Southern Baptists shouldn't fear the charismatic movement. "We shouldn't feel defensive or threatened by an alternative experience, perspective or insights about the Holy Spirit," said William Hendricks, director of Southern's doctoral studies program. Churches should not be making a big issue of the movement, he added, because "you could be fighting what is a legitimate experience of the Spirit." Tim Weber, professor of church history, agreed: "Most charismatics take the Bible as seriously as Southern Baptists, although they read it differently," he said. The professors also said Southern Baptists shouldn't divide charismatics into a separate "camp," since their influence has touched the 15 million-member Southern Baptist Convention. ... The professors believe the time has arrived for a more reasoned approach to charismatics and dialogue with them (*Charisma*, April 1995, p. 79).

Three of the men that are associated with the charismatic move within the SBC are Jack Taylor, Ron Phillips, and Gary

Folds, all of whom accepted the unscriptural nonsense that occurred at the Toronto Airport Church in Ontario and/or at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. This “revival” took the form of uncontrollable laughter, falling on the floor, barking like a dog and roaring like a lion, electric shocks, weird shaking, Holy Spirit glue, and other bizarre experiences.

Jack Taylor (d. 2021) was a former vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Taylor was converted to the “Toronto Blessing” when he visited there in 1994. After that he spoke frequently on the radical Trinity Broadcasting Network and similar charismatic forums. Through his Dimension Ministries, “Word Spirit Power” conferences, and books, he introduced many Southern Baptists to charismatic doctrine and practice.

Ron Phillips is pastor of Central Baptist Church of Hixson, Tennessee (now known as Abba’s House). His annual Fresh Oil & New Wine Conferences, books, and television program, *Ron Phillips from Abba’s House*, have influenced large numbers of Southern Baptist pastors and church members. Another Southern Baptist pastor, Dwain Miller of Second Baptist Church in El Dorado, Arkansas, prophesied to Phillips that God would use him “to bring renewal to the SBC’s 41,000 churches.” He was referring to a charismatic “renewal,” which is always accompanied by unscriptural ecumenical fervor and downplaying of Bible doctrine. In 2006, Phillips told the *Tennessean* newspaper that he first experienced speaking in tongues when he was sleeping. He said his wife woke him up and said, “What in the world are you saying?” He concluded that it was a gift from God to encourage him (“Some Baptists Believe Gift of Tongues Remain,” *The Tennessean*, March 26, 2006). He says that he continues to speak in tongues in his “private prayers.” Of course, there is not a hint of something like this in the New Testament Scriptures. In 2008, Phillips counted 500 churches

in his charismatic network (“Charismatic Southern Baptist Churches,” *Baptist Standard*, Oct. 30, 2008).

Gary Folds was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Belle Glade, Florida. He wrote a book promoting the Toronto “Blessing” entitled *Bull in a China Shop: A Baptist Pastor Runs into God at Toronto*. He describes being “slain” in the Spirit and other such things. Following is how he described the meetings he attended: “Some people would simply lay on the floor as though they were sleeping ... Others would writhe in what appeared to be anguish, pain, or possibly agony. Some would twitch, while others shook, and some would even have convulsive-type jerking. Many would cry, while an even greater number would laugh ... Many of them would laugh for an hour or longer. One night I saw people laugh for almost two and a half hours.”

James Robison is another example of SBC charismatics. The once fiery evangelist used to lift his voice against sin and apostasy, but those days are over. In 1979, he had some sort of charismatic experience. That same year he spoke at an Assembly of God church. By 1981, he had completely gone over to the ecumenical Charismatic-Roman Catholic line. That was the year he first invited a Roman Catholic to speak at his Bible conference. Robison was so comfortable with the ecumenical program by 1987 that he joined hands with 20,000 Roman Catholics, including hundreds of priests and nuns, at New Orleans ‘87. At this meeting, Robison made the following amazing statement: “I tell you what, one of the finest representatives of morality in this earth right now is the Pope. People who know it really believe he is a born again man.” I was at this meeting with press credentials and personally recorded the message from which this excerpt is taken. Robison has influenced many Southern Baptists in the charismatic direction. In 2014, Robison had a warm audience with Pope Frances at the Vatican. He wrote, “This week I was blessed to be part of perhaps an unprecedented moment

between evangelicals and the Catholic Pope. On Tuesday, for nearly three hours, a few of us were blessed to meet in an intimate circle of prayerful discussion and lunch ... We continued in such glorious fellowship that words could never begin to describe it. I am fighting back tears even as I write, so glorious was the manifest presence of Jesus. I couldn't help but wonder in those moments if Jesus, as He did when Stephen was stoned leading to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to become Paul the Apostle, perhaps once again stood at the right hand of the Father looking down on that scene in Rome between Evangelicals and the Pope, turn to the Father and say, 'Look, I think my prayer is about to be answered' (Robison, "Witnessing the Miracle Jesus Prayed For," JamesRobison.net, June 26, 2014).

Billy Graham is another Southern Baptist who recommended tongues and charismatic signs and wonders. In his 1978 book, *The Holy Spirit*, he "endorsed laying on of hands, divine healing and tongues." He said: "As we approach the end of the age I believe we will see a dramatic recurrence of signs and wonders, which will demonstrate the power of God to a skeptical world." Graham even promoted the false prophet Oral Roberts. Graham spoke at the dedication ceremony of Oral Roberts University in 1962. Later that year Graham joined Roberts as a speaker at the July 1962 convention of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International in Seattle, Washington. Graham invited Roberts to the World Congress on Evangelism in 1966 and recommended him to influential evangelical leaders.

Pat Robertson is another example. In the late 1950s he became involved in the Pentecostal movement and began "speaking in tongues." He established the Christian Broadcasting Network in 1960, and that same year was ordained by the Freemason Street Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia, a Southern Baptist congregation. A few years later he formed the "700 Club," which spread ecumenical and

charismatic doctrine far and wide. He still claims to be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. Speaking at Celebration 2000 in St. Louis, Missouri, Robertson testified that though he is a Baptist, he sees the need for Roman Catholic charismatics to visit Baptist churches in order to teach the Baptists how to dance and worship God.

Another charismatic Southern Baptist is Pastor Wallace Henley, Crossroads Baptist Church, Houston, Texas. His church practices tongues speaking, and he supported the “revival” at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where the pastor got so “drunk in the spirit” that he could lead the congregation. Henley said that those who are opposed to the charismatic movement are “pharisaical” and “mean-spirited.”

In November 2005 the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board voted to forbid missionaries to speak in tongues, but Jerry Rankin, the head of the board, said that he has spoken in a “private prayer language” for 30 years. What confusion!

Speaking at a chapel service on August 29, 2006, Dwight McKissic, a trustee of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, told the students that he speaks in tongues in his “private prayer life” (“Southwestern Trustee’s Sermon on Tongues Prompts Response,” Baptist Press, Aug. 30, 2006). McKissic, who is the pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church, an SBC congregation in Arlington, Texas, said he has prayed in tongues since 1981. The first time, he says, was when he was a seminary student. He recalls, “Strange sounds begin to come out of my mouth” (“Southern Baptists Debate Tongues,” cbs11tv.com, October 7, 2006).

David Rogers, former Southern Baptist missionary to Spain, son of the late Adrian Rogers, said he worked with many missionaries who practice private tongues.

Charles Carroll, SBC missionary to Singapore who was dismissed by the Southern Baptist International Mission

Board in 1995 because of his charismatic activities, testified that many

Southern Baptists living overseas are charismatic, but most remain “in the closet” for fear of being fired (“Baptist Missionaries in the Closet,” *Charisma*, March 1999, p. 72).

In May 2015, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board reversed its former policy, approving a new one accepting missionaries who speak in “tongues” so long as they don’t become “disruptive” by placing “persistent emphasis on any specific gift of the Spirit as normative for all” (“FAQs on Missionary Appointment Qualifications,” IMB Policy 200-1, IMB.org).

Thus, this is not a small matter. Rankin and those supporting his position are trying to distinguish between public tongues and private, saying that while they are opposed to public “tongues,” they believe there is a private form of tongues that one can use to edify oneself.

In fact, the tongues of Acts are the tongues of 1 Corinthians 14. Biblical tongues were real languages that a believer was enabled to speak supernaturally. Biblical tongues were a sign to the nation Israel that God was going to send the gospel to every nation and create a new spiritual body composed of both Jews and Gentiles (1 Co. 14:20-22, quoting Isa. 28:11-13). Each time tongues were spoken in the book of Acts (Acts 2, 10, 19) *Jews were present*. As the prophet Isaiah foretold, the Jews rejected the sign and were judged by God. The purpose of tongues speaking ceased even before the events recorded in the book of Acts were completed. The last mention of tongues is in Acts 19. The sign, having been fulfilled, ceased. When John Chrysostom wrote in the 4th century about the sign gifts of 1 Corinthians 12-14, he said: “This whole place is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to, and BY THEIR CESSATION, being such as then used to occur but

now no longer take place" ("Homilies on 1 Corinthians," Vol. XII, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Hom. 29:2).

There is no "private prayer language" in the New Testament. It is the recent invention of Pentecostals and charismatics who, having realized that they cannot speak in real tongues that can be interpreted (one of the absolute biblical requirements), were forced either to renounce their experience or to create some sort of cockeyed defense for it. There is not one example of a prayer in the Bible that is uttered in unintelligible mutterings that "bypass the intellect." Jesus Christ did not pray that way and neither did the apostles. I have heard charismatics speak in their "private prayer language" in churches and conferences in many parts of the world. Larry Lea's "private prayer language" at Indianapolis '90 went something like this: "Bubblyida bubblyida hallelujah bubblyida hallabubbly shallabubblyida kolabubblyida gloooooory hallelujah bubblyida." I wrote that down as he was saying it and later checked it against the tape. Nancy Kellar, a Roman Catholic nun who was on the executive committee of St. Louis 2000, spoke in "tongues" that went like this: "Shananaa leea, shananaa higha, shananaa nanaa, shananaa leea..." repeated over and over.

Friends, this is not any sort of biblical language; it is childish nonsense, but it is neither innocent nor lacking in spiritual danger. The Bible warns repeatedly and forcefully about the danger of spiritual deception, and those who empty their minds through the practice of a "private prayer language" are in danger that the devil will fill them. Being "sober and vigilant" (1 Peter 5:8) is the opposite of emptying one's mind, of "moving outside of the box," of "letting go and letting God."

In 2006, Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "I do believe that there are varying interpretations regarding the issue of private prayer language. And because I do believe there are varying interpretations, I

believe it is okay to believe one way or the other” (“So. Baptist Prez Enters Debate,” AgapePress, Nov. 2, 2006). On October 17 that year the trustees of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, voted to disallow professors from promoting the charismatic doctrine of a “private prayer language,” but at the same time the president of the seminary, Paige Patterson, said professors who practice this privately and do not teach it in the classroom will not be disciplined or fired, and one of the school’s trustees who openly endorses this practice will remain in his position (“SWBTS Takes Stance against Pentecostal/charismatic Doctrine,” Baptist Press, Oct 17, 2006).

On September 5, 2021, Steve Gaines, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, conducted three full-blown charismatic-style “healing” services at Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee. The people came forward in mass “to be anointed with oil and prayed over for healing ... that God will heal and restore.” Some of the men on the platform held their hands out charismatic fashion over the people as if healing rays were emitting from their hands. Contemporary rock music was playing during the “anointing.” Gaines preached from James, but he did not obey James, which says, “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed” (Jas. 5:14-16). James describes a private, individual anointing for physical healing, not a public mass anointing for vaguely defined “healings” and “restorations.” James describes prayer for saints that are known to the elders, known members of the church, but at Bellevue the people had to tell the anointers their first names, because they could be complete strangers and casual visitors. James calls for

confession of faults, but at Bellevue the pastor made it clear that they didn't have enough time for such things.

The 2008 Southern Baptist hymnal contains many songs written by charismatics and published by charismatic music companies such as Integrity, Maranatha, and Hillsong. About 75 of the top 100 contemporary worship songs are included. For example, songs by David Ruis, Paul Baloché, Jack Hayford and Darlene Zschech are included. These popular worship leaders are extreme charismatic ecumenists and contemporary Christian rockers.

David Ruis was a worship leader at the Toronto Airport Church where people rolled on the floor, barked like dogs, roared like lions, laughed hysterically, and got "drunk in the spirit" during their "revivals." Ruis's song "Break Dividing Walls" calls for unscriptural ecumenical unity between all denominations.

Paul Baloché was worship leader at the charismatic Community Christian Fellowship of Lindale, Texas. Their 2002 Leadership Summit featured Ricky Paris of Vision Ministries International, who calls himself an apostle and is said to give "apostolic covering" to Vision Church of Austin, Texas. Baloché's *Offering of Worship* album was recorded at Regent University in Virginia Beach, which was founded by the radical charismatic ecumenist Pat Robertson. As far back as 1985, Robertson said that he "worked for harmony and reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics" (*Christian News*, July 22, 1985). Some of the Regent professors are Roman Catholic and Regent's Center for Law and Justice has a Roman Catholic executive director. According to *Frontline* magazine, May-June 2000, a Catholic mass is held on Regent's campus every week.

Jack Hayford, author of the song "Majesty" (which teaches the Pentecostal kingdom-now theology) and many other very popular worship songs, is pastor of Church-on-the-Way Foursquare Church, a Pentecostal denominational founded

by the female pastor Aimee Semple McPherson. Paul and Jan Crouch, of the Trinity Broadcasting Network are members of Hayford's church. Speaking at the St. Louis 2000 conference, Hayford told how his daughter approached him one day and expressed concern that her "tongues speaking" was mere gibberish. He encouraged her that the believer must first learn to speak in "baby tongues" before he speaks in "adult tongues." (I attended this conference with press credentials and heard Hayford say this.) To the contrary, biblical tongues-speaking is not something that can be learned; it is supernatural gift and there is not one example in the New Testament of someone learning how to speak in tongues. Hayford claims that in 1969, as he approached a large Catholic church in Southern California, God spoke to him and instructed him not to judge Roman Catholicism. He says he heard a message from God saying, "Why would I not be happy with a place where every morning the testimony of the blood of my Son is raised from the altar?" ("The Pentecostal Gold Standard," *Christianity Today*, July 2005). Based upon this "personal revelation," Hayford adopted a neutral approach to Catholicism, yet the atonement of Jesus Christ is NOT glorified on Roman Catholic altars. The Catholic mass is an open denial of the doctrine of the once-for-all atonement that we find in the book of Hebrews. Note what the Second Vatican Council said about the mass: "For in it Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering himself to the Father for the world's salvation through the ministry of priests" (*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, "Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery," Intro., C 1, 2, p. 108). This is only a small part of Rome's wicked heresies, and it is impossible that God would encourage Jack Hayford to look upon the Roman Catholic Church in any sort of positive, non-judgmental manner. Hayford has acted on this "personal revelation" by yoking up with Roman Catholic leaders in

conferences throughout the world. For example, he joined hands with thousands of Roman Catholics, including hundreds of Catholic priests and nuns, at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization in St. Louis in 2000. This is evidence of spiritual blindness of the highest degree.

On July 3-4, 2015, Darlene Zschech and Hillsong joined hands with Pope Francis at the Convocation of the Renewal of the Holy Spirit at the Vatican. On her Facebook page, Zschech said: "Honoured to be singing this week, with Andrea Bocelli, Don Moen, Noa [Israeli singer], with Pope Francis and thousands of worshippers gathering in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. This is a celebration of unity and peace in the Renewal of the Holy Spirit. Amazing days for the Body of Christ." The Catholic mass was celebrated at the event led by Cardinal Angelo Comastri.

Zschech's song "I Believe the Presence" from her *Shout to the Lord* album preaches false Pentecostal latter rain theology. The lyrics say: "I believe the promise about the visions and the dreams/ That the Holy Spirit will be poured out/ And His power will be seen/ Well the time is now/ The place is here/ And His people have come in faith/ There's a mighty sound/ And a touch of fire/ When we've gathered in one place" ("I Believe the Presence" from *Shout to the Lord*).

Shame on Lifeway for giving charismatics a powerful forum to influence Baptist churches, and shame on the Southern Baptist Convention for allowing Lifeway to do these things.

In December 2015, SBC President Ronnie Floyd participated in International House of Prayer's (IHOP) OneThing conference. For those who have eyes to see, this is an irrefutable witness of the spiritual deception that has permeated the Southern Baptist Convention. At the International House of Prayer, Floyd joined hands with one of the world's most radical groups of charismatic mystics, as well

as with Roman Catholic contemporary praise musician Matt Maher. The International House of Prayer is most assuredly one in the spirit with Matt and his love for the mass and prayers to Mary. IHOP is passionate about “Jesus,” but it is a false christ and a deceiving spirit masquerading as the Spirit of God. And this frightful reality is created by the soul-blinding power of contemporary worship. Even the most conservative elements of the Southern Baptist Convention have long been drunk on this music, unwittingly drinking of a deceiving spirit, an ecumenical spirit, a non-judgmental spirit, unwittingly building a bridge to the one-world church, so that today there is no ability to resist it. Even the most conservative Southern Baptist leaders, from Al Mohler to Charles Stanley, by their silence, support the bridge building done through contemporary music. Matt Maher, who joined the SBC president at the IHOP conference, leads the “Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament” (the mass) at Catholic Churches, such as Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Tempe which is devoted to Mary, “the Mother of Life.” The “Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament” refers to the worship of the consecrated host of the mass. Because of the supposed power of the Catholic mass to transform bread into the very body and blood of Jesus, the host is “adored” as Christ Himself. This is the type of apostasy with which every lover of contemporary worship music joins hands. Stuart Townend and the Gettys, whose music is promoted now by Bob Jones University, Frank Garlock, and the Hamiltons, are friends with Matt Maher and have joined him in ecumenical ventures. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17). (For more about IHOP, see the free eBook *End-time Confusion: International House of Prayer*, www.wayoflife.org.)

In a video interview with The Gospel Coalition, J.D. Greear, Southern Baptist president from 2018-2021, said that

God can still speak audibly to believers today and is not limited to speaking through Scripture (“Southern Baptist President,” BreakingChristianNews.com, Jan. 4, 2019). Greear said “he would never place God in a box about what He could do today.” This has been the Pentecostal position from its inception. “Don’t put God in a box” has always meant that God can do all sorts of things that we don’t see in Scripture, such as knock people down, glue them to the floor, cause them to speak gibberish, laugh hysterically, shake, jerk, roar like lions, bray like donkeys, and stagger like drunks. “Don’t put God in a box” has always been the theme song of those who refuse to be bound by Scripture. Former Pentecostal Hughie Seaborn comments as follows: “The SBC will be thoroughly Pentecostal before too long. God can do whatever He pleases, but He won’t contradict His Word, and His Word tells us in Hebrews 1:1-2 that, *‘God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets* [who received dreams, visions and audible voices], *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son* [through that which is perfect, the written Word of God].’ Dreams, visions and audible voices are subjective and fraught with dangerous deception. How can we know for sure who is speaking to us, even if what is received agrees with the Bible? The devil speaks a lot of truth, but it always has an agenda. The written Word of God is the only safety we have in these perilous last days. J.D. Greear is a dangerous man. When they say they *‘would never place God in a box about what He could do today,’* they are actually saying that they don’t want God to ‘put them in a box.’ That’s the real issue that I’ve found with them. It’s not, ‘Don’t tell me what God can and can’t do,’ but rather, ‘Don’t tell me what I can and can’t do.’ They don’t like the restrictions that Scripture places on them.”

Because the SBC refuses to deal with charismatic error plainly and consistently, the leaven will spread. The Bible

warns that “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” This is true for sin (1 Co. 5:6) as well as for false doctrine (Ga. 5:9).

(For more about the charismatic movement see [The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: History and Doctrine, and Error](http://www.wayoflife.org) www.wayoflife.org.)

9. The SBC Is Leavened With Theological Modernism.

In 1996, Jerry Falwell said the Southern Baptist Convention has been “rescued from theological liberalism” (Baptist Press, Oct. 24, 1996).

In fact, this is not true. The SBC has a local, a regional, a state, and a national aspect. Only someone trying to excuse his affiliation with liberalism would claim that the Southern Baptist convention only exists at the national level. If this were true, there would not be such a thing as a Southern Baptist congregation, but we know that there is such a thing. It is the state conventions that fund the national convention, and at the state level liberalism is very much alive among Southern Baptists.

Let’s consider North Carolina. This state illustrates how that the Southern Baptist Convention is a mixed multitude of theological modernists and conservatives and how that the most conservative Southern Baptists are still yoked together at the state level with liberals. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which sends funds to the Southern Baptist Convention at the national level to support the six seminaries and other projects, at the same time supports liberal schools such as The Divinity School at Wake Forest, Duke Divinity School at Winston-Salem, Gardiner-Webb School of Divinity at Boiling Springs, and Campbell University Divinity School at Buies Creek. None of these schools hold that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. Wake Forest and Duke University have open admission for homosexuals. While taking funds from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which in turn is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention,

these schools are also affiliated with the rankly liberal Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF). In 2000, CBF coordinator Daniel Vestal told the press that there are congregations that support the CBF who ordain homosexuals, and that he does not want anyone to leave over this issue ("CBF 'welcoming but not affirming' of homosexuals," Associated Baptist Press, Oct. 23, 2000). CBF council member Dixie Lee Petrey said, "I don't think we should limit the Spirit of God in the way that it moves. Do we really want to sit here and say God's Spirit cannot call a homosexual to follow God's call?" CBF council member Bob Setzer said, "We're not saying that God cannot call a homosexual, even a practicing homosexual."

In chapter one of the book *Has the Southern Baptist Convention Been Rescued from Liberalism* I gave current examples of theological liberalism in Virginia, Georgia, Missouri, California, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas. In November 1996, for example, the Missouri Baptist Convention failed for the second year in a row to pass a requirement that its leaders embrace the inerrancy of Scripture. This reveals that there are large numbers of Southern Baptists at the state level who do not believe the Bible and do not want to obey the Bible. In Georgia there are modernists such as Mercer University President R. Kirby Godsey. In his 1979 book, *When We Talk about God*, he said, "the notion that God is the all powerful, the high and mighty principal of heaven and earth should be laid aside." Godsey continued to lead Mercer until 2006.

Wicked heresy such as this is held by thousands of men and women who are members in good standing in Southern Baptist churches. Even though many Southern Baptist congregations have left the convention to affiliate with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, there are still large numbers of liberal-oriented congregations, homes, and individuals in the Convention.

Though the national seminaries in the Southern Baptist Convention have been turned back from open theological modernism, little has changed at the state and local level. There are 54 Southern Baptist colleges and universities, many of which are openly and unquestioningly modernistic, with a total enrollment of roughly 113,500 students (R.L. Hymers, Jr., *Battle for the Bible in the 21st Century*, pp. vii-ix, citing Bill Sumners, Director and Archivist, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Jforbis@edge.net). Thus, even today, after many decades of “conservative” leadership at the national level, many students in Southern Baptist-supported institutions are being trained by modernists.

Those who believe the Bible are yoked together denominationally with these heretics. Scripture plainly instructs God’s people to mark and avoid false teachers and to reject them from the churches (Ro. 16:17-18; Tit. 3:10-11). The Southern Baptist Convention does not require obedience to these Scriptures, and I, for one, refuse to have anything to do with such a weak, Christ-dishonoring organization.

The Bible says that even to bid a heretic Godspeed is to be a partaker of his evil deeds (2 Jo. 8-11). How much more are conservative Southern Baptists partakers of the evil deeds of liberals when they join hands with them in the same organizations and in the support of the same schools?

10. The SBC is Filled With Men and Women Who Are Yoked With Pagan Anti-Christ Organizations Such as the Masonic Lodge and the Eastern Star.

Calvary Contender editor Jerry Huffman summarized the spiritual abomination of the Masonic Lodge: “Freemasonry is a secret society of six million members worldwide. It often claims it is not a religion, but its writings say it is. It teaches that Jesus is not God. It has worship and funeral services, and places the Koran and ‘holy books’ of other religions on the same level as the Bible (*Calvary Contender*, May 1, 1992). The

Scottish Rite Journal in February 1993 stated that “Masons believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man...” (An excellent publication that documents the heresies of Freemasonry is *The Masonic Lodge: What You Need to Know: Quick Reference Guide* by Ed Decker, published by Harvest House, Eugene, OR.)

In the 1990s, 14 percent of SBC pastors and 18 percent of deacons were Masons (*Calvary Contender*, June 1, 1993).

At the June 1992 Southern Baptist annual conference, an unsuccessful attempt was made by a minority of representatives to root Freemasonry out of the Convention. The Home Mission Board was assigned the task of preparing a report, but the chairman of the Board, Ron Phillips, displayed his prejudice when he stated that he did not agree with the conclusion that Masonry is incompatible with Christianity and that he knew many “dedicated Christian men” who are Masons (*Christian News*, March 15, 1993). It quickly became obvious that the Southern Baptist Convention was more concerned with retaining members and maintaining harmony than with dealing with false gospels and spiritual compromise. The *Indiana Baptist* for March 16, 1993, reported that “fearing the loss of three million members,” the just-released Home Mission Board report leaves it to individual Southern Baptists whether to join the secret society. The report documented Freemasonry’s anti-Christian doctrine, that many Grand Lodges do not declare Jesus as the unique Son of God; the offensive rituals and “bloody oaths”; “implications that salvation may be obtained by one’s good works” [it is not merely implied but positively stated]; the heresy of universalism; pagan religions are studied in higher degrees. Despite all this, the study recommended leaving the decision to the individual member. (The author of the Home Mission Board report, Gary Leazer, joined the Masons a couple of years later.) At the June 1993 convention in Houston, Texas, the Southern Baptist

representatives decided to accept the Mission Board report's recommendation and leave the matter of Masonic membership to the conscience of individuals. Freemasonry's "Sovereign Grand Command," who had aggressively politicked within the Convention, praised the decision. Southern Baptist physician Dr. James Holly, who led the attempt to root out Freemasonry, said, "Southern Baptists have become the first Christian denomination that essentially blesses the Masonic Lodge" (*Christian News*, Dec. 20, 1993).

This is proof positive that the average Southern Baptist pastor does not care preeminently about truth. As a rule, they are cowardly shepherds who are more concerned about their retirement than the faith once delivered to the saints.

11. The Southern Baptist Convention Is Being Leavened With New Reformed Calvinism.

There has been "the rise of a movement called New Calvinism among Southern Baptists. This movement is committed to advancing in the churches an exclusively Calvinistic understanding of salvation, characterized by an aggressive insistence on the 'doctrines of grace' (TULIP), and to the goal of making Calvinism the central Southern Baptist position on God's plan of salvation" (Eric Hankins, "A Statement of the Traditional Southern Baptist Understanding of God's Plan of Salvation," chapter 1, *Anyone Can Be Saved: A Defense of 'Traditional' Southern Baptist Soteriology*, p. 16).

Under the leadership of Al Mohler, Jr., the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has become a hotbed of Calvinism and is training generations of Calvinist proselytizers. Since 1982, an annual Founders Conference has promoted Calvinism within the Convention.

In 2007, Ed Stetzer, then director of LifeWay Research, said that nearly 30% of recent seminary graduates serving as pastors are Calvinists ("Calvinism on the Rise," *Christian Post*, Nov. 29, 2007).

Writing in *SBC Life*, Malcolm Yarnell, associate professor of systematic theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, observed that TULIP theology is causing division in churches. Steve Lemke, provost of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, warns: "I believe that [Calvinism] is potentially the most explosive and divisive issue facing us in the near future. It has already been an issue that has split literally dozens of churches, and it holds the potential to split the entire convention" ("The Future of Southern Baptists as Evangelicals," April 2005). Lemke says that "the newest generation of Southern Baptist ministers" is "the most Calvinist we have had in several generations."

Lemke warns that Calvinism can result in a lowered commitment to evangelism, saying: "For many people, if they're convinced that God has already elected those who will be elect ... I don't see how humanly speaking that can't temper your passion, because you know you're not that crucial to the process."

There are exceptions, but there can be no doubt that Calvinism tends to cool evangelistic fervor. Among Calvinists, evangelism is done IN SPITE OF Calvinism, not because of it. Those who protest that it doesn't hinder evangelism point to EXCEPTIONS rather than to the rule. While Charles Spurgeon was an evangelistic Calvinist, for example, a large number of Calvinists of his day opposed him and denounced his broad, indiscriminate invitations for sinners to come to Christ. One Calvinist publication warned in Spurgeon's day, "... to preach that it is man's duty to believe savingly in Christ is ABSURD" (*Earthen Vessel*, 1857; cited in *Spurgeon vs. the Hyper Calvinists* by Iain Murray).

Calvinism almost killed the evangelistic zeal of the Baptist churches of England in the 18th century. Baptist historian Thomas Armitage wrote: "William Carey's 'Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen' was published in 1792, but it found few readers

and produced little effect. To most of the Baptists Carey's views were visionary and even wild, in open conflict with God's sovereignty. At a meeting of ministers, where the senior [John] Ryland presided, Carey proposed that at the next meeting they discuss the duty of attempting to spread the Gospel amongst the heathen. ... Ryland, shocked, sprang to his feet and ordered Carey to sit down, saying: 'When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine!'"

Since non-Calvinists are committed to the mixed multitude mindset of ministering in the same denomination with the Calvinists, there is no possibility of stopping the leaven from spreading.

For example, a book written by 10 non-Calvinist Southern Baptist seminary professors and pastors emphasizes that they have no intention of separating from Calvinists or ridding the Convention of Calvinism, even though they present Calvinism as heresy that misrepresents God's character and has confused the minds of multitudes of people about the doctrine of salvation. In the first chapter of *Anyone Can Be Saved: A Defense of 'Traditional' Southern Baptist Soteriology*, David Allen, dean of the School of Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, says, "I have on rare occasion sought to correct overzealous Traditionalists who have questioned the place of Calvinists in the SBC. ... Being a Calvinist should not be a Convention crime. Calvinists have and should always be free to have a place at the SBC table. ... I have and continue to work side-by-side with Calvinist brothers and sisters in the churches I pastored, in the seminary I serve, and in the broader Southern Baptist Convention of which I am a part" ("The Current SBC Calvinism Debate," *Anyone Can Be Saved*, p. 2).

This is unscriptural and it is confusion. For a preacher who believes anyone can be saved because Christ died for all sinners to minister together in the same church and/or school

with preachers who renounce that doctrine is confusion. Imagine being a church member or Bible college student in such a mixed multitude. The doctrines of Calvinism lie at the heart of the gospel itself. This is no small matter. It is impossible to straddle the line between a Calvinist understanding of salvation and a non-Calvinist understanding. Paul beseeched the churches to “mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Ro. 16:17). We don’t believe that all Calvinists are unsaved, but we do believe that they are seriously wrong on some very important doctrines. The New Testament church is commanded to exercise great doctrinal unity. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Co. 1:10). I cannot imagine allowing a Calvinist to join our church or teach in our Bible college. Church leaders are responsible to guard the flock from heresies. A staunch Calvinist should have the same perspective toward non-Calvinists.

12. The Vast Majority of Southern Baptist Congregations Refuse to Exercise Church Discipline, and It Is Impossible to Have a Biblically Pure Church Without Discipline.

Dean Register, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, testified: “It’s very unusual for Southern Baptist churches to take disciplinary action against an individual” (*The Sun Herald*, Biloxi, Mississippi, Sept. 13, 1998). Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, confirmed this in a statement published by the Associated Press: “Church discipline was common among Baptists until early this century, when it faded as people abused the system to carry out vendettas” (AP, Sept. 12, 1998).

The “vendetta” part aside, there can be no doubt that this observation is accurate. Across the length and breadth of the land there are unrepentant moral reprobates and heretics on the rolls of Southern Baptist churches. Famous Southern Baptists like Billy Graham (who believed in infant baptism, denied the literal fire of hell, held that sinners can be saved without hearing the gospel, and turned his converts over to spiritual wolves), Jimmy Carter (who is liberal in theology and says Mormons are true Christians), and Bill Clinton (a sexual predator who lied under oath and obstructed justice), disobey the Bible but are not disciplined. (Jimmy Carter left the convention some years ago, but he was a faithful Southern Baptist for decades.) More than a million Freemasons, who are yoked together with idolatrous organizations in disobedience to 2 Corinthians 6, are members of SBC congregations. Many modernists who deny the infallible inspiration of the Holy Scripture are members of SBC congregations. Many unrepentant fornicators and adulterers are members of SBC congregations.

Furthermore, it is common for a large percentage of the members of Southern Baptist congregations to habitually neglect themselves from the assembly and to live no differently than their unsaved neighbours. In an article published in 1999 by Jim Elliff, resident consultant for the Midwestern Center for Biblical Revival at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, we learn the following sad facts, and the situation has not improved since then.

“Out of Southern Baptists’ nearly 15.9 million members, only 5.2 million, or 32.8%, even bother to show up on a given Sunday morning, according to the Strategic Information and Planning department of the Sunday School Board (1997). In the average church, one can cut that 32.8% by about two-thirds to find those interested in any additional aspect of church life, such as a Sunday evening service. In other words, only about a third of the 32.8% or slightly more than a tenth

of the whole (12.3% in churches with evening services in 1996, the last year for which statistics are available) show more interest in the things of God than Sunday morning attenders in the liberal church down the street where the gospel is not even preached. These figures suggest that nearly 90% of Southern Baptist church members appear to be little different from the 'cultural Christians' who populate mainline denominations" (*Founder's Journal*, Feb. 7, 1999).

In the Bible, God commands His people to exercise discipline toward sinning and heretical church members (1 Co. 5; Tit. 3).

13. Southern Baptists Are at the Forefront of Promoting Church Growth Philosophies.

Church growth philosophies turn the church's mission away from commitment to the whole counsel of God, which is the mission and purpose that Jesus Christ delivered (Mt. 28:19-20), to a watered-down, man-made "purpose." The church growth movement promotes the use of worldly music and dress to attract crowds.

Southern Baptist conservatives in Virginia and the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary co-sponsored a church planting conference in November 2000, which featured guest speaker Aubrey Malphurs, a Dallas Theological Seminary professor. Malphurs, author of *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, encourages churches to use "culturally relevant" music to gain young people. He recommends turning the Sunday morning service into an "innovative" thing featuring "skits, drama, audio-visual presentations, creative-dance and the use of video in preaching" (p. 181). Malphurs downplays preaching by claiming that "most people can count on the one hand the number of sermons that have accomplished significant change in their lives" (p. 179). It is obvious that the preaching to which Malphurs is accustomed is powerless. Later he says

that preaching is “not necessarily the best” way to facilitate life change (p. 214).

Malphurs is wrong. He is promoting a humanistic, pragmatic approach to the church rather than simply submitting to the doctrine and practice we find in the New Testament Scriptures. The Bible plainly exalts preaching. It is mentioned 153 times. The prophets of old preached (Mt. 12:41); John the Baptist preached (Mt. 3:1); Jesus Christ preached (Mt. 4:23); the Lord’s disciples preached (Luke 9:6); the early Christians preached (Acts 8:4). They preached the word everywhere (Acts 8:4) and long into the night (Acts 20:9). It is through the “foolishness of preaching” that God has ordained that men be saved (1 Co. 1:21). God’s Word is manifest today through preaching (Tit. 1:3).

Malphurs is wrong. God does not change lives through worldly music and drama and dance but through the forthright preaching of the faith once delivered to the saints (2 Ti. 4:2; Jude 1:3).

In spite of this, Malphurs is promoted by mainstream, conservative Southern Baptists.

The chief example of this is Rick Warren, Southern Baptist pastor of Saddleback Community Church in southern California and author of the massively-influential *The Purpose Driven Church*, which has sold more than 18 million copies. The Purpose Driven philosophy has permeated the Southern Baptist Convention and far beyond. Bruce Ryskamp, president of Zondervan, said that Purpose Driven “is more than a bestseller; it’s become a movement.” Warren doesn’t use theological terms such as sanctification, justification and propitiation in his sermons. He encourages the use of Christian rock music to communicate to the unsaved. He is radically ecumenical. In his book he uncritically praises Robert Schuller, David Yonggi Cho, Mother Teresa, and other heretics. Warren was a guest faculty member of Schuller’s 1997 Institute for Successful Church

Leadership Conference, even though Schuller was a heretic who taught that sin is merely the absence of self-esteem. Warren preaches a “positive only” message to make the unsaved feel comfortable. He promotes Christian psychology and a multitude of psychology-oriented self-help programs. He preaches a watered down gospel that does not deal with sin, holiness, judgment, or repentance, and does not even clearly define saving faith. Just a vague “believe on Jesus” and presto you are ready to heaven. This is not the gospel that Paul preached as he summarized in Acts 20:21, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” The Lord Jesus Christ preached on hell frequently and fiercely. There are nearly 100 references in Scripture to fearing the Lord, and God’s judgment is a never-ending theme of Scripture. However, Rick Warren (in *The Purpose Driven Church*) does not mention God’s judgment, never urges his listeners to fear the Lord, and makes only one passing reference to hell. (For documentation see *Purpose Driven or Scripture Driven?*, a free eBook available at www.wayoflife.org.)

14. The Southern Baptist Convention Is Beginning to Accept “Christian Homosexuality”

In the book *What Is the Emerging Church?* (2008), we warned that the emerging church is weak on the issue of homosexuality. Brian McLaren, for example, says, “Frankly, many of us don’t know what we should think about homosexuality” (“Brian McLaren on the Homosexual Question,” Jan. 23, 2006, blog.christianitytoday.com). Chris Seay says, “Approach homosexuals without condemnation but with God’s love and the gospel” (ChurchRelevance.com, June 19, 2007).

This confused thinking became front and center in the Southern Baptist Convention with the election in June 2018 of J.D. Greear as president. (He was reelected to a second

term in 2019 and this was extended until 2021 due to Covid lockdowns.) In 2014, in a message before the ERLC [Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission] National Conference on “The Gospel, Homosexuality, and the Future of Marriage,” Greear said, “We have to love our gay neighbor more than we love our position on sexual morality ... I am not saying that we would ever compromise our position or fail to state it, just that even when they disagree with it, we do not cut them off, we draw them close. We say yes, this issue is important. I cannot compromise, but **I love you more than I love being right**. In the cross of Jesus Christ, he shows us the right way to relate to the gay and the lesbian community—clarity about God’s righteousness, compassion that would give up its own life to draw them close.” Greear’s position is incredibly misguided and unbiblical, though it is presented in a semblance of truth. It is certain that Jesus Christ loved sinners and died for sinners with a desire that sinners draw near to Him, **but Jesus calls sinners to repentance and there is no “drawing close” to God without repentance**. Twice in the same sermon Christ said, “except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Christ directly and plainly exposed the sin of the woman at the well, and she repented and drew close to God in salvation (John 4). On the other hand, Jesus exposed the sin of the rich young ruler, and he did *not* repent and as a result did not draw close to God (Mark 10:17-23). Greear says, “We have to love our gay neighbor more than we love our position on sexual morality,” and, “I love you more than I love being right.” But the Bible says we should love God’s Word and hate every false way (Psalm 119:128). The Bible says we should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11). Jesus was a friend of sinners, but He preached repentance to sinners and warned them in no uncertain terms of eternal hellfire (e.g., Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5). Christ never modified or softened or shortened

His message in any way whatsoever in order to “draw them close.”

The fundamental problem in the Southern Baptist Convention is that it is composed of churches that do not have a zeal to obey God’s Word and are thus spiritually powerless. Having grown up in Southern Baptist churches and having wide experience of them for 70 years, it is clear to me that *the average* SBC congregation is a mixed multitude of saved and lost and is spiritually lukewarm *at the very best*. The pastor is a hireling, not a prophet, and his greatest fear is offending some lukewarm member of his congregation. Serious intercessory prayer and fasting are nearly unknown. Separation from the world is considered legalism. Life-changing conversions are as rare as hen’s teeth. Consider the statistics for 2013: A full 60% of SBC churches baptized *zero* youth between ages of 12-17 and 80% baptized *zero or just one* young adult ages 18-29. But there was an explosion in the baptisms of “five and under” (*Annual Church Profile*, 2013). That is Baptist infant baptism, and it is the sign of a dead denomination! And a large percentage of independent Baptists today are no different in spiritual character than Southern Baptists. I am so thankful that I personally know of churches that *are different* in spiritual character than what I have described and that do know and experience the resurrection power of God in regenerating power and life-changing holiness and biblical separation, but they are rare.

Greear said in sermon about homosexuality, Jan. 27, 2019, that “the Bible appears to whisper when it comes to sexual sin compared to it shouts about materialism and religious pride.” He was quoting from female preacher Jen Wilkin whom he praised as one of his church’s favorite Bible teachers. But we wouldn’t call God’s judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah a whisper! In preaching from Romans 1, Greear tried to make the sin of homosexuality equal to sins mentions in verses 29-31, but Paul himself, in this very context, labeled

homosexuality a special sin that is the product of God giving men over “to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.” Paul called homosexuality “vile affections,” “against nature,” “a reprobate mind” (Ro. 1:26-28).

Greear called on Christians to stand up for homosexual rights. The following is excerpted from “SBC Prez,” ReformationCharlotte.org, Jan. 31, 2019: “The current Southern Baptist President, J.D. Greear, is proving himself to be unfit for the position he holds in America’s largest Protestant denomination. Over the last few years, the SBC has taken a sharp turn toward political as well as theological liberalism while pushing a social justice agenda. *Reformation Charlotte* reported earlier today that Greear, during an eisegesis of Romans 1, compared homosexuality to ‘greed’ and ‘boasting,’ even stating that most of these sins are ‘more egregious in the eyes of God’ than homosexuality. Of course, this is foolish, as homosexuality is the one sin that caused God to wipe ... cities off the face of the earth. It is, according to the text he clumsily referenced, the sin that God gives people over to because of their other sins. It is actually the wrath and judgment of God being poured out on a people to be given over to depraved minds and dishonorable passions. It has now come to light that not only has Greear misrepresented the Scriptures regarding the sin of homosexuality, he has also called on Christians to stand up for the rights of LGBT people. ... The ‘rights’ that LGBT people are fighting for are, for example, the right to use the public restroom of whatever gender they choose to identify as on any given day. The right to get married and practice sodomy in the apartment next door. The right to get married in your conservative church. The right to be fully embraced as an active, affirmed, and participating member of your church. And the right to propagandize you and your children with their vile affections that God has given them over to...”

On Feb. 25, 2021, Greear tweeted, “Jesus doesn’t say, ‘Take up my teachings and follow me. Or, ‘Take up my moral code.’ He says, ‘Take up my cross.’” This is further heresy from an ignorant man who has no business in the pastorate. Note the following words from Christ Himself: “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (Joh. 14:15). “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (Joh. 14:21). “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me” (Joh. 14:23-24). “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (Joh. 15:10). “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you: (Joh. 15:14). “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world” (Mt. 28:18-20).

SBC Conference Speaker Promotes Homosexual Ideology -

The following is excerpted from “SBC Conference Speaker,” *Disntr*, Mar. 27, 2024: “Rachel Gilson, a self-described same-sex attracted woman who spoke at the Southern Baptist Convention’s women’s conference in 2023 has now appeared in a promo video released by Preston Sprinkle’s Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender. The video portrays God as perfectly accepting of homosexual and transgender lifestyles

devoid of any true repentance. In the video appear multiple homosexuals, lesbians, and ‘transgender’ people who argue that one should be able to live out who they really are, including rebelling against the God who created them and feeling welcomed and accepted in the Church. In 2019, during a student conference, Gilson remarked during a sermon that gay married couples who come to Christ can stay together because God hates divorce. Speaking on the topic of homosexuals coming to Christ, after a bit of build-up, Gilson said, ‘It’s not like if someone in a same-sex marriage comes to know the Lord, it’s like, Okay, what we’ve got to deal with first is your same-sex marriage...’ ... Gilson has also been closely associated with Grant Hartley, another former Cru [previously known as Campus Crusade] leader who converted to Roman Catholicism a few years ago. [In 2022], Hartley boasted about his experience of dancing at a gay bar, stating that it felt like ‘heaven’ to him. In 2019, Hartley quote-tweeted a message from Rachel Gilson while she was preaching a sermon at Cru: “There is no command in scripture to be straight; there is a command to be faithfully single or faithfully married, and you can do either of those without being straight.” ... In 2022, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, which is presided over by Danny Akin, [highlighted] Rachel Gilson’s paper on marriage.”

Churches Leaving the Southern Baptist Convention

While some independent Baptist churches are joining the Southern Baptist Convention, claiming the SBC is “conservative” and “has won the battle against liberalism,” better-informed churches are leaving.

In this report, we are simply pointing out what is happening. As far as we are concerned, every Bible-believing church should have left the Southern Baptist Convention 100 years ago (even putting aside for the moment the issue that a denominational structure is unscriptural in itself).

We would also hasten to say that while we commend the following churches for having enough spiritual conviction to leave the Convention, and that does take a lot of backbone, we can't recommend them, and there are many fundamental reasons. Just the fact that they have not rejected contemporary worship music would be sufficient. Contemporary worship music is mixing the holy God with the unholy world and is a bridge to everything that these churches say they are separating from (and more) by leaving the SBC. Nothing is more effectively building the “one-world church” than Contemporary Christian Music. The fact that these churches are not tearing down the bridge of contemporary music means they are still on the path to apostasy, regardless of their present boldness. There is no doubt about this. Any church that is not properly educated in this matter and boldly standing against CCM is building bridges to the world and to the one-world church. We have documented this extensively in [*The Directory of Contemporary Worship Music*](#) and in the new video series [*The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*](#). See especially “CCM Is a Bridge to Dangerous Waters” and “Bob Jones, Majesty Music,

the New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys” in that series, www.wayoflife.org.

We would exhort these churches to make this bold step of leaving the SBC a beginning of a thorough-going spiritual revival whereby they reject sin and error and worldliness and compromise in every form.

Pulpit & Pen, Sept. 30, 2019, says there are “hundreds [of churches] that we are aware of who have left the SBC and/or stopped funding it over issues relating to corruption, the ERLC (Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission), Lifeway, charismaticism, or Social Justice.”

Following are some examples:

First Baptist Church, Victoria, Missouri

This church left the Southern Baptist Convention in September 2019.

The following is a statement signed by Pastor Bruce Tegg, joined by the chairman of the deacons and two other deacons:

“I have been a Southern Baptist since my preschool days. I was baptized, married and ordained (both as a deacon and a pastor) as a Southern Baptist. I was a Southern Baptist when the Convention first addressed women deacons, when the seminaries taught heresy, when we were battling the charismatic movement, when the Freemasons were investigated and now with the invasion of Calvinism. In each controversy the resolution was not to remove the cancer of error, the solution was assimilation. Rather than remove the theological Tobiahs the SBC, as Israel in Nehemiah, gave them residence in the Temple. The SBC now accepts women deacons, speaking in ecstatic utterance, Freemason pastors and deacons, Presbyterian seminary graduates, and heretical instructors in their colleges, universities and seminaries. Over the past few years the corruption has multiplied exponentially ... The Tobiahs, Achans, and the Balaams now control every

aspect of Southern Baptist life. ... These issues stand out as significant, but they are in no way the complete list of theological problems in the SBC. We could also speak of Beth Moore and her support of Joyce Meyer ... the recent statement of current SBC President JD Greear about being an advocate for homosexual causes, and many other unresolved issues. Essentially, the SBC, MBC, and JBA have gone the way of Balaam, seeking monetary gain over holiness and righteousness. ... When this corruption occurs, the Scripture is clear, we must make our decision based on His commandments and not any partiality toward friendships or finances.

“Ephesians 5:11 ‘And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.’

“2 Thessalonians 3:6 ‘Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.’

“Based on these and many other commandments found in both the Old and New Testaments, the First Baptist Church of Victoria is formally and publicly resigning from affiliation with all entities of the SBC, MBC, and JBA effective immediately.”

Southside Baptist Church, Gallatin, Tennessee

This church left the SBC in August 2019.

The following is the church's statement:

“The present tragic reality is that the Southern Baptist Convention now has key leaders in places of high authority and influence who are directing Southern Baptists away from clear Biblical truth.

“Beth Moore now insists that by calling homosexuality a sin, that she is making people feel ‘demonized,’ and ‘doing more harm than good.’ ... Beth Moore is only one person ...

however no one in SBC leadership is correcting her or calling her to repent, and her influence is affecting millions.

“Sam Allberry is a gay priest in the Anglican Church who speaks at and is promoted by the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention. Allberry suggested that families should allow open homosexuals to ‘babysit’ your children unsupervised. Allberry is a man who identifies as ‘same-sex attracted,’ and has confirmed that he has ‘sexual, romantic and deep-emotional attractions to people of the same sex.’ Russell Moore, head of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) tweeted, ‘Sam Allberry is a gift to the church. We need his voice.’

“Recently, J.D. Greear, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, preached a sermon—from Romans 1, mind you—where he insisted that the Bible doesn’t really have all that much to say about sexual immorality, and is much more vocal about other sins such as materialism and boasting.

“At the 2018 SBC annual Convention ... Dr. Robert Oscar Lopez, a professor at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary ... submitted a powerful resolution on LGBT issues titled *On Ministry and Counseling to Lead People from Homosexuality to Heterosexuality*.” ... It stated: ‘RESOLVED, the Southern Baptist Convention rejects as heresy any claims that God makes people homosexual.’ The Resolutions Committee refused to allow it to go to the floor for a vote, claiming that it needed ‘more clarification.’

“The President of the SBC, J.D. Greear, claims Christians and Muslims worship the same God. The stunning claims were made in his book *Breaking the Islam Code*.

“On Aug. 18, 2019, the Southside congregation made a united decision: Because the leadership of the SBC has left and/or is weak on key Biblical positions; and because they have turned a deaf ear to those who have tried to stand

against their departure—we, of necessity, leave the convention.”

Fellowship Baptist Church, Steinhatchee, Florida

This church left the SBC in September 2019.

Following is the church’s statement:

“Right now their mission [that of the SBC] and our mission are not in agreement. Not the official, stated mission of the SBC because it is very biblical, but it is the liberal direction of its leadership. It is not what they say, but what they are doing. The promotion of Social Justice and Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality and the softening stance on homosexuality and women in the pulpit.

“We, Fellowship Baptist Church of Steinhatchee, Florida, hereby renounce all membership, affiliation and any other formal association with the Southern Baptist Convention, and by extension, the Florida Baptist Convention and Taylor Baptist Association. We will continue to hold firmly to the Word of God and to historic Baptist doctrine while affirming the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith as our confession.”

Grace Life Church, Muscle Shoals, Alabama

This large church announced in October 2019, that it is in the process of “finally and formally separating all connections to the Southern Baptist Convention.”

On October 20, in the Sunday morning service, Pastor Jeff Noblit preached about this and posted it online at the church’s web site.

He said the church’s elders are united in the decision. He began the message by saying that “this issue is burning in my heart” and he believes that the stirring is “a righteous indignation.” He said that he has had deep concerns about the Convention for many years, and one of the “straws that broke the camel’s back” was the “rise and embracing and affirming of Beth Moore’s ministry.” He said, “Beth Moore is a

charismatic, gifted communicator who has drifted toward considering herself a preacher. She does a lot of internet things where she kind of gets in the face of those of us who are conservative in our doctrine, saying ‘I am preaching at so and so church this Sunday morning,’ kinda like [thumbing her nose] and saying, ‘What are you going to do about it?’ This is a serious issue. Southern Baptists from all ages have held that Scripture is unequivocally clear that women do not hold the office of preaching or pastoring the church, women do not exercise authority by preaching the Word in the congregational meetings of the church. Now we have key, prominent Southern Baptist leaders who are accommodating and blessing this. You want me to tell you why? Because she has a million followers online, she has a huge influence, and the great idol of Southern Baptist life is pragmatism. It’s working and it brings in the money, so hands off. We died to that idol a long time ago. We had the chance to be ‘something’ in the Convention; we had the chance to be a big noise. We were selected to be that, but we would not compromise our convictions to make that happen. So that is a very serious issue to me. You look at church history. You find the churches and the collections of churches that begin to embrace feminism and women in authority and women preachers, and they went to liberalism fast. And we will be no exception.”

Following are other excerpts from Pastor Noblit’s sermon:

“At the last Southern Baptist Convention, the messengers of the churches voted to include ‘critical race theory and intersectionality’ as tools to help us interpret the Bible. Now if you don’t know what critical race theory and intersectionality mean, among other things it means that if you are born white you are already a racist, it doesn’t matter what you feel or how you act. All of this reparations talk about what happened in generations past, all of the radical political progressive thought is in those terms. In order to appease the culture and get along, they actually voted to say that we will include these

unbiblical, God-hating, God-rejecting people and their theories to help us interpret the Bible. It's not going to happen [here]! I don't need radical, liberal, atheist and godless people to help me understand the Scriptures. It seems like a small thing, but, brothers, the cow's out of the barn. I know where this is going. I've been watching it for years. ... There's not one word in the Bible that tells you that schools [seminaries] clean up the church; the churches clean up the church. And the churches don't have the moral spiritual fiber or fabric or courage and fortitude to do anything about it.

"All of this is happening like dominoes. In the last couple of weeks, Robert Jeffreys, the pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, Jack Graham, the pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church of Dallas, Jerry Falwell, Jr., president of Liberty University (they are now Southern Baptist), have given their endorsement to Paula White's ministry. Paula White is a heretic, a three time married pastor who calls herself a prophet. And these men of this stature (Graham is a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention) are saying that they embrace and encourage her work. It is 100%, dyed in the wool, let's share out constituencies. It's about money; it's about wealth; it's about popularity. It's hard to retreat from these things. Folks, Paula White couldn't teach in my Sunday School. She wouldn't be allowed [to be] a member of this church. Not that I don't love the lady and wouldn't reach out to her, but you have to believe certain things to be a member of a church and be in good standing!

"I agree with Dr. Jeffreys at First Baptist Dallas; I agree with Jack Graham of Prestonwood Baptist about supporting President Donald Trump even though we are very offended and disagree with a lot about him. But his positions deserve our support over the radical, liberal agenda of the Democratic party. If you are a Democrat, I'm sorry, but it's absolutely gone. The wickedness; the ungodliness; killing a baby up to the moment of birth and even saying we will allow them to

die after they are born if the mother decides she wants to abort it. All of this of applauding and pushing, affirming unnatural, perverse sexual practices, all of these gender issues, all of this nonsense. This is what happens when a culture turns its back on God. I wish we had a better instrument than Donald Trump but there is a basis in Scripture to disagree with a lot about him but to agree with his policies. If somebody is breaking into your house, I don't think you wait for a police offer to show up that can give you his baptismal certificate and tell you he is in good standing at a godly church. You say, 'Come in here and help me kill this snake, help me fight this enemy.' That's the way I view that. So I agree with those men on some things, but if we are going to cooperate together we have got to agree on truth, we have got to agree on the gospel, we have got to agree on what qualifies a person to be a pastor.

"Even this week Brother Steve is getting calls from churches that are saying, 'We want to connect with you guys; we can't go with this any further.' ... Far and away, biblically speaking, our Baptist churches are gone. They won't come back to health. There are good Baptist folk scattered in them, don't misunderstand me, some people that love the Lord, and I thank God for them, but as a whole they're gone. And we might as well do as Amos did and link up with the people who are trying to do right, stay humble, stay repentant, and go on for the glory of God.

"I was reading the biography of Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, one of the premier expositional preacher/pastors of the last 150 years. He also lived in London. This was two or three years ago on my study break, I'm reading and praying and thinking, and he made a statement in there that toward the end of his life he had to separate with ministers and ministries he had worked with for decades, because they finally caved in and went with the world. Brothers and sisters, listen to me, I will die first! ... there are things that matter that

are being radically compromised, all to the end of numbers and money and popularity. It might be [only] 12 or 27 of us, but we aren't going down that road.

"Let me say something to you moms and dads out there. You better raise your children in a place that believes something, believes something that if it's a good time and it's a party and everybody is having fun, that's all that matters. Church isn't meant to be like the world. It is meant to enjoy the deep, wondrous, glorious treasures of our God who reveals Himself in Scripture.

"My dear, dear good friend John O. Sims, he and I have been together for decades now, he has basically told his church the exact same thing. He said, 'Brother Jeff, I'm a fifth generation Southern Baptist. That's all I've known; that's all my people have known. But even my daddy, who is now 80 years old, has told me, Son, you are doing the right thing.'

"So when our leadership, 20 and 30 years ago, was reclaiming the inerrancy of the Scripture, we felt good about that, but I've said the whole time, It's not going to last. You can change all of the schools you want, but until the local churches embrace it and really walk in it, it's just a matter of time. We have the most atrocious, unsound preaching and teaching in so many of these places."

"To remind you of what I have pointed out to you several times, the present president of the Southern Baptist Convention is the one who stated that let's remind ourselves that in the Bible God only whispers about the sin of homosexuality, which is totally wrong. I'm sick and tired of these guys saying, 'Well, it's a sin,' but then they go 20 minutes explaining how that it is really, kinda not a sin anymore. I know where this is going. In Brother Matt's lifetime there will be homosexual preachers in Southern Baptist churches. Mark my words. I've been watching this for four decades. Everything I've said was going to happen has happened. ...

“And ladies I would ask you, as your pastor, there are a lot better ladies out there to listen to than Beth Moore. She’s driven by emotionalism, she’s driven by promoting herself. You don’t need Beth Moore’s teaching. She’s been pointedly asked several times, ‘What’s your position on homosexuality?’ and she will not answer the question. Folks, these are Baptist churches. What has happened to us? If you think there is some wisdom in going down that road, let me say to you, You are in the wrong local church. [We are not going to] back up one inch. We aren’t moving on what God says is sin. We are not moving on moral absolutes. ... How far are we going to go with this culture? Straight to hell? That’s what’s going on. And here’s the great travesty of it. These men hold to an orthodox statement of faith and doctrine, then they practice something different over here. It’s nothing new. Jeroboam in ancient Israel kept all the law of Israel, but he brought the Baal calves in and all of the sensual immoralities and entertainment that went with it. It’s been happening for thousands of years. Folks, our God is holy. He is holy. How dare we bring the filth of the world in and mix them up with the holy things of our God? Look, we are sinners around our God, but to willfully embrace [these things] is pure blasphemy; it is apostasy.”

Jeff Noblit, Oct. 20, 2019, Sunday morning service, Grace Life Church, Muscle Shoals, Alabama

https://www.gracelifeshoals.org/sermons#!/swx/pp/media_archives/203615/episode/79777

Shelbyville Mills Baptist Church, Shelbyville, Tennessee

On July 4, 2021, Pastor Jonathan Sims preached the following:

“You know, I’ve thought about this a lot. I’ve had the privilege...of living in the midst, I believe, of every important leadership dispensation in the Southern Baptist Convention. I was alive in the 70s and 80s--Roy Honeycutt and Russell Dilday brand of liberalism and their leadership. I was alive for

the 80s and 90s Morris Chapman, Adrian Rogers conservatism. And now the 90s to 2000s, Al Mohler, Russell Moore, JD Greear Calvinism. **But one thing has been constant through each of these dispensations: biblically weak, sick, and unhealthy local churches.** .. the Southern Baptist Convention has reached a point that my conscience will no longer allow me to even be loosely affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. I believe it's time for us to formally withdraw from the Southern Baptist Convention."

"Sims stated that he has been 'grieved for decades' over the fruit of the Southern Baptist Convention and that we can have no doubt about the state of the denomination based on its fruit. Two years ago, the church voted unanimously to defund the Southern Baptist Convention and reduced their giving from "tens of thousands of dollars" down to one hundred dollars a year just to give the church time to deliberate and decide how to move forward" ("Another Southern Baptist Church Announces Departure," *Reformation Charlotte*, July 14, 2021).

Trinity Baptist Church, Southaven, Mississippi

On September 7, 2021, Pastor Chad Everson announced on the church's Facebook page: "Today letters went out to the Associational Missionary, the Executive Director of Mississippi Baptist, and the Executive Director of the SBC, laying out the reasons Trinity Baptist voted unanimously to withdraw from them all. A good day for us."

"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (1 Co. 5:6).