



IBFNA

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THE REVIEW

Moving Ahead for the Cause of Separation

by Pastor Charles Dear, Moderator *IBFNA*

We praise the Lord for the good conference at Shipshewana, Indiana, for the good preaching, good music, and great fellowship. It was a blessing to welcome new folks, who had never been to an IBFNA conference before, and to see the expressions of joy on their faces to find a Fellowship with solid biblical exposition and God-honoring music. It is a delight we need to see repeated over and over again as we invite others to stand with us in challenging times.

We all need to do our part to draw together those of like-precious faith and practice in these times. May I urge you to consider hosting a pastors' meeting in your church to introduce them to the IBFNA? Perhaps you could invite them for breakfast or lunch and have Dr. Richard Harris, our Representative, come and open the Word as well as explain why they need to be a part of our Fellowship. The rationale for our existence needs to be heard by men who now go it alone and who need to know there are others like them, men who understand the issues we all face today in opposition to worldly methods and music. Dr. Harris stands ready to work with you and to challenge good brethren in your area to stand together with us. I hope you will take steps immediately to plan a pastors' meeting and call him today at (215) 679-5765.

Have you renewed your membership yet?

For those who could not be with us at the conference, you need to renew your membership by October 1 in order to be included in the IBFNA membership directory. Membership costs \$25 per family or \$15 per individual, and it includes a subscription to *The Review*, our official paper, as well as a copy of the annual directory and all other mailings. If your contact information has changed since the last directory (email addresses, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, cellphone number), please forward those changes to ibfnamod@gmail.com or by mail to the Fellowship's office, now at IBFNA, 523 East Godfrey Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19120-2123.

Leadership Update

At this year's conference, we elected new leadership across the board. Short terms of service are one of the hallmarks of the IBFNA, where term limits prevent any monopoly on leadership over time. This has never been an issue for our Fellowship. Our challenge has been to have good men serve for limited terms of office, followed by others who are equally capable and willing to invest the time and energy to help us move forward. The newly elected officers are:

Pastor Charles Dear, Philadelphia PA, Moderator;
Pastor Greg Ward, Bay City MI, Secretary;
Pastor Ed Mason, Carlton MI, Treasurer;
Pastor Kevin Hobi, New Boston NH, Editor of *The Review*.

Family Conference 2013

Finally, we have completed plans for our IBFNA Family Conference for 2013. In response to the many positive comments from this year's meeting in Shipshewana, Indiana, we have booked the Farmstead Inn again for June 18-20, 2013. Room reservations will be accepted for the IBFNA block of rooms through May 17, 2013. Plan now to be with us and to bask in the blessed fellowship once more.



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Rooted, Built Up, and Established

by Pastor Kevin Hobi, Editor *The Review*

Our fellowship of independent Baptist separatists enjoyed its 22nd annual family conference, June 26-28, at the Farmstead Inn Conference Center in the sleepy Amish village of Shipshewana, Indiana. The conference theme correctly labeled our gathering as a time of rejoicing in the grace that has rooted, built up, and established us in our common faith in Christ (Col. 2:7). Paul speaks of abounding thanksgiving balanced with sober warning in that context (vv. 7-8), and our gatherings were full of the apostle's zeal for both of these spiritual concerns.

The preaching of the Word of God stood once again at the center of our sessions. The messages have been made available at our website through the diligent labors of Brother Bob Payne (www.ibfna.org). His final message on the Rapture of the Church sent us home abounding with thanksgiving and looking for our blessed hope. His sermon was a detailed exposition of 1 Thess. 4:13-18, and he emphasized that the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ is vital to the New Testament believer's stability and strength in the Lord.

Our guest speakers this year were Marty Marriott, President of Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Watertown, Wisconsin, and Steve Pittman, Missions Professor at Grace Baptist Bible College in Winston Salem, North Carolina. It was obvious that both of these gifted servants of Christ felt very much at home in our fellowship of independent, separatist Baptists. Brother Marriott shared that he was saved as an engineering student at the University of Cincinnati, while pursuing the lifestyle of a "recreational" hippie. God's Spirit touched his heart and brought him to salvation as he watched a Billy Graham crusade on television. Marty's messages were rich blessings full of personal anecdotes and heart-felt passion for the truth. His wife Miriam ministered the Word to our ladies and sang in our conference choir.

Brother Pittman brought a contingent of students from his school and church, which followed their professor in joining the IBFNA. It was encouraging to welcome these newcomers to our fellowship. Steve introduced himself as a southern confederate who roots for the Michigan Wolverines. He is an experienced missionary (Brazil) and committed separatist. His messages focused on Old Testament examples that challenge us today with the need to remain faithful fundamentalists. The differences between Abraham and Lot teach us lessons about what will make or break a faithful stand for the Lord. The experiences of the nameless prophet of

1 Kings 13 hold many lessons for our ministries today. Steve's workshop focused on dispensational issues related to scriptural usages of the term *kingdom*.

Brother Clay Nuttall counseled us from the book of Titus for our morning devotions and prayer time. His rich survey of the book's content emphasized the need for the Word of God in the church, in the home, and in our witness to the world. Those sessions were followed by encouraging times of corporate prayer for suffering brethren, needy churches, and revival in our nation. Brother Robert Delnay presented the workshop, "What's So Bad about Keswick?" offering a first-person appreciation for the movement's value and its relationship to historic fundamentalism. Failure to separate from new evangelicalism was a key problem for Keswick. Brother Al Harris led an open discussion about the importance of caring for our families as we minister in the Lord's work.

Brother Ed Mason and his wife, Judy, instructed our young people. Ed challenged the teens with an emphasis on systematic theology. His concern was that our next generation of leaders know what they believe and why. We welcomed for the first time the musical gifts of Greg and Heather Murray (www.murraymusicministries.com), who minister with the Mike Pelletier Evangelistic Team. Greg led the singing and played the trombone, while Heather's mastery on the piano made the grand old hymns we sing come alive with energy. Greg felt right at home in the middle of Hoosier country, donning the red-and-white-striped IU warm-ups for one of the sessions. The conference choir Greg and Heather organized was one of the highlights of the week. Karis Ward, Becky and Heather Payne, Allison Kauffman, and Christina Bell enthusiastically served the needs of our youngest attendees in the nursery ministry.

Brothers Mark Strangman, Paul Connor, Tom Hamilton, and Tom Wolfe also preached the Word faithfully and well. The fellowship passed two resolutions, one entitled, "Holiness unto the Lord," in which the fellowship committed itself to keeping an emphasis on God's holiness central to our lives, teaching, and application of separatist principles; and a second entitled, "Church and State," in which we determined to exercise our religious, speech, and franchise freedoms in this important election year to the glory of our great God. We remembered with great appreciation the faithful service of our outgoing officers, Brothers Bob Payne, Tom Hamilton, Mark Strangman, and Chick Dear, and we were exhorted to

pray for those newly elected for the coming year: Chick Dear, Moderator; Greg Ward, Secretary; Ed Mason, Treasurer; and Kevin Hobi, *Review* Editor.

Paul's desire, that the believers in Colossae be "rooted and built up in him [Christ], and established in the faith," was prompted in part by the geographical distance between himself and these beloved friends: "for though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you

in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ" (Col. 2:5). God has given us a like-minded fellowship to be with in spirit, as we, in our separate places of God's calling, look forward to the opportunity by His good providence to reconvene in 2013. We plan to return to the Farmstead Inn again next year for another time of encouragement on June 18-20. We look forward to seeing you there, Lord willing.

Preaching and Politics: Bringing the Bible to an Election

by Pastor Charles Dear, Moderator *IBFNA*

We have heard all the warnings against preachers who talk about the forthcoming election from their pulpits. We have heard the open threats of the IRS's taking away our tax exempt status and the poorly-veiled threats of jailing preachers for speaking out on the issues. However, our assignment from heaven is to "preach the Word," all the Word, without concern for where that may lead us or who is offended by the Truth. In a time when "Truth is fallen in the streets," we do not have the option to choose whether or not we will address the issues destroying our country! Necessity is laid upon us to deal forthrightly and biblically with any and all issues that stand in opposition to the clear teachings of God's Word. To do anything less would be to shirk the sacred responsibility resting upon our shoulders as pastors and preachers to bring God's Truth to the hearts of our people.

Another aspect of this challenge is how people in our congregations are taken with the social programs provided today by the federal, state, and local governments, which have shifted significantly dependency from God to the state and have created an alternate and unethical world-view that is contrary to biblical principles of responsibility and freedom. You might be surprised how many of your own people rely upon some form of governmental handout or subsidy, like food stamps, utility subsidies, medical care, or child care.

We can begin by looking at some specific issues of concern to us, where the Bible is now under assault by politicians and their edicts, as well as at laws being enacted on all levels of government, from the federal level to the smallest community associations that oversee how people use their own private homes. Far from exhaustive, this list could be lengthened from your own observations and experiences:

- (1) attacks on marriage, the family and home, as defined in Scripture;
- (2) attacks upon the rights of private property;
- (3) attacks upon moral integrity, heterosexuality, pre-marital virginity, and marital faithfulness and the advancement of abortion and euthanasia;
- (4) attacks upon the rights of the individual, particularly in violation of soul liberty;
- (5) creation of a state dependency for all things, with a corresponding exclusion of God and the Church from any public forum;
- (6) undermining the biblical work ethic with cradle-to-grave programs from government;
- (7) wasteful and poor stewardship by bloated government bureaucracies established to eclipse and shutdown the more efficient Church ministries to the poor and needy;
- (8) an ever-increasing number of government regulations imposed upon churches, Christian schools, and Christian agencies, which impedes legitimate ministries, necessary facility usage, and faithful obedience to the mandates of Scripture.

Every one of these issues has been addressed by politicians and candidates running in the election this November. Some political parties have brazenly declared their support for legalizing practices that God calls an abomination. The question for us is whether we will address these daring challenges from our pulpits, without fear or favor, because every one of them can be answered from the Word of God, whereby we confidently preach, "Thus saith the Lord." The failure to raise the standard against these sins over the last 50 years has contributed significantly to the success of these attacks, has undermined the true well-being of our people, and has robbed us of the blessings of God. Our complicity has been

one of silence, but silence is not the role of those who are the Lord's watchmen!

You may be able to suggest texts appropriate to the issues listed above, but if you struggle with where to begin, here are a few useful passages of Scripture:

- (1) attacks upon marriage and the family as defined in Scripture: Matt. 19:4-6, Eph. 6:1, and Heb. 13:4;
- (2) attacks upon the rights of private property: Acts 5:4;
- (3) attacks upon moral integrity, heterosexuality, pre-marital virginity, and marital faithfulness: Gen. 39:5, Lev. 18:22, Rom. 1:24-29;
- (4) attacks upon the rights of the individual, particularly soul liberty: Rom. 14:5, 12;
- (5) creation of a state-dependency for all things, with a corresponding intentional exclusion of

- (6) God and the local church: I Tim. 6:17-19; undermining a the biblical work ethic: II Thess. 3:10;
- (7) the wasteful nature and poor stewardship of government bureaucracies put in place to eclipse and shutdown more efficient church ministries to the poor and needy: James 2:1-9;
- (8) the ever-increasing number of government regulations: Acts 5:29.

I am sure you might choose others or add more, but the point here is that we have every right as preachers of the Word to address any and all of these issues from our pulpits; and we must do so if we would help our people choose wisely from among various platforms, which envision major social engineering, including the removal of God, His Word, and the ministries of the Church from the lives of the citizens of our nation. May God save America!

A Plea for Christian Statesmanship

by Pastor Richard Harris¹

Isaiah wrote: "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion" (Isa. 59:19-20).

This statement is unquestionably true, and God will ultimately lift up that standard when His own Son, the Redeemer, comes to Zion at His second appearing. However, it is His will that there be a standard of righteousness today. It is interesting that, before the Savior's coming return, He prophetically remarks through Isaiah, "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered [I was amazed] that there was none to uphold [the standard of righteousness]: therefore mine own arm brought salvation..." (Isa. 63:5). This failure of men should be astonishing to us.

There have always been honest differences of interpretation on church organization, as well as on other issues, among good men who love Christ. There was a time when men could amicably differ on issues which did not affect fundamental Christian doctrine and still respect and firmly defend one another. Great Christian leaders of the past were able to respect those differences and yet recognize that the men with whom they differed were still Fundamentalists and brothers in Christ. They were Christian statesmen.

The dictionary definition of a statesman is 'one who is experienced in the art of administration of

governmental affairs, who exhibits great wisdom and ability in dealing with important public issues.' We are so desperately in need of Christian statesmen today who will lead His church. Fundamentalists once stood together by strongly proclaiming the fundamental doctrines of Scripture and by bringing that which was false into the light of truth. They protected God's people from the misuse of power that the National Council of Churches was gaining through its alliance with governmental leaders. It is hard to contemplate where we would be today if those godly men had not stood together.

It is a tragedy that the climate among fundamental Christians seems to have swung away from the respect, appreciation, and heritage these men and churches gave to each other. Now, distrust, competition, and self-centeredness seem to divide so many of God's people, even some who claim to be Fundamentalists. This division over issues that are not remotely connected to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian Faith is tearing Bible Christianity apart. How desperately we need to remember . . . Satan's method is to divide and conquer. He isolates us from one another and builds a wall of distrust and division between us. By allowing him to do this, we are weakened as a united voice for fundamental Christianity. Our enemy knows this and takes bolder and bolder steps to strip us of our credibility and our effectiveness.

I am not referring to the compromise that speaks of “breaking down the walls” of denominationalism. To “denominate” something means to describe a group’s beliefs; nowhere in God’s Word are we told to surrender our distinctive beliefs in order to build some ecumenical organization. That is compromise and accommodation, and it is in direct violation of God’s commands. Fundamentalism was never a nondenominational conglomerate, but rather a multid denominational movement that respects the honest and sincere difference of denominational interpretations of God’s Word in areas considered not basic to the fundamental Christian Faith.

Although it is true that “it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power” (2 Chron. 14:11), this does not negate our responsibility to maintain a spiritual unity among those who love and obey the Lord Jesus. It should be natural for believers to stand together for the Faith. One day Jesus was confronted with the pettiness of His disciples when they were discussing among themselves “which of them should be the greatest” (Luke 9:46-50). Right after being rebuked for their competitive spirit, John remarked to Jesus that they had seen someone casting out devils and they forbade him because “he followeth not with us.” Again Jesus rebuked them for their self-centered spirit.

When there is no compromise of cardinal Bible doctrines concerning the authority of God’s Word and the Person of our Lord Jesus, it is clear that we are to stand together as brothers in Christ. The extent of our fellowship and ministry together will be determined by the scope of our agreement, but we certainly can raise a united voice for true Christianity.

The Apostle Paul, when writing to the church at Corinth, said, “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? For we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (2 Cor. 3:4-5, 9).

Whether we realize it or not, each of us who claims the label *Christianity* is being represented in some way by one of three groups. They represent three strategic positions within Christendom in America—one of apostasy, one of compromise, and one of faithfulness to the fundamental truths of Christ and His Word. Too many of us do not understand the urgency for a national voice to promote and protect the Faith because we see no threat to religious liberties. Or, we have difficulty standing together for the Faith unless we are in total harmony on every minor doctrine.

The failure of fundamental believers to live up to the challenge of Christian statesmanship threatens the very survival of a strong biblical voice, united in its belief in the authority of God’s Word. Only a revival of wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit coupled with the courage of our convictions can protect us. Our plea is for Christian statesmanship among fundamental Christians.

¹ Editor’s note: This article is adapted from a publication Brother Harris originally wrote for the American Council of Christian Churches while serving as President of that organization. This adaptation is reprinted here with the permission of the author and the ACCC.

IBFNA 2012 Conference Pictures



Pictured from left to right: Mark Strangman, former Secretary; Kevin Hobi, Review Editor; Ed Mason, Treasurer; Greg Ward, Secretary; Tom Hamilton, former Treasurer; Chick Dear, Moderator and former Review Editor; and Bob Payne, former Moderator.



Some new faces from Winston Salem, NC



The Murrays and Mrs. Marriott prepare for ministry



Pastoral duet Strangman/Hamilton



In need of some more horsepower Ezra Ward



Pastor Joshua and Janelle Franklin minister in song



Young people get away for some putt-putt



Mrs. Marriott instructs the ladies



Good burger-and-shake smiles Brandon Hobi/Josiah Ward



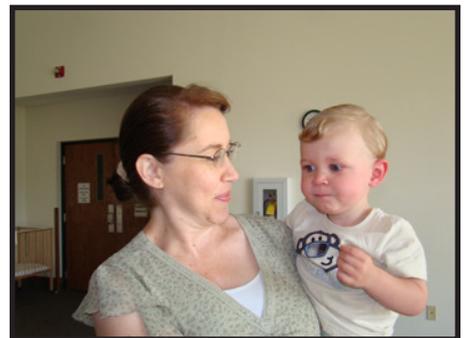
Precious times of corporate prayer



A conference for the entire family to enjoy



Talent well-used for the Lord (singer excluded)



Proud mom of future IBFNA member Allison & Josiah Kauffman



Beautiful brass!
Greg Murray



Ready to learn!



Pastor Payne
ministers the Word



Knights of the round table



Brother Marriott
ministers the Word



Brother Pittman
ministers the Word



Run away bull –
Amish sporting event



Successful nursery audition
Becky Payne/Anthony Bell



Conference Choir



Unsuccessful nursery audition
Pastor Reinhardt/Anthony Bell



Too much humor,
not enough singing



Informative ministry displays
Evangelist Jim Sloan

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