



IBFNA

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THE REVIEW

For Such a Time as This by Pastor Al Harris, Moderator *IBFNA*

“For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14).

The Jewish people were in a terrible crisis. Haman had maneuvered the king into signing a law to kill all the Jews in the land. By this action, Haman would kill his hated enemy Mordecai. Esther had been chosen as queen, and neither the king nor Haman knew that Esther was a Jew. Esther was in a strategic position to get an audience with the king, but also in the fearful position of being one of the first Jews to die if she were discovered to be a Jew.

While situations have changed in some ways, every crisis of the gospel brings with it both a dread of severe difficulty and an opportunity for victory. David stood at the time of crisis as Goliath challenged Israel. Peter and John stood at the crossroads of destiny when the religious leaders threatened them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Their answer of obedience to God rather than man declared their determination to be faithful to the Lord. Paul stood at that time of crisis on several occasions and determined at Lystra not to allow a stoning to stop his ministry. Imprisonments and beatings did not silence the gospel of God.

Today, the crisis is a different one. Fundamentalism is but a very small part of the religious life of America. However, it had a great impact in its past. Fundamentalism is fractured by various groups that seem to be diminishing in terms of their impact in our culture and in reaching the lost for Christ. If we remain silent, we are sure to diminish even further until there is no voice raised for the truths of Scripture in American life. We will be relegated to the pages of history. Those who remain will become unheard voices in isolated communities, whose tiny sound gets swept aside as the blast of compromise sweeps through Bible colleges and our churches.

Mordecai had an answer. He was confident that God could preserve His people, and yet Esther had to answer for her strategic position. Had God prepared her for this special time and opportunity?

I believe that God has raised up the IBFNA at this pivotal time in history. I want you to consider with me the kind of costs that are necessary if we are going to accomplish something for God that impacts fundamentalism and the lives of young preachers to come.

1. It will require sacrifice. Esther knew it might cost her life. If we are going to build a Fellowship that will impact other pastors and young men to stand for the faith, then we must be willing to pay the price. We must commit to being at the conference next year. We must encourage some other pastors to come as well. We must share the *Review* with other pastors and let them know there is a Fellowship of men willing to stand for the faith in a statesman-like way.

2. It will take faith. It is easy to think we are unimportant, to hide as just one church

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among thousands across the land. But 300 trumpets and torches put to route the Midianite army under a man willing to trust the Lord against overwhelming odds. This past conference in Gettysburg revealed the heart and strength of this Fellowship. The messages, the singing, and the spirit of purpose in standing for Christ were clearly evident. Our membership increased and our vision has been broadened. Now is the time to move forward for the Lord.

3. It will necessitate a clear purpose. We do not care to be the only voice in fundamentalism, but we are determined to stand clearly and boldly for the faith once delivered to the saints in a gracious manner that will raise a banner for young men to follow. Young men are looking for the path of faithfulness to the Lord. They are looking for something that is alive with the power of the Spirit of God and faithfulness to the Word of God. They want the Word of God to increase and enjoy success, but they often see fundamental churches dying apart from any real vision. We know the truth, and we have a vision for faithfulness and declaring boldly the Word to a lost world. We need to raise that banner high so that those who desire this kind of faithful ministry can see it

and gather with us.

4. It will demand that we be willing to care for others more than ourselves. Esther had to determine, and many others down through the centuries did also, to stand for God even if it cost her dearly. David said he would not sacrifice that which cost him nothing. His relationship to God was valuable to Him. This past conference demonstrated that a growing number of men understand this truth.

- Are you willing to plan to attend the conference in June of 2015 if the Lord tarries?
- Are you willing to give to help others, especially young pastors, come?
- Are you willing to join your voice, influence, and heart to stand for the faith separate from compromise with this world?

I am asking you to lift your voice with mine and to raise a standard of faithfulness to the God of the Bible and His holiness. We will sound different from the evangelical crowds who want to be accepted by the religious community, but our goal is to be accepted by the King of Glory.

Gettysburg 2014 – Family Conference Report

The 24th annual gathering of the Independent Baptist Fellowship of North America in Gettysburg, PA knew the blessing of the Lord's rich presence and the fellowship of the Spirit of His grace. It was not an academic exercise, but the enthusiastic rallying of concerned brothers and sisters to the courageous support of the cause of Christ in difficult days. Over and over our speakers used the Scriptures to challenge us to sound again the depth of our commitment to the convictions which gave birth to our organization. Dr. Moritz began his messages on contending for the faith once delivered to the saints by reminding us of the saliency of the IBFNA purpose statement:

“We believe the greatest danger to the purity of the faith comes not from the apostates themselves, but from men who, though they are themselves Bible believers, are tolerant of others in positions of trust and authority who do not so believe. This is why one aspect of the IBFNA purpose statement reads, ‘to emphasize the biblical teaching on separation from unbelievers in religious work (primary separation) and separation from believers who ignore or disobey the Bible’s teaching of primary separation (secondary separation).’ The IBFNA Article of Faith states, in part, that we believe in ‘ecclesiastical separation, whereby we preach against apostasy, and withdraw from brethren who enter into memberships, affiliations and fellowships (including evangelistic crusades,

youth movements, mission agencies, and schools), which seek to unite separatist fundamentalists with those who deny Biblical doctrines, including those who do not obey the Biblical teaching on separation.”

God gave us a deep sense of our need for His grace to fulfill this commitment in these dark days.

Each morning began with Pastor Dave Reinhardt leading our devotional time prior to refreshing seasons of prayer together. He noted the prominence of the word *beloved* in the Epistle of Jude. We must contend for the faith from hearts of Christ-like love. That reminder in the form of an insightful word study of *beloved* throughout the Scripture set the tone for each day together.

Our host pastor, Al Harris, whose church did a wonderful job extending their care and help to our conference time in many ways, began our preaching emphasis with Amos 8:11-12. He warned that our day will be one that suffers from the scarcity of the Word of God unless some things do not change. The existence of men and women who have a reverence for God as He is must not change, a willingness to declare the Word of God as it is must not change, and hearts of humility and submission to the obedience of Christ must not change.

Pastor Ed Mason, who serves the Lord as the Treasurer of our Fellowship, emphasized personal separation in this year's message on the Bible doctrine of

separation titled, “Growing in holiness through separation.” He preached from 2 Pet. 1:1-11 and spoke of the need to separate from ourselves. We must come to the cross on a daily basis and renew our consecration to the Lord.

Dr. Clay Nuttall spoke from Acts 20:27, “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” He spoke about the quality, content, and application of the counsel referred to by Paul. It is a determinate and immutable counsel designed for the glory of God. It is communicated in the Scripture, so declaring it requires carefully preaching what God says with sound hermeneutical principles. In terms of application, obedience is the only correct response to the counsel of God.

Pastor Dan Brabson brought us back to 2 Peter with a focus on the book’s author, audience, and authority. Peter was a frail and weak vessel through whom God accomplished mighty things. We need to walk in humility as we earnestly contend for the faith. The recipients of the



letter were persecuted strangers and pilgrims. They needed to stand against both fleshly lusts and false teachers. False teaching is destructive, deceptive, popular, and sensual. In spite of these challenges, believers must live in hope, understanding that God judges sin and delivers the godly from temptation. The authority cited in the Epistle is Scripture. Apart from God’s Word, we have nothing of value to say.

Pastor Steve Pittman addressed the theme “One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism” with a series of Scriptures designed to facilitate some sound practical counsel on how to apply many principles of ecclesiastical separation wisely in our day and age. Our Moderator, Pastor Charles Dear, finished the week with an exhortation to stay the course. His message from 2 Timothy 3 emphasized the truth that perilous times are affecting the church from within, not merely from without. There are realms that are sovereign territory of the Lord, and no man ought to be allowed to claim that ground. If we are conformed to Jesus Christ, we will be deformed in relation to the world. We must continue in the things that we have learned.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Fred Moritz of Maranatha Baptist University, served our gathering with

five messages on our theme, “Contending for the Faith.” His first message began with an emphasis on the priority of contending for the faith. Although Jude intended to focus on the gospel, the need to exhort his readers to the defense of the faith became his proper emphasis. Gospel coalition groups fail to understand this priority. The watchword for the fundamentalist is – you must earnestly contend for the faith; the watchword for the new evangelical is – you must be born again. Jude also gives a prescription of the faith. It assumes a defined doctrine of Scripture and of the person and work of Christ. It affects our personal lifestyle and our burden for souls. We must preach the faith while caring for these things.

Dr. Moritz’s second message focused on five imperatives from 1 Cor. 16:13-14. The imperative of our person is “watch ye.” We must be aware and informed, not careless and carefree. The imperative of our position is “stand fast in the faith.” All churches everywhere are called to stand in the Lord, in the Spirit, and in the truth. The imperative of our purpose calls for courage: “quit you like men.” “Be strong” is the imperative of our power, and the only one found in the passive voice signaling our need to be strengthened by the Lord. The final imperative must permeate and flavor all the others: “let all your things be done with charity.”

We learned much about Christian unity from John 17 along with our focus on contending for the faith. The bases of Christian unity include Trinitarian unity, the doctrine that the eternal Son of God became flesh, a common understanding and experience of salvation in Christ alone, a common revelation, a common separation from the world, a common sanctification, a common commission, a common glorious union through God’s Spirit, and a common emotion, which is the Father’s love for the Son. Unified Christians have certain obligations. They must keep God’s Word, the truth. They must stand for Christ in a hostile world dominated by the evil one. They must be a witness to those not yet of the fold. Finally, we ought to live with an anticipation of Christian unity. We should seek unity with those who share the common faith that Christ spoke of in His prayer.

Dr. Moritz specifically challenged pastors with the command, *Save thyself*, from 1 Timothy 4. This we do when we command and teach authoritatively on the basis of *Thus saith the Lord*; when we cultivate a godly character that backs our message; when we center on the important activity—the pulpit ministry; when we work hard at our gift; and when we continue consistently in these things.

Brother Moritz finished our time in Jude at the end of the Epistle, emphasizing our need to contend for the lost. In a godless age, we can live like either Noah or Lot. While contending for the faith against false teachers,

we must have compassion on those whom they are deceiving. When caring for the souls of men, some of whom may be doubting, we must not be contentious. Yet we must have a clear conviction about the damnation of the lost and the reality of hell. Finally, reaching men and women for Christ requires a caution that avoids the defilement of the flesh and the world.

The thrill of our godly music and times of fellowship while enjoying our historic venue supplemented the good preaching we heard all week. Many commented about how encouraging the robust spirit of the singing was. Our song-services were led by Evangelist Ken Lynch, who also organized a conference choir and encouraged our hearts with special music. We were treated to the giftedness of Karla Armstrong and others. Ken and Karla conducted the men's and ladies' breakout sessions on Thursday afternoon.

At our business session, we made progress on our incorporation efforts with some needed additions to our founding documents and elected new officers for the coming year: Pastor Al Harris, Moderator; Pastor Ed Mason, Treasurer; Pastor Greg Ward, Secretary. Pastor Kevin Hobi was asked to serve another year as Editor of the *Review*. We also adopted two resolutions, one on our conference theme and one on the right and

responsibility of franchise. At one point in his messages, Dr. Moritz introduced us to some less well-known verses of John Fawcett's hymn, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds." Fawcett wrote that song after changing his mind about a transfer from a small congregation he had pastored for a time to a larger church in London. Fawcett could not bear to leave the small parish God had taught him to love. The verses Dr. Moritz uncovered were:

"This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

"From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin, we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity."

For three great days in Gettysburg, our Fellowship knew the encouragement and strength of the ties that Fawcett celebrates, those that bind our hearts together in Christian love and a in a stand that seeks to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Praise the Lord for a blessed conference.

Goodbye to a Good Friend

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15).

Our brother and co-laborer, Pastor Ralph Weer, went home to be with the Lord on July 4th. He was in his 85th year of the Lord's blessing on his life. Brother Ralph and his wife, Myrtle, have been a source of encouragement and wisdom for the IBFNA for many years. He will be missed dearly for a time until we are together again in the presence of our dear Savior.

Those who know their history can name patriots who left their loved ones on Independence Day. Ralph shared that love of country having served with distinction in the U.S. Navy as a Russian language decoder. He was concerned for our nation and reminded us to pray for her. After his service Ralph founded C. J. Auto Parts in Trenton, NJ. God called him to gospel ministry later in his life.

Ralph served the Lord as church-planter and

pastor of Kendall Park Baptist Church in Kendall Park, NJ. He was the director of New Life Island Youth Camp near Frenchtown, NJ, and he served on the Board of Trustees of Bible Baptist College. A pastor's pastor, Brother Ralph served as the GARBC regional representative for the state of New Jersey. Never quite retiring, he and his wife remained active as he served churches as interim pastor in Florida and New York.



That godly men like Ralph Weer have stood with us encourages us that we are standing where we should be standing. May the Lord use the memory of his example to strengthen our stand for Christ. The prayers of our Fellowship are with Myrtle and the rest of the family.

From Moderates to Cults

by Dr. Clay L. Nuttall

No conservative ever woke up one morning and became a liberal. That kind of surrender usually comes in steps. They are seldom big steps. For those who have been in ministry for fifty years or more, we have seen a number of organizations and individuals stumble over the cliff of liberalism. Few have fallen to their theological death on the dead run. It is indeed the “little foxes that spoil the vines.”

The road to error is appealing. It looks good, and the sounds are mesmerizing. The traveler will meet other acquaintances along the way, and that makes them develop a false sense of security. Then there are the cheerleaders and those who direct the traffic as they assist them across the busy theological thoroughfares. The false guides are quick to make light of any warning signs along the way. The signs warn of the danger of leaving behind reliable authoritative theological markers. The new guides, however, are well-known, published and popular. How could they be wrong? They promise a world of intellectualism and prestige, where everyone can know as much as God does and sometimes more.

The young lions are particularly susceptible and are easy picking. The prideful attraction of joining the theological elite is overpowering. When trusted guides of the past cry out, fearing for their safety, the young ones foolishly laugh and make fun of those stuck in a past that encouraged searching the text for what God has said.

TOOLS OF THE FALSE GUIDES

Those who encourage the simple on their way to theological death are many. The world of the false guide is an illusion. They operate in an allegorical world where meanings change often, like putting on a change of clothes. There is no solid basis for these meanings, but the guides are happy to champion the false teaching of human traditions. They approach the true guide book with disdain and press their ideas and opinions into the old text.

To confuse the unlearned, titles, names and designations often change. A certain denomination has used this trick to try to prove that they have moved back to a more conservative position. What they really did was label the infidels as liberals, the liberals as moderates, and the moderates as conservatives. Historically, movements rarely move to the right after tasting the leaks and garlic of the left.

The same thing has happened in evangelicalism. In an attempt to make the left-leaning crowd look respectable, these are relabeled *conservative*

evangelicals. The truth is that they are really moderate evangelicals. The real danger in any movement does not come from the right or left, but from those moderates who have one foot in both camps. The moderates, contaminated by enough of the leftist’s error, thoroughly leaven the conservative camp.

EXAMPLES OF CONTAGIOUS THEOLOGY

For the informed conservative there has been little question about identifying cults. Over the past thirty years, those who pretend to be conservative have eroded this stand. Some time ago, a professor at a well-known conservative school shared a personal exchange with me. He maintained that the Seventh Day Adventist Church was a legitimate church and that I was insensitive and offensive to identify them as a cult.

More recently there has been an effort to view the Mormon Church as a legitimate church. Some have sought to apologize to the Mormons for what they thought was an uncharitable attitude toward that cult. One observer referred to the effort of one educational institution as “Mormons and evangelicals together.” More recently, some from the left have suggested that it is erroneous to refer to Jehovah’s Witnesses as a cult. So let me set the record straight. They are all cults, and there are more of them. I am not suggesting that we attack them physically or personally, but trampling on the clear teaching of the Scriptures is not a light matter. Theological bullies are wasting their time if they think they can embarrass the Biblicalist into silence.

Compromise of theology that is biblical is serious business. In our own camp, there is great danger in holding up popular theological gurus as examples. When we quote or refer to certain popular writers, scholars and theologians, we would do well to issue a warning. A majority of these men are spreading error mixed with some truth. The fact that someone may have a strong biblical position on something does not mean you trust them on everything. The average believer does not know that. We might assume that, because a person has expertise in some areas, he is competent in all areas. That is dangerous because it is impossible for any of us to be fully-studied in every area.

The love-affair that many professed fundamentalists have with moderates should send chills down our spine. We can be respectful and careful with moderates, but we must deal openly with their error. We

do not have to join them. On the other hand, what shall we do with our own crowd when they try to blur theological distinctiveness? Silence is not an option.

THE END RESULT

We often hear of individuals who, in spite of their exposure to good teaching for years, recently have moved to a church or movement where the Bible is transgressed every week. How does one explain such a puzzle? Were they not listening, or do they not know? Do they not care, or have they deliberately chosen to compromise? Of course, it is possible that they are not saved and have no spiritual sensitivity. It could be that we failed to teach clearly or that we did not teach enough. The average believer receives very little Bible content, even if they attend all the services. The fact is that only a small number of these people do any serious Bible study on their own. So when they move

over to the slavery of a cult, or when they are mesmerized by false teachers among the elite, what has happened? One thing is for sure—they did not make that move overnight. They moved to the moderate position before they plunged over the cliff to their theological death.

It seems to me that we have a task at hand. More teaching and better teaching will provide a safety net. We must not send people home empty and confused. We must be intolerant about those things that hinder people from growing spiritually. In the long run, gossip and destructive criticism are worse than adultery. In fact, James calls it “spiritual adultery.” Every tragedy discussed in these few paragraphs could be prevented by paying serious attention to our preaching and teaching.

“My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1).

Resolution on Conference Theme: Contending for the Faith

Whereas we are the unworthy recipients by grace alone of the faith once delivered to the saints, that body of doctrine founded on the inerrant, authoritative, all-sufficient, God-breathed Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the common confession of all true believers and the propositional divine truth upon which our common salvation is firmly established (Jude 3);

And whereas the faith is a gracious trust, which we must pass on to generations that follow us by guarding it from the corruption of “profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith” (1 Tim. 6:20-21);

And whereas it is our desire that churches be established in the faith, increasing in number as God gives the increase (Acts 16:5), and that the souls of God’s people would be confirmed and exhorted to continue in the faith, for it is through much tribulation that we should enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22);

And whereas we live in a day when the faith has come under fierce attack from the kingdom of darkness through unbelief, false teaching, open rebellion, seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1), the influence of men who, like Elymas the sorcerer, seek to turn people away from the faith (Acts 13:8),

or who, like Jannes and Jambres, resist the truth with corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith (2 Tim. 3:8);

And whereas, in the face of these attacks, too many from the side of truth have compromised the faith, refusing to earnestly contend for it, choosing rather to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons (James 2:1), and unwilling to suffer in the patience of the saints, while keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12);

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Independent Baptist Fellowship of North America, gathered in our Annual Conference in Gettysburg, PA, June 17-19, 2014, determine to heed Scripture’s command to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3); that we confidently confess that if some do not believe, their unbelief shall never make the faith of God of none effect (Rom. 3:3); and that, living by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2:20) and striving together for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27), we determine to follow the example of the apostle Paul, who fought the good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7), and to heed his encouraging charge: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

Resolution on the Right and Responsibility of Franchise

Whereas “there is no power but of God” and “the powers that be are ordained of God” (Rom. 13:1), and whereas this axiom of biblical theology reveals the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, above all other forms of authority, including the separate realms of civil governments and local churches;

And whereas civil governments so ordained under the lordship of Christ are responsible to Him as His ministers for good, to render praise to those who are good and the threat of the sword over those who do evil (Rom. 13:2-4);

And whereas the form of civil government, which the providence of God has ordained for our nation, is a constitutional republic, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, one in which each citizen has the right and responsibility to cast his vote and elect his leaders, making the people with their right of franchise the ultimate authority of our land as ordained by God;

And whereas the God of heaven, who ordained the people of this land to be her ultimate authority, has blessed her with manifold benefits issuing from political doctrines that promote the cause of freedom, such as the endowments of the Creator—certain unalienable rights, government’s need for the consent of the governed, separation of powers, federalism, and constitutional

limitations on the power and reach of government;

And whereas this same God will hold the people of this land accountable for how well they execute their responsibilities and care for their privileges as the land’s God-ordained authority, just as He will hold Nero of Paul’s day accountable for how he ruled;

And whereas the people of our nation, among whom we stand as salt in the earth and light in the world (Matt. 5:13-14), possess a singular tool for executing their responsibilities and caring for their privileges as the God-ordained power of the land—the right of franchise;

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Independent Baptist Fellowship of North America, gathered in our Annual Conference in Gettysburg, PA, June 17-19, 2014, determine to faithfully, prayerfully, and thankfully cast our vote, that we recognize in the fear of the Lord the account we will have to give some day for how well we served the role God has ordained for us as part of the highest civil authority of this land, and that we will hold accountable our elected leaders with our vote, assessing whether they have remembered to serve the cause of freedom, and whether they have recognized their subservience to the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who ordained that they should lead, and Who judges the nations of men with righteous judgment (Psalm 2).

June of 2015

“Occupy Till I Come” Luke 19:13

Make plans now to join us in Winston-Salem for our 25th Annual Conference focusing on eschatology and prophecy.

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