



Axioms of separation

By J. E. Ashbrook

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I was reared as one of four children in a pastor's home in Columbus, Ohio. Some pastors' children seem to find it a traumatic experience. For me, it was a very happy one. I owe more to my father than to any other man. My boyhood summers were spent working on my grandfather's old-fashioned farm. I would not trade that experience.

I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour beside a chair in the choir room of the Glen Echo United Presbyterian Church when I was twelve. Shortly thereafter my father left that denomination in protest of its apostasy and founded the Calvary Bible Church of Columbus, where he served the rest of his life.

During World War II I attended North-western University, courtesy of the U.S. Navy. I graduated in 1946, having earned a B.S. degree, majoring in chemical engineering. In the service God led me to Christian buddies. We encouraged one another. Barracks and ship-board Bible classes gave me a vision for serving the Lord.

After discharge from the service I spent a year as an engineer with a research institute. It was a year of struggle with the Lord's call. God made His will plain. In 1951 I graduated from Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware. It was an education in the old Princeton tradition of language, exegesis and theology. The shadow of J. Gresham Machen still hung over the school, giving it a strong separatist emphasis.

On graduating from seminary I knew little about being a pastor. Fortunately, the Lord led me to a small church which knew little about being a church. I served as Pastor for forty-six years and we learned together. Not long ago I resigned the pastorate, feeling that the church should be in younger hands. Since 1968 I have had a happy association with the men of the Ohio Bible Fellowship. These brethren have been drawn together by the desire to take a clear-cut stand on the issues of the day. It is my hope that this small booklet may encourage pastors and their laymen to do the same. It will not be popular. Taking a stand never is; but, as stalwart old Luther said: "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen!"



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Introduction

One spring morning in 1940 my father and mother drove to the United Presbyterian parsonage at Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Father was on trial before a committee of the Presbytery of that denomination. In 1937 the United Presbyterian Church of North America sold its soul by joining the Federal Council of Churches. The missions in the Church had become increasingly modernistic. In Egypt, where the Church had one of its larger works, they had agreed with the Government to hire Moslem teachers for mission schools. An increasing number of the preachers knew more about masonry than miracles. Dad protested all of these things. As a result he was brought to trial.

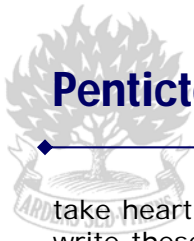
The Pastor at Reynoldsburg was the secretary of the Commission trying Father's case. He had phoned Dad to say that, if he came to Reynoldsburg, he might see a copy of the decision which they would present to the Presbytery. The decision was that he should be dismissed from the denomination for refusing absolute loyalty to its program. Arriving at the parsonage, Dad asked if he might have the decision for a few hours to take counsel on it. He also had the foresight to have a photostatic copy made.

At the Presbytery meeting some days later the Commission reported that it had not been able to reach a decision. The members of that body knew that Father's charges were correct. They did not like them either; but, in loyalty to the denomination, they had to judge him wrong. After they denied having reached a decision, Father rose, was recognized, and produced the decision they denied having reached. That day my father died as a denominational minister and was born a separatist.

I recall arguing with my father about the doctrine of separation on a Saturday evening in the spring of 1945. It was wartime. I was a serviceman stationed in the Chicago area. The bright spot in my week was attending the Chicagoland Youth for Christ Rally in Orchestra Hall on Saturday night. My father came to town and attended one of those rallies with another Navy buddy and me. The leader that night recognized the number of Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, United Brethren and Bible Church people present. Over refreshments after the service Dad began to point out that it was wrong to treat apostate churches as if they were the same as fundamental churches. I was angry, although I tried to hide it. I had gotten a blessing from the service, and I was sure my dad was wrong. What aggravated me even more was that I couldn't argue with the Scriptures he gave.

Sometime later, in 1948, I sat in a classroom at Faith Theological Seminary taking a course called "Modern Religious Problems." The teacher, a round-faced, affable man by the name of Carl McIntire, sat on the edge of the desk with a large Bible open. The first-year class, most of them service veterans, pressed him with arguments in favor of staying in the main-line denominations to rescue them. The class argued for Youth for Christ, cooperative evangelism, Billy Graham, Wheaton College and various local issues. He rarely gave opinions. He just used his Bible to give verses and principles. The Word of God cut down our human reasoning, our theories and our arrogance.

So, dear reader, if you get irritated at some of the things I point out in this booklet, I will



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take heart. I felt the same way toward those who pointed them out to me. However, as I write these words, looking back over thirty-seven years in the pastorate, I praise God for those who pointed me to the truth of Biblical separation. Separation is the doctrine which stands at the crossroads between fundamentalism and new evangelicalism. But for those men, I might have been a new evangelical.

There are two distinct areas in the matter of Biblical separation. The reason for both areas is the holiness of God. The first area is that of personal separation. That is a separation from the works of the flesh in which we formerly walked, to the fruit of the Spirit produced in us. Many a testimony has been tragically destroyed by a lack of personal separation. The second area is that of ecclesiastical separation. It deals with such things as separation from unbelief, apostate churches, denominations and disobedient brethren. This booklet deals with the second area.

This booklet is not meant to be an expose of men and movements. However, when it is necessary to illustrate points, I have used actual incidents, usually of my own experience. This may anger some. In the matter of separation, I have found that most brethren agree in the exposition of Scripture. But, when you begin to apply the doctrine to specific situations and individuals, the controversy comes.

This booklet is not a scholarly tome. You would have figured that out. It is a preacher's booklet. I have not tried to be exhaustive in scope, nor explicit in detail. It is my hope that these words may arrest some pastors and congregations at the fork of the road between fundamentalism and new evangelicalism. It is my hope that some beleaguered young fundamentalists may read it and be encouraged that they are on the right road. If God uses it, even with a few, I will count my writing time worthwhile.

CHAPTER I

SEPARATION FROM APOSTASY

My title, *Axioms of Separation*, mixes metaphors. I have heard that is not good. "Axioms" comes from geometry and "separation" comes from theology. My exposure to plane geometry came in a lacklustre classroom at the west end of our high school building under the tutelage of a man we students called "77 Finger McCoy." That was a cruel title, given because arthritis had warped our teacher's fingers in the shape of 7's. It was under Mr. McCoy that I became aware of axioms, theorems and corollaries. I learned that an axiom is a self-evident truth, like "things equal to the same thing are equal to each other." It is my thesis in this booklet that, in the realm of separation, there are a number of self-evident truths. It is amazing that they are so neglected and scorned by the Church of our day. I would like to have you follow me through your Bible as I seek to set forth some axioms of separation.

AXIOM #1: SCRIPTURE FORBIDS USTO HAVE FELLOWSHIPWITH UNBELIEF.

There is one letter in the New Testament written to a lady. II John begins:



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“The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth:”

The commentaries like to argue over whether this was a specific Christian lady or whether the Apostle addressed the Church as an “elect lady.” That need not affect our discussion. The key point is that either the lady or the Church was given to extending Christian fellowship to professed Christians who came by. John’s command in the Book is that such Christian fellowship should not be extended to religious unbelievers or apostates. Verses 7-11 read:

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 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.”

Many people in that day called themselves Christians. But already, some of them did not hold to the Scriptural doctrine of Christ. John advised this lady, and us too, to have nothing to do with those who do not hold the Scriptural doctrine of Christ.

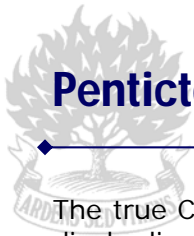
What is the Bible doctrine of Christ? The keynotes would be that He was the eternal God, that through the virgin birth He became just as fully man, that He lived a holy and miraculous life, that He died for our sins, that He rose from the grave in the body in which He was crucified, that He appeared to those who knew Him best, that He ascended to God the Father’s right hand where He ministers on our behalf and that He is coming again to take us to the place He has prepared.

The Scriptures teach us, here in II John, that if a man comes to us claiming to be a Christian but not subscribing to this doctrine of Christ, we are to have nothing to do with him.

GROUNDS FOR SEPARATION

Let me give an example. The media and the apostate church have granted sainthood to Martin Luther King. However, the National Observer for December 30, 1963, gave his doctrine of Christ:

“What set Jesus apart, he believes, was Jesus ‘unique goodness. ‘I don’t think anyone else can be Jesus. He was one with God in purpose. He so submitted His will to God’s will that God revealed His divine plan to man through Jesus.’ In this sense, says Dr. King, Jesus was divine. But Dr. King rejects the virgin birth of Christ as literal fact. The early Christians, he says, had noticed the moral uniqueness of Jesus; to make this uniqueness appear plausible, they devised a mythological story of Jesus ‘biological uniqueness.’”



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The true Christian has his line drawn for him right there. He does not have to analyze civil disobedience or communist front connections. God's Word says, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."

WHAT IS APOSTASY?

A paragraph back I used the word "apostate." Let me pause for a definition, for that term will occur other times. The Greek word behind apostasy means "a falling away," or "a defection." My definition would be that apostasy is the departure from spiritual truth by individuals, churches, or organizations which once possessed the truth. The major portion of professing Christianity in our nation and world today would be correctly termed apostate. The first two places where apostasy always departs from Bible truth are the inspiration of the Word of God and the deity of Jesus Christ. Tragically, Martin Luther King's view of Christ is not unique. It was the view which he was taught in Crozer Seminary, a leading school of the American Baptist Convention. It would be the view of the apostasy about us.

At the Northern Baptist Convention gathering in 1922, the conservatives felt that the Convention could be returned to theological orthodoxy by adopting the New Hampshire Confession of Faith as a doctrinal basis. Dr. W. B. Riley of Minneapolis was the spokesman chosen to read the Confession on the floor. With his imposing voice and figure, he gave the Confession a reading like it had never had before. When he finished, William Colgate (of toothpaste fame), the Treasurer of the Convention, moved to the podium and with contempt said: "Hmm, so that's the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, huh? I thought Mr. Riley was reading from the back of a Western Union Telegraph blank." Mr. Colgate spoke for apostasy - having moved from faith to sneering contempt for that faith. Scripture forbids us to have fellowship with such unbelief.

AXIOM #2: SCRIPTURE COMMANDS US TO REPROVE ASPOSTASY.

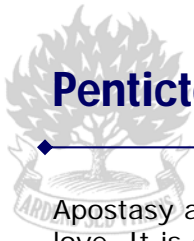
When my father's charade of a trial was over in the United Presbyterian Church, some of the denominational leaders came to him and offered to help him start a new United Presbyterian Church in the north end of Columbus on two conditions: (1) Give all mission money to United Presbyterian missions. (2) Keep quiet about the Federal Council of Churches. (The Federal Council of Churches was the forerunner of the National Council of Churches.)

WHY BE NEGATIVE?

It is obvious that one of the things which irritated apostasy was criticism of apostasy. Why be negative? Why criticize? Why not just obey God and have no fellowship with apostasy? Why not just be positive? Ephesians 5:11 says:

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

The first statement of that verse reemphasizes our first axiom. The second statement of the verse goes farther. The word translated "reprove" is **elengcho** in Greek. It means "to expose," or "to show to be guilty." We are to separate from apostasy and then to expose it by pointing at it with the finger of truth.



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Apostasy always masquerades in respectable garments. It claims to be spreading Christian love. It is eliminating prejudice. It is bringing men together. It is crusading for peace. It is cleaning up man's environment. It never unveils itself as despicable unbelief with a veneer of humanistic good works. That unveiling is a task God has assigned to us.

A NIGHT IN THE DEVIL'S CHURCH

On November 5, 1981, my wife and I attended the 31st anniversary celebration of the founding of the National Council of Churches in Cleveland. We watched a slide show which portrayed the accomplishments of the Council. It presented the Council as having single-handedly eliminated prejudice, made peace with Russia and Red China, produced a new Bible for the people and fed the hungry around the world. A faithful pastor must reprove this darkness and show his people that this is really the Devil's church, having abandoned the doctrine of Christ, and counterfeiting the fruits of the Gospel with a humanistic portfolio of good works. Suppose that you are driving down your street and come to a place where someone has removed a manhole cover. You narrowly avert disaster. You realize that, had your front wheel dropped into that hole, you might have been killed. However, you have not discharged your responsibility as a citizen by avoiding the hole. You have a responsibility to stop and see to it that authorities are notified and a barricade erected to protect your neighbors.

Likewise, as a Christian, you have a responsibility assigned by God to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness as displayed in apostate Christianity and other Satanic religions. The spirit of today is, "Don't be negative." That is not a Biblical admonition. Scripture commands us to reprove apostasy.

AXIOM #3: SCRIPTURE TEACHES US THAT WE MUST PURGE UNBELIEF IF WE CAN.

In the church at Corinth they had a flagrant case of immorality. The majority of the church was moral, but they had done nothing about the situation corrupting their fellowship. Immorality or unbelief tolerated usually builds a following. God did not command the believers at Corinth to leave the church in order to separate from the man. Rather, He commanded the believers to purge the church of the unrepentant man. I Corinthians 5:1, 2 describes the situation and 5:6, 7 instructs the church what to do:

"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you... Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

Church discipline is God's provision for keeping a church pure morally. It is also God's provision for keeping it pure doctrinally. The reason we have apostate denominations today is that it was rarely practiced. Unbelief flooded into the seminaries, flowed into the pulpits and trickled into the pews while churches and denominations failed to stem the tide by



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purging unbelief. The failure to practice Scriptural discipline will always lead to the necessity for separation.

FAILING TO OBEY

Whenever I preach on a Bible character I read the essay of Dr. Alexander Whyte in his Bible Characters. As Pastor of Free St. George's Church in Edinburgh, he was a leading figure in the Free Church of Scotland. About 1870 and thereafter higher criticism came in the church school through Professor W. Robertson Smith and later through Dr. George Adam Smith. Discipline for heresy was proposed, but Dr. Whyte took an attitude of, "boys will be boys and think of new things." He used his influence to block the purging of his church. When my father attended New College, Edinburgh, about 1919, there was nothing left but the devastation of higher critical unbelief. One wonders what might have happened had Dr. Whyte insisted, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump."

One day in 1920 a young pastor sat in the study of his parsonage at the First Baptist Church of Butler, Pa. His wife, the mother of two young daughters, was a room away dying of tuberculosis. Answering a knock at the door, the young pastor met seven men and a woman from the Pittsburgh Baptist Association. The young pastor had written a pamphlet exposing the modernism of the New World Movement, with which the Northern Baptist Convention had become involved. He believed that, if the people could be alerted, his whole denomination could be saved. His eight visitors were there to take him to task for his reproof. That young pastor was Robert T. Ketcham, the outstanding separatist leader in the early days of the GARB. He did not start out to be separatist. He started out to purge apostasy. When he saw that that could not be done he became a separatist.

CAN YOU CLEAN UP YOUR APOSTATE CHURCH?

We have a Scriptural obligation to purge unbelief. However, this is no longer an option in 95% of the churches where the problems exist. No person in a National Council of Churches church can possibly clean it up. The schools are apostate. The denominational hierarchy is apostate. The connections are apostate. Fortunately, the sincere believer who seeks to purge the apostasy will usually be purged by the apostasy and will end up a separatist. Scripture teaches us to purge unbelief if we can.

AXIOM #4: SCRIPTURE TEACHES THAT BELIEVER AND UNBELIEVER CANNOT BE YOKED TOGETHER IN SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOR.

The classic passage on this subject is II Corinthians 6:14-18. It is classic because it is conclusive. It reads:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial: or what part bath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God bath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."



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The yoke was the instrument which joined two animals together in an endeavor. We are in the world with unbelievers. You may be yoked with an unbeliever to produce a report at work. You may be yoked with an unbeliever in some community matter. You may be yoked with an unbeliever to build a fence between your two properties. However, the place where you are not to be yoked with an unbeliever is in spiritual endeavor. Look back over the passage and you will see that it talks about righteousness, light, faith and the temple of God. These are all spiritual, or religious, things. God commands us not to be involved with unbelievers in spiritual endeavors. In verse 14 He says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers..." In verse 17 He says, "Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate..." Biblical separation is God's preventive medicine to protect us from the contagion of apostasy. I like the way Dr. Paul Jackson said it years ago: "Separation, as I have so often explained, is to the whole ministry of the Word of God and the service of Jesus Christ what sanitation and sterilization are to surgery."

"I AM THE ONLY TESTIMONY IN THIS CHURCH"

This booklet will, no doubt, reach some sincere believer who maintains the only light of testimony in an apostate church. Human reason says to you, "I must stay, for ill leave, there will be no witness left in this church." Notice that your human reason is the opposite of God's clear command. God says, "Come out from among them and be ye separate." The blessing in your situation is not to stand like a noble martyr on your reason. It is to obey and come out.

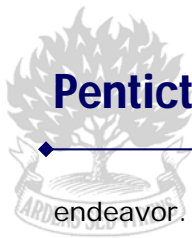
I spent my boyhood summers on my grandfather's farm. In the hills where he lived, everyone still farmed with horses. Every farmer was proud to have a matched team. We had a team of two gray mares. Others had two blacks, sorrels or roans. Farmers looked for the same size and the same color. Simply put, God says that the Christian, in spiritual endeavor, should always be matched with those who share his righteousness, light and faith.

OBEDIENCE AND ITS REWARD

One summer night in 1940, my grandfather and I were doing evening milking as my father, who had come to visit, engaged in conversation. My grandfather, a United Presbyterian elder, stormed, "William, have you taken leave of your senses? What are you doing leaving the United Presbyterian Church? Who will pay your salary? Who will give you a pension? You have four children — the oldest just ready for college. Who will educate them?" My father replied by quoting II Corinthians 6:17, 18:

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

I can add to that testimony. All four of us children made it through college and just about every one earned an advanced degree. Every bill was paid. Dad went home to be with the Lord in 1977 and Mother in 1987. That which the Lord had given them paid every bill. God keeps His promises. And the promise I am talking about right here is attached to, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," and "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Scripture teaches that believer and unbeliever cannot be yoked in spiritual



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CHAPTER II

SEPARATION FROM DISOBEDIENT BRETHREN

During the thirty-seven years I have been in the pastorate, I have been a member of two different church organizations. The first organization was a result of separation from apostasy. The second organization was a result of separation from brethren.

When I entered the ministry I joined the Independent Fundamental Churches of America. In the 1930's and early 40's many obedient pastors practiced separation from apostate denominations. They came out of the Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian, Brethren and other backgrounds. Many of those men organized new denominational affiliations, such as the General Association of Regular Baptists and the Bible Presbyterian Church. Others, having had their fill of denominationalism as well as apostasy, joined in the happy fellowship of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America.

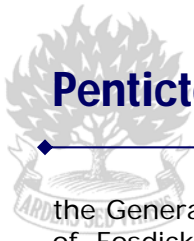
In the early 1960's that happiness was broken. There was a growing group within that fellowship, mainly led by men trained at non-separatist Dallas Theological Seminary, which desired to cease reproving apostasy. The **Voice Magazine**, official organ of the group, had always had militant articles encouraging separation from apostasy. Some articles expounded Biblical passages. Others gave factual reports of apostasy in the denominations. Others gave victorious testimonies of those who had come out. In the early 1960's a decision was made to change the image of the publication by eliminating this material. Such a decision seems to be characteristic of the decline of every separatist group. The same trend could be observed in organizations like the Bible Baptist Fellowship and the General Association of Regular Baptists. The men of the Ohio Regional of the I FCA, abetted by others of the Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Northern California Regionals, began to protest that shift. As a result of various debates on the convention floor over a period of five years, the Ohio men came to the conclusion that we were a slight minority and that the leadership of the group was on the other side. Believing that reproving apostasy was a Biblical mandate, we severed our previous connection and became the Ohio Bible Fellowship.

This introduction leads us to the question of this chapter. Is it ever right to separate from brethren? I would answer that with another axiom.

AXIOM #5: SCRIPTURE TEACHES US TO SEPARATE FROM DISOBEDIENT BRETHREN.

At this point it becomes necessary to define two terms which will become increasingly prevalent in our discussion. The terms are fundamentalism and new evangelicalism.

One of the great pitched battles for the faith raged in the 1920's between a Baptist unbeliever, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and Presbyterian believers. By a strange arrangement, Dr. Fosdick was supply pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New York City. In 1923



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the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church made an effort to remove the blasphemy of Fosdick from a Presbyterian pulpit. It passed a resolution, championed by William Jennings Bryan and Clarence E. Macartney. I quote from **The Presbyterian Conflict** by Edwin Rian:

“It called upon the Assembly to direct the Presbytery of New York to require the preaching and teaching at the First Presbyterian Church in New York City to conform to the Bible and the Westminster Confession of Faith. It also asked the Assembly to reaffirm its faith in the infallibility of the Bible, in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, in His substitutionary atonement on the cross, in His bodily resurrection and in His mighty miracles, as essential doctrines of the Holy Scripture and the Westminster Confession of Faith.”

The five points which the Assembly was asked to reaffirm became known as “the fundamentals.” The fundamentals espoused those points as the lowest common denominator of Christianity. The modernists in the Church reacted by signing the Auburn Affirmation, declaring that these five points were not essential to Christianity. By original definition, fundamentalists were those who adhered to the fundamentals.

WHAT IS FUNDAMENTALISM?

A wider definition of fundamentalism is needed today. I would argue for the following: Fundamentalism is the militant belief and proclamation of the basic doctrines of Christianity leading to a Scriptural separation from those who reject them. There are three keys to the definition. The first key is “militant belief.” The basic doctrines are held with the conviction of faith. The second key is “proclamation.” These doctrines are not only believed, but taught to congregations and preached to the lost. The third key is “separation.” A man cannot be rightly called a fundamentalist unless he practices separation where necessary.

WHAT IS NEW EVANGELICALISM?

It is also necessary to define new evangelicalism. The faint-hearted who do not want to oppose new evangelicalism love to opine, “What is new evangelicalism?...you can’t define it.” The truth is that we do not have to define it because the man who coined the term defined it for us. Fuller Seminary opened its doors in California in 1947. Its first President was Dr. Harold John Ockenga. These are his words:

“New evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. While reaffirming the theological view of fundamentalism, this address repudiated its ecclesiology and its social theory. The ringing call for a repudiation of separatism and the summons to social involvement received a hearty response from many evangelicals ... It differed from fundamentalism in its repudiation of separation and its determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day.”

When you analyze that statement you see that new evangelicalism differs from fundamentalism in three basic points.



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- (1) It repudiates separatism. This is its most fundamental premise.
- (2) It gives a summons to social involvement. This traces back to the modernist's social gospel.
- (3) It expresses a determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day. This is also a repudiation of separatism. It says, "We will not come out; we will sit down and talk."

WHICH WORDS ARE SCRIPTURAL?

Let me repeat what I have already said: separation from apostasy is the fork in the road between fundamentalism and new evangelicalism. The fundamentalist says, "I believe and will practice separation from apostasy." The new evangelical says, "I do not believe and will not practice separation from apostasy." The watchwords of the fundamentalist are: "Be not unequally yoked;" "Come out from among them;" "be ye separate;" "touch not the unclean thing;" and "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." The watchwords of the new evangelical are: "stay in;" "associate;" "infiltrate;" and "dialogue." The big difference which I see in those two sets of words is that one set is Scriptural.

When you turn to the Bible, new evangelicalism seems easily defeated. However, it has overwhelmingly won the hearts of the "Christian" public. The colleges which were fundamental in the 1940's are largely new evangelical today. The publishers which once published fundamental books are largely new evangelical. The seminaries which were fundamental are turning out men to infiltrate denominations, or to establish a new breed of non-separatist Bible churches. The music publishers who once helped us sing the glad songs of the gospel are busy setting gospel words to the world's sound. I am tempted to fill in the names; but that is not the purpose of this booklet. New evangelicalism, with its appeal to man's intellect, its invitation to the non-controversial road, its easy adjustment to the world's lifestyle and its use of the rich and famous, has captured the masses of professing Christians.

Enough for definition. Let me get back to the axiom that Scripture teaches us to separate from disobedient brethren. In 1962 I was speaker at a meeting of independent churches in Michigan. After one of my messages, the President of a Bible School accosted me with the statement: "It is not right to separate from other believers; for, after all, we will all be together in heaven. . . We believe in separation, but we do not believe in second-degree separation." That view- point is popular. It just happens to be Scripturally wrong. Let's look at some Scripture on the subject:

Matthew 18:15-17. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

This procedure is given for dealing with a disobedient brother. It does not specify what his disobedience might be. However, if he will not repent, the ultimate action is to withdraw



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Christian fellowship from him — to treat him as an heathen man or publican who is excluded from such fellowship.

I Corinthians 5:11. “But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”

Again, the man in question is a brother. If he continues in sin there is to be a separation from him.

I Timothy 6:3-5. “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings and evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

Again, it is a brother in question. In fact, the brother is a teacher. The question is one of doctrine. Paul’s command is, “from such withdraw thyself.” That is separation.

II 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.”

What do you do with a brother who will not obey the Scripture? The command is the same as in the previous passage, “withdraw yourselves.”

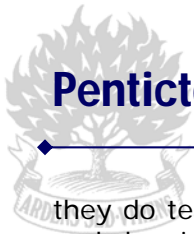
Romans 16:17. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them.”

What is the command about disobedient brethren? “Avoid them.” That is separation.

It seems very clear to me from all of these passages of Scripture that Scripture teaches us to separate from disobedient brethren. In the case of the new evangelical, the disobedience is the refusal to obey God’s commands to separate from apostasy. God says, “come out.” New evangelicalism says, “No, we will remain in; we will infiltrate it; we will associate with it; we will dialogue with it.” I submit to you that if it is not proper for fundamental believers to separate from new evangelical believers, then God has left the fundamental church with no procedure for defense against new evangelicalism.

VAN IMPE EXEGESIS

A few years ago Jack Van Impe wrote a book (entitled) Heart Disease in Christ’s Body. The book masquerades as a plea for Christian love. Actually, it is an attack on the fundamentalists who tried to help him take a separatist stand. It is not my intent to answer that book. However, in the course of his book he analyzes almost the same list of texts as I have given above. He seeks to show that none of them teach what I have pointed out that



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they do teach. He does that by limiting each text to the exact context in which it is found and denying that it might apply to anything else. In effect, he denies that there are any Biblical principles involved — only individual situations. It is enough to say that this is strange exegesis. If followed to its logical conclusion, this would mean that Bible preachers could deal only with specific problems which happened in the early church and would have no guidance on anything else.

WE WILL ALL BE TOGETHER IN HEAVEN

What about that argument, “We should not separate from other believers, for we will all be together in heaven”? It is certainly true that all believers will be together in heaven. There will be one great difference then. When we see the Lord as He is, we will see sin as God sees it, and there will be repentance where we have been in error. When that has taken place there will be no trouble being together in heaven. But if that same repentance takes place on earth right now, we will have no trouble fellowshiping on earth. The person who bears the onus of dividing the body of Christ is not the fundamentalist who insists on obeying Scripture, but the new evangelical who insists on fellowshiping out of bounds.

AXIOM #6: GOD’S WORK DONE IN GOD’S WAY PRODUCES ONLY GOOD RESULTS. GOD’S WORK DONE IN MAN’S WAY PRODUCES GOOD AND BAD RESULTS.

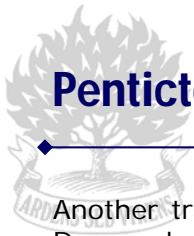
The newspapers and religious magazines furnish us with a constant chronicle of the good done by new evangelicalism. We read about thousands of decisions in the latest ecumenical crusade of Billy Graham or Luis Palau. There are glowing reports of the encouragement to missionaries at an EFMA-IFMA gathering. We read of Washington being swayed by a conference of Christian Businessmen or the National Religious Broadcasters. What do we say about these things? Is new evangelicalism now the official channel of God’s blessing?

Three observations need to be made. First, God has never called us to judge obedience by results. Christianity is not pragmatic. It is authoritarian, with God as the authority. God never has commanded us to cooperate with apostasy and then evaluate the results. Rather, God says, “Come out from among them and be ye separate.”

EVALUATING ALL THE RESULTS

The second observation is that, if something is to be measured by results, you must evaluate all the results. For instance, when new evangelicals breach the Bible principle of separation, the line between belief and unbelief is obscured. Attorney James Bennett was a prominent Christian worker in New York City in the days of Billy Graham’s first New York Crusade. I recall hearing him say that, before the Graham Crusade, the religious people of New York clearly knew which churches were fundamental and which were not. After the crusade, that line was erased. Erasing that line was not good, but evil.

Another result of ecumenical evangelism is that hungry-hearted souls are turned back into modernistic churches. Because their unbelieving church cooperated with the Crusade, it was recognized as a true church and now bears the imprimatur of the Bible-preaching evangelist. They were starving there before and have been steered back to starve some more. That is not good, but evil.



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Another tragedy is that spiritual babes are left on the doorsteps of unbelieving churches. Do you believe in abandoning babies on doorsteps? Then how can you swallow sending those who have answered a Gospel invitation back to apostate Protestant or blind Catholic churches? In recent years the Graham Crusades have openly returned new converts to Catholic parishes. That is not good, but evil.

Another consequence of ecumenical evangelism is that people are weaned from service in their local churches. Who wants to sing in a volunteer choir of 15 when they have sung with 2,500 under a world famous director? Who wants to sit in a corner and teach a class of 5 when 4,000 came forward in the Crusade? That is not good, but evil. The stress of the New Testament is on the local church, not the ecumenical crusade. If you measure by results, all of these results must be considered.

RESULTS DO NOT MEAN IT IS RIGHT

The third observation is that results do not mean that something is the will of God. In Numbers 20, when Moses attempted to get water from the rock, he disobeyed the Lord by angrily smiting the rock twice. For that disobedience God refused to allow Moses to enter the promised land. But did Moses have good results? Yes, God graciously opened the rock and quenched the thirst of millions of Israelites. The good results did not justify the wrong way in which the thing was done.

Do you see this axiom? God's work done in God's way produces only good results. God's work done in man's way produces good and bad results.

In my service days I was exposed to some of the problems of navigation by compass. I was never good at that; but I did learn that a small deviation in course would end you up hundreds of miles from where you intended to go. Back in 1948, when Dr. Ockenga determined a course for new evangelicalism, he did not intend to make much of a correction. He just intended to repudiate separatism, to add some invigorating social involvement and win over some liberals with erudite dialogue. However, that seemingly small deviation from obedience has not led many churches to a safe harbor, but it has sent thousands over the falls of compromise to reunion with apostasy.

Richard Quebedeaux, a card-carrying new evangelical, described the state of the movement a number of years ago:

“Evangelicals of the left range from moderate Republicans to democratic socialists, if not Marxists. Most affirm the nuclear family [husband, wife and children] but are at the same time open to alternative domestic life styles, from extended families to communes. Just about all of the left evangelicals are feminists and support the ordination of women, egalitarian marriage [no Scriptural order in the family], and the use of inclusive language. The old evangelical taboos against alcohol, tobacco, social dancing and the like are almost universally condemned (as binding at least). Biblical criticism, used constructively and devoutly, is employed by a great many evangelical students and scholars of the left. They recognize the marks of cultural conditioning on Scripture, and their study of the Bible is informed by their knowledge of the



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natural, social and behavioural sciences.” []are mine.

This paragraph clearly describes the destructive effect of new evangelicalism—not in my words, but theirs.

As I write this booklet in 1989, we have witnessed 41 years of new evangelicalism. In 1948 when new evangelicalism took its divergent fork in the road, it was thought to be a slight course correction. Now, many new evangelicals find themselves on a totally different road. Unless fundamentalists obey the Bible by separating from disobedient brethren we will find ourselves with them on a broad road, totally different from the one on which we set out.

Satan is always pushing his program. He is always inviting fundamentalists to cooperate, join, associate, infiltrate, dialogue and stay in. Thousands of fundamentalist pastors, churches, schools and missions have been sucked into his whirlpool of compromise. Defections continue daily. These men and groups might have been spared for glorious victories had they obeyed the simple Scriptural principle of separation from disobedient brethren.

Whenever I sit at breakfast and see the picture of the Quaker on a box of cereal I think of Henry Parsons Crowell, the man who built the Quaker Oats Company. He was a godly Presbyterian layman and a great benefactor of Moody Bible Institute. He lived through the days of the battle for the faith in the Presbyterian Church, USA. He left that body when the apostate Henry Sloane Coffin was elected Moderator. His biographer, Richard Ellsworth Day, wrote the following:

“He realized that not only must Faith be careful to select workers and leaders who are Bible believers; but these workers and leaders themselves must be intolerant of unbelievers in office! If they were tolerant it could bring defeat just as effectively as if they themselves were infidels. Therefore, FAITH MUST NOT SUPPORT MEN IN AUTHORITY WHO, THOUGH THEY ARE THEMSELVES BIBLE BELIEVERS, ARE TOLERANT OF OTHERS IN POSITIONS OF TRUST AND AUTHORITY WHO DO NOT SO BELIEVE... Mr. Crowell saw that the battle against the Leaven of the Sadducees was being lost in Christendom today by reason of — Tolerance toward believers who were tolerant toward unbelievers.”¹

Crowell died in 1944, four years before the term new evangelical was coined. However, he perfectly described the new evangelical soft spot and saw that it was anathema to the preservation of the faith. Were he alive today we believe he would be grieved to see the institution to which he gave so much in the grasp of new evangelicalism. He expressed the truth of our axiom that we must separate from disobedient brethren who continue in toleration of unbelief.

¹ I am not sure if there should be some inner quotes in this quotation. I have reproduced the capital letters just as they are given in Day's biography. I could wish that every true believer in the Southern Baptist convention would digest this quotation — with or without proper quotation marks.



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Chapter III

PRACTICING SEPARATION PRACTICALLY

There are many different abilities and attitudes you need to serve the Lord. One of them, which is much unheralded, is the ability to say, “No!” You need it many times. The early new evangelicals opined that the fundamentalists said “No” to the modernists with unnecessary harshness. Let me point out that, when Scriptural obedience is concerned, it is far better to say “No!” with ruffles and flourishes, than it is to disobey God by saying “Yes.”

ECUMENISM IN THE AIR

We are living in what the Bible calls “the last days.” Satan is building the one world church which will be revealed in all of its ugliness during the days of the great tribulation. It is the aim of our enemy to attach every church to the ecumenical monstrosity. He has the National Council of Churches. He has the World Council of Churches. The Roman Catholic Church is now being tied in. The charismatic churches are being attached with the cement of experience. He is now using the ploy of praying for peace to amalgamate the heathen religions into the grand scheme. The pressure is on, and he wants to make connections with your church and mine. This pressure will increase every day until Christ takes His bride home.

The only thing which will keep your church from being swept into the Satanic counterfeit is the ability to say “no.” I would like to set forth four practical axioms on that subject.

AXIOM #7: DO NOT AFFILIATE YOUR CHURCH WITH ANY CHURCH, MISSION, MOVEMENT OR EVANGELISTIC EFFORT WHICH DOES NOT FULLY BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD.

There will always be movements which will want your church to join to support good causes. There will be movements like the American Family Association which opposes pornography, fights abortion and takes a stand against television filth. These are good causes with which you probably agree; but the hodgepodge of belief brought together to fight the “good cause” will join you with priests and bishops — from apostate Methodists to charismatic Catholics. There will be movements like the John Birch Society which will seek your church to join the fight against communism. That is a good cause, but you will find that such groups want your support without your gospel. There will be political movements to elect a good man. You may work for and vote for that man; but the good man of the world will always betray you. These movements have Christians in them. They will approach you through these Christians; but if the group is not fully Bible-believing, you will be burned.

THE GOOD CAUSE SYNDROME

In II Chronicles 18 godless Ahab trapped godly Jehoshaphat with the “good cause” syndrome. The Syrians held the border town of Ramoth-gilead. For the safety of both Israel and Judah, that town needed to be secured. On the basis of that good cause Jehoshaphat joined with Ahab. Jehoshaphat’s faith was compromised as he listened to Ahab’s false prophets. With a believer’s discernment he saw that they were not men of God. A true prophet, Micaiah, was summoned to the scene and spoke the truth; but, by that time, Je-



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Jehoshaphat was so enmeshed with his compromise that he stood with Ahab instead of Micahiah. Compromise ties your tongue so that you cannot rebuke evil. As Charles Spurgeon said, "Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it." God, in His grace, delivered Jehoshaphat. However, when King Jehoshaphat arrived home at Jerusalem, God sent Jehu the prophet to meet him as a reception committee with the words:

"Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord." II Chron. 19:2

Jehoshaphat's kingdom was never the same after that. I think he would have denied loving Ahab. He might have said that he could hardly stand him. But, he said "Yes," when he should have said "No." A positive example is found in Ezra 4:1-4:

"Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do, and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our god; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building."

Again, there was a good cause involved and help was needed. Apparently, these people did worship God in some sense; but Zerubbabel correctly saw that they did not fully believe the Word of God. Zerubbabel's "no" cost him lots of trouble from his enemies. But it kept God's hand of blessing on his enterprise. He did not "love them that hate the Lord" or accept their help.

I read somewhere that "Evangelism is the soft underbelly of fundamentalism." (If I remembered who said it I would gladly give credit.) That is true. Fundamentalists ought to love souls and be soul winners. In my experience with fundamental brethren I find that true. The line which has trapped more pastors into some endeavor of ecumenical evangelism is, "Brother, this is for the cause of souls." Do not allow any cause, even the cause of souls, to lead you into disobedience to God's command.

There is one more practical thing to remember on the "good cause" syndrome. You can be for or against a cause without joining anything. You do not have to join "Right to Life" to fight abortion. You need not join a society to fight communism or an association to be against pornography.

Let me give a practical hint to young pastors. If you are the least bit uncertain about any invitation, say, "Let me think about it for a day, and I will call you back." That will let you weigh the matter with your Bible and prayer. Remember, do you affiliate your church with any church, movement or evangelistic effort which does not fully believe the Word of God?



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The world desires to use you. Your concern must be to keep your work so that you are sure God can use you.

AXIOM #8: DO NOT AFFILIATE YOUR CHURCH WITH ANY CHURCH, MISSION, MOVEMENT OR EVANGELISTIC EFFORT WHICH DOES NOT PRACTICE BIBLICAL SEPARATION.

Missions, movements and evangelistic efforts will come to you seeking your support. Some of them will appear to have good policies, but they do not want to declare themselves separatists. Beware! Actively reproofing apostasy is a part of Biblical separation. If any group will not pay that price it will lead to the assembling of a mixed multitude.

SILENT ON SEPARATION SEMINARS

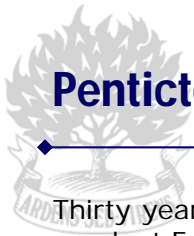
Seminars for God's people are big these days. There are church growth seminars, counseling seminars, and things like The Institute of Basic Youth Conflicts. Most of these seminars multiply registrations by appealing to a broad clientele. They take no stand on separation from apostasy and compromise. As a result, the fundamentalist enticed to the seminar may have a Methodist on the right, a Catholic priest on the left and new evangelicals fore and aft. The seminars assemble the Billy Graham ecumenical crowd with fundamentalists added. Why does that crowd feel comfortable together? There is no note of reproofing apostasy. It has been quietly agreed that, for the sake of the ministry, Ephesians 5:11 will not be practiced.

The Gideons are a good example of the problem. Putting Bibles in hotel rooms is a good cause. However, the Gideons usually want to be in the First Fundamental Church on Sunday evening after being in the First Modernistic Church on Sunday morning. (It has to be in that order, for the modernistic church does not have an evening service.) Allowing them to bridge the gulf of separation says to the whole community, "Fundamental churches and modernistic churches are about the same... they support the same things."

A few years ago the Moral Majority was the rage. The expressed goals of the group appealed to fundamentalists who were against pornography, homo- sexuality and abortion and were for restoring morality, strengthening defense and opposing communism. Why not join it? Answer: It would not practice Biblical separation. Any fundamentalist knows that we are a minority. You cannot practice Biblical separation and build a majority because we are a minority. The world's way is always to win with a majority. Stop to think for a moment. Can you name anytime in Scripture where God followed that policy? Charles Spurgeon said: "Long ago I ceased to count heads. Truth is usually in the minority in this evil world." The battles of Scripture were always won by an obedient minority, not a diverse majority. Do not affiliate your church with any church, mission, movement or evangelistic effort which does not practice Biblical separation.

Let me introduce another axiom right here. Perhaps it is not really another. It is almost a corollary of the previous axiom.

AXIOM #9: YOU CANNOT PRESERVE A POSITION WITHOUT CRUSADING FOR IT.



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Thirty years ago, as a young man, I was elected to the Executive Committee of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America. A new president was elected at the same time. The new president, a godly man, professed to believe in separation. He said that he wanted to keep the group clean, but that there had been too much talk about apostasy and separation. He declared that the group should take a stand quietly, without being offensive. Under that leadership the IFCA ceased to be an outspoken fundamentalist group in the front rank of the battle. "Be positive" is one of the world's watchwords. Trying to take a stand, while remaining all positive, is the halfway house between fundamentalism and new evangelicalism. It always leads to the weaker position, not the stronger one.

Thousands of churches have fallen to new evangelicalism while trying to be silent fundamentalists. People and groups like Billy Graham, Christianity Today, the National Association of Evangelicals, the World Evangelical Fellowship, the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association, Wheaton College and Fuller Seminary have put on a massive blitz to sell the Christian world on new evangelicalism. Fundamentalism met this blitz with a great silence. Some voices were raised; but the majority of fundamentalists tried to maintain their position by standing silently. The Bible-believing church was stolen by vocal new evangelicalism. You cannot preserve a position without crusading for it.

TIGERS TO PUSSY CATS

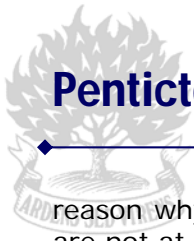
In the early days of fundamentalism its leaders were known as being "fighting fundamentalists." The fundamentalists were namers of names. They identified liberals. They quoted their infidelity. They reprovved apostasy. New evangelicalism criticized that. They accused fundamentalists of being unkind to the liberals. They said that it was wrong to name names. Under the pressure of this criticism many of the tigers of fighting fundamentalism have turned into the pussy cats of quiet fundamentalism. Many a quiet fundamentalist now purrs on the hearth of new evangelicalism. The last forty years of church history prove that you cannot preserve a position without crusading for it.

AXIOM #10: WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T JOIN.

I believe that every Christian ought to be a member of a Bible-believing church. If there is not one he can conscientiously join, he ought to be the spark to start one. Beyond that, what do you have to join? Satan is a joiner. He is always associating, affiliating, amalgamating to put together his one-world religious system. Thousands of invitations to join are his opportunities to compromise.

How does God usually guide us in this age? Does He guide by visions, dreams, circumstances or neon signs? No. As we read God's Word and pray about a decision, God gives, or withholds, His peace in that matter. What I am saying is that if you do not have perfect peace about it, don't join. You don't have to join anything. You will never have to apologize for what you don't join.

In any area there are fellowship groups, Christian school groups, legal groups, and moral cause groups. I am not saying that all of these are bad. If there is no obvious Scriptural



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reason why you should not join, pray about it and think it through Biblically. Then, if you are not at peace about the whole thing, don't join.

Chapter IV

WHAT SEPARATION IS NOT

I have read good articles on separation where the author took a firm stand and then retracted it at the end of the article. You may have read the title to this chapter and decided that I am about to take back what I have written. No, I believe what I have written; but I do have an axiom on the subject of what separation is not.

AXIOM #11: SEPARATION IS NOT THE ANSWER TO EVERY DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN BRETHREN.

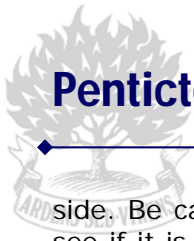
What kind of people are Biblical separatists? They are men with strong convictions. They are resolute. They have something of Elijah, John, Paul and Jude in their natures. The very traits God uses to make them strong must be controlled or separation can turn to fragmentation. Let me set forth four areas in which separation is not the answer.

PERSONAL DISAGREEMENT

First, separation is not the answer to personal disagreement. Sharp arguments, wounded feelings and hot words are not as rare as they ought to be among good separatists. Being agreed in important matters does not stop such things. The answer to such problems is not separation, but face-to-face talk, confession, forgiveness, prayer and forgetting. When I started in the ministry 37 years ago my father said, "Son, if you will settle your problems Scripturally you can spend a long time in the same church. If you don't care to do that you had best keep your suitcase packed and be ready to move every three years." I have spent my 37 years in the same pastorate. It has not been without many a night spent seeking out brethren to get things right. I have played the part of the wounder and of the wounded. Both have an equal obligation to find one another and get things right.

DIFFERENT DECISIONS

Second, separation is not the answer to a difference in decisions. In any fellowship of fundamental men there will be differences of opinion. Separation does not standardize all decisions. Two separatist brethren may consider the same mission board. One may decide to support that board, and the other to withdraw his support. There is danger in seeking to make your brother see the same thing you see and at the same moment. In my first college experience I was educated as an engineer. All of the answers to problems were mathematical. I have set forth "Axioms of Separation." I believe that they are definite; but they are not always mathematical. There has to be a charity in coming to our conclusions. It is easy to separate from a brother because he has a speaker we would not have, supports a mission we would not support or recommends a school we would not recommend. Every separatist has made his share of mistakes over the years. I have had speakers, supported missions and recommended schools which I should not have, support or recommend today. But I am a separatist even though I may be a slow learner. If a man has the conviction of separation from Scripture he will learn by mistakes and come out on the right



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side. Be careful not to run up the red flag for every mistake or differing decision. Wait to see if it is a pattern. If a man always comes out on the wrong side, it will be obvious that he is new evangelical, and it will be time for separation.

STANDARDS

Separation is not the answer to a difference in our standards. Our slovenly world has forced us into standards for such entities as camps and Christian schools. We dare not neglect such things. We cannot form Christian character without the confrontation of good rules. However, standards can and have become a battleground among good men. No two churches, schools or camps will have exactly the same set of practices. All of us must be battling the world's attack on Biblical holiness; but when we work together, we will have to adjust to one another and come to agreement on what we will expect as a group. This is not an area for separation, but for prayerful consensus. That will always require some compromise; and in that context, it is not a dirty word.

DENOMINATIONAL DISTINCTIVES

Separation is not the answer to denominational distinctives. Can we fellowship together in spite of denominational distinctives? There is a difference between apostasy and truly held Biblical convictions. The name "fundamentalist" came out of the context of Presbyterian separatists. There are independent fundamentalists, Baptist fundamentalists, Methodist fundamentalists and other varieties. Differences in the mode of ordinances, church government and forms of worship have nothing to do with separation. One could wish that Zwingli and Luther might have agreed to disagree on the Lord's Supper without a separation.

Amos 3:3 asks the question, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" That text is sometimes interpreted to mean that if we disagree in any way, we must separate. The passage does not teach that. Study the context of the passage and you will see that God was dealing with the apostasy of Israel and not with denominational distinctives or minor disagreements. There is a proper ecumenism of separatist brethren as well as a false ecumenism of Satan's system.

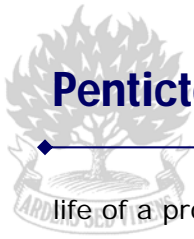
Separation is God's answer to apostasy. Separation is God's answer to the problem of disobedient brethren who will not separate from apostasy. But, separation is not the answer to every disagreement between brethren.

Chapter V

THE NAMELESS PROPHET²

As you read this chapter I would like you to open your Bible to I Kings 13. I want you to journey back with me through the musty corridors of time to relive three scenes from the

² If you know me personally you have probably heard this message preached. God laid it on my heart about 1962, and I have preached it almost everywhere I have gone since that time. The reaction to this message, preached at a National IFCA Convention in California, started my own demise from the organization. A new member of the Executive Committee, from which I was retiring, said, "That message would take the IFCA back twenty years." This was at the same time that the leadership was smugly repeating that familiar cliché of organizations, "We stand where we have always stood."



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life of a prophet whom God has allowed to be nameless.

To set the scene of the chapter we must take our minds back to the closing days of Solomon's reign. They were not his best days, for he had succumbed to the temptations of the flesh. Instead of being satisfied with the abundant riches God had given him, he determined to gather more by laying an oppressive burden of taxation on his people. As long as Solomon lived, the rebellion was hidden. Upon his death, taxation became the issue of the hour. That issue set the scene for a young opportunist by the name of Jeroboam to seize ten of the twelve tribes.

I Kings 13 takes us into Israel, the Northern Kingdom, the new kingdom of Jeroboam. Jeroboam was by no means godly; but he was by all means wise in the ways of the world. He saw clearly that if his people were to journey to Jerusalem for the historic feasts, the nation would soon unite, and he would be a king without a kingdom.

We read his solution to the problem in I Kings 12:28, 29, 32:

"Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. . . And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar."

His solution was an idolatrous religion designed to counterfeit the things to which his people were accustomed.

God's answer to this crisis was what it usually is, a man. We meet him in I Kings 13:1:

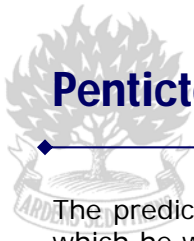
"And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense."

A SCENE OF VICTORY

This brings us to the first of our three scenes. We see the nameless prophet in a scene of victory. It appears to me that the day on which this scene took place may well have been the great dedication day of the altar of Bethel. King Jeroboam himself was present to lead his people in the idolatry. Uninvited, our prophet strode to the center of the stage and did four things.

His first action was to make a prediction.

"And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."



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The prediction was very definite. It promised the birth of a man, identified the family into which he would be born, gave his name and told exactly what he would do. Three hundred years later that prophecy was fulfilled. You may read it in II Kings 23:15, 16.

But, people are hardly moved by predictions which are one hundred years down the road. So, the prophet's second action was to give a sign. That sign was not years down the road. It was immediately fulfilled as verses 2-4 tell us:

"And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. And it came to pass, when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord."

God had given this prophet some credentials to present and he did so right there. There was a terrifying crack, the top of the altar shattered and the ashes went pouring down through the split. At almost the same instant the King cried out a command to arrest the prophet. The arm with which he pointed out his victim withered in place so he could not draw it in again. This introduces our prophet's next action.

The prophet's third action was to pray for a healing. We read it in verse 6.

"And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before."

I must admit that this part of the story is always disappointing to me. I hope that the prophet will not pray a word and will leave Jeroboam standing there with his arm at half mast. I hope that, for the rest of his life, every time he tries to turn over in bed he will be reminded not to lay hold of prophets. But, God is more gracious than his servants. He restored Jeroboam's arm.

A TRIUMPHANT REFUSAL

At this point in the passage our prophet did one more thing, and it is the key to the whole chapter. The prophet's fourth action was to make a refusal. King Jeroboam was scared to death. God had fulfilled a prediction before his eyes. His arm had been instantly withered by God and then graciously healed. He knew that prophet was God's man. He spoke to his tormentor in a conciliatory tone saying, "Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward."

Right here we come to this prophet's finest hour. I think he stuck his index finger in King Jeroboam's mustache and waggled it, and he spoke the words of verses 8 and 9 with obvi-



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ous contempt.

“And the man of God said unto the King, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so it was charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.”

Then, turning on his heel, our prophet departed the scene. I have called this, “a scene of victory.” It is always victory in spiritual things when a man simply obeys the Lord. I hope that you see, in this booklet, that my crusade is one for simple obedience to God’s Word. New evangelicalism takes God’s Word and mixes it with equal parts of human reason and modern culture to determine the way to go. We fundamentalists need to be reminded that we have only to take God’s Word and obey it. That is victory.

Observe carefully, in this first scene, that the temptation to compromise came from the enemy. Jeroboam represents apostasy, unbelief, counterfeit religion. In our day the National Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement are the sworn enemies of the Bible-believing church. Yet the enemy sings to us the siren song of cooperation. There has never been a time in this dispensation of grace when the enemies of the Gospel have so actively sought the support of the Lord’s people. The doctrine-free, false prophets of ecumenism are the respected apostles of our age. They turn to us with invitations to cooperate, share pulpits, join campaigns, reach communities and support good causes. The new evangelicals have heeded these siren songs and gone over to dialogue. The fundamentalist, as the prophet of old, must see them as the Devil’s invitations.

PATTING WOLVES

Years ago I sat at our dinner table with a young man trained in Fuller Seminary. Our guest said, “I think of myself as a fundamentalist; but I have to confess that fundamentalists have been very uncharitable in their approach to the liberals. They have refused to dialogue with them and have failed to demonstrate Christian love toward them.” He had absorbed the Fuller philosophy. Let me ask you, where in Scripture do you find the teaching that we are to treat false teachers with charity and the apostles of apostasy with Christian love? That is exactly the opposite of the teaching of II John on which we have already commented. Scripture terms the purveyors of false doctrine as “grievous wolves.” The faithful shepherds of history have not dialogued with grievous wolves.

Had our prophet taken his dramatic stand against Jeroboam’s heresy and then gone home with him to dinner, his actions would have belied his condemnation. God had protected him from that with clear orders. He has done the same for us.

I always wish that this chapter ended at verse 10. It doesn’t. As we move on we see a second scene. We see the nameless prophet in a scene of compromise. That seems impossible.

A SCENE OF COMPROMISE

The temptation to compromise comes from a new direction. Listen to verses 11 and 12:



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“Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.”

I wish that we might draw back the curtains of time to get a glimpse of the ministry of this old man. I am sure that, at onetime, he had stood in the front of the battle for God. But something happened. Persecution had come with Jeroboam. It was easy to lose your head if you opposed the idolatry of Jeroboam. This old man had decided that it was expedient to be quiet. So, retiring to his peaceful home, he ceased to speak for God. That had an effect on his home. We see his sons returning from an idol feast — a strange place for prophet’s boys. But, more than that, his decision had an effect on his heart. When he cut himself off from the opposition, he also cut himself off from the fellowship of strong men. His heart was starved for that fellowship. He longed to talk with a brother believer. Then, his boys came home from the feast and told their story. His heart leaped within him. He must talk to that prophet.

Right here we meet a new kind of temptation. In this second scene the temptation to compromise was the temptation which came from a friend. When we know we face an enemy our guard goes up. When we know we face a friend our guard goes down. So it was here.

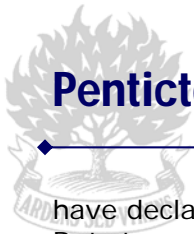
The sons of the old prophet saddled the family ass for him and he set off to overtake the younger prophet as fast as the little donkey could go. He found him sitting under a tree taking a break from his journey and gave a simple invitation. “Come home with me, and eat bread.” The younger prophet recognized a brother. This was no Jeroboam. However, he declined the invitation and explained his refusal by quoting the same orders he had quoted to Jeroboam. I am sure that God had given those orders to protect this prophet from the invitation of Jeroboam. But, those same orders protected him from the temptation of a friend.

The path of compromise is always down. The old man who had begun on the road of compromise with his silence walked another mile with a lie as we read in v18:

“He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.”

Tragedy struck right here. Our nameless prophet believed the lie and went back to dinner in the old man’s house. What caused this fearless prophet to disobey God’s orders? He was blinded by the fact that the lie came from a friend.

The story of I Kings 13 would be very simple if it had only two men in it — the nameless prophet and Jeroboam, the apostate. However, that is not the picture. There is another man somewhere in between. That is also the picture of our own day. On the one hand, we



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have declared fundamentalism. On the other hand, we have declared liberalism or unbelief. But, tragedy of tragedies, we have a mighty camp somewhere in between. That is what new evangelicalism is. These are brethren who have decided to ignore, and thus disobey, the clear commands of the Word of God about separation. They would have us ignore those commands too. The story of the nameless prophet is repeated.

WOULD A BROTHER LIE?

Is it possible that brethren would lie to us? Yes. As a pastor, I have had many people speak to me about unscriptural conduct and say, "Pastor, we prayed about this and we know the Spirit of the Lord led us." Every time I have been invited to join ecumenical campaigns that same lie has been repeated to me. How do I know such a thing is a lie? Permit me another axiom:

AXIOM #12: THE SPIRIT OF GOD HAS NEVER LED ONE CHRISTIAN CONTRARY TO ONE WORD OF THE WORD OF GOD.

The new evangelical comes to us as a brother. He has a philosophy of ministry which appeals to the flesh. It sounds very logical to human reason. But it ignores God's simple commands such as, "receive him not into your house," "come out from among them," "be ye separate," and "touch not the unclean thing." When he tells us that the Spirit of God has led him in this new direction, we must recognize that as a lie because the Spirit of God has never led one Christian contrary to one word of the Word of God.

THE MOST DANGEROUS DEVIATION

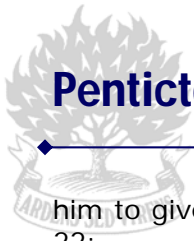
The most dangerous deviation is the one closest to your own position. New evangelicalism sprang out of fundamentalism. It is a movement of brethren. The lie of new evangelicalism has deceived more fundamentalists than the siren song of ecumenism. In recent years Jerry Falwell, who still desires to be called a fundamentalist, has denied the last forty years of church history and decided that there is really no difference between fundamentalists and new evangelicals. His swallowing of the lie of new evangelicalism has led great numbers of those who follow in his train into the same compromise.

Don't let your guard down. Is it right to allow disobedient brethren kind words from your pulpit? Is it right to allow disobedient brethren to use your good name? Is it right to let disobedient brethren have dollars collected from your people? Is it right to allow disobedient brethren to have the cream of your young people to educate and use in their enterprise? Say a gracious "No" if you can. Thunder out a "No!" if you must. But, above all, don't say "Yes."

A SCENE OF DEFEAT

There is a third scene in this chapter. It is a solemn warning. We see the nameless prophet in a scene of defeat. In this final section there are two things — a prediction and a picture.

The old prophet who issued the lying invitation had not had a prophecy to declare for the Lord in many years. But as he sat fellowshiping with his younger brother, the Lord forced



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him to give a prediction which must have stuck in his throat. We have it in verses 21 and 22:

“And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and has not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.”

When the meal was over the old prophet provided the younger prophet with his own donkey and sent him on his way. It was not long until there was a knock on the old man’s door and a neighbor brought the tragic message of which we read in verses 24, 25:

“And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcass was cast in the way, and the ass stood beside it, the lion also stood by the carcass. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.”

I submit to you that the scene so described is one of the most unnatural scenes in the Bible. We have a man-eating lion which would not eat the man he had killed. We have a donkey which would not run from the lion. Donkeys are not famed for brilliance, but they have always known enough to run from lions. Man-eating lions eat donkeys for dessert. In this strange tableau a man-eating lion and a donkey stood on either side of a prophet’s carcass. The people of the area came and peered around the rocks to see the strange scene. The aura of unnaturalness which surrounds this scene is the stamp of God upon it. God wanted all who passed that way to know that this was not a man who happened to be killed by a lion, but a prophet who was executed by his God for disobedience.

We are always worried what men will think in any given situation. God was not worried about what men would think. He was concerned only that his prophet had disobeyed.

This story compels any discerning reader to ask an obvious question. Why was it that God was so severe on the young prophet who spoke to Jeroboam so well; but, the old prophet who perpetrated the lie seems to have escaped scot-free? Let me give my answer in the form of a final axiom.

AXIOM #13: AT ANY GIVEN TIME OF CHURCH HISTORY GOD IS MOST SEVERE ON THOSE WHOM HE IS USING AT THE MOMENT.

The old prophet in our story had been laid on God’s shelf for years. God was not using him in Israel. The younger prophet was God’s man of the hour. Because God had so clearly commissioned him, He was forced to treat the breach of his responsibilities with death.

With all of my heart, I am a fundamentalist. I believe that the Bible-believing, separated, fundamental church is God’s instrument in this hour. For that reason, I do not believe that



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we can afford the luxury of compromise. As I observe fundamentalism at this hour, I see fundamental associations becoming more new evangelical. Every fundamentalist gathering I attend has less protest and forthrightness than the one before. I see fundamentalists more tolerant of new evangelicalism's great speakers. The fundamentalists' desire for souls and consequent growth have opened the door to new evangelical methods. Success, instead of Scripture, has become the measure of a man's work. The music fundamentalists sing has more new evangelical notes. Fundamentalists have adopted the silent stand and allowed vocal new evangelicalism to sweep the day.

God does not have to use fundamentalism. If we sell our birthright of obedience for a mess of new evangelical pottage, God can leave us lying in the middle of the road somewhere between the lion and the ass.

EPILOGUE

On the evening of October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed the list of his ninety-five theses to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. I do not expect this baker's dozen axioms to have the impact of Luther's theses. However, I do want to take the space to nail them up in one list. I trust that it will help some young pastor to review the list and find the principle he needs at the moment. Also, it will help those who want to argue to have one clear list with which they can joust.

1. Scripture forbids us to have fellowship with unbelief.
2. Scripture commands us to reprove apostasy.
3. Scripture teaches us that we must purge unbelief if we can.
4. Scripture teaches that believer and unbeliever cannot be yoked together in spiritual endeavour.
5. Scripture teaches us to separate from disobedient brethren.
6. God's work done in God's way produces only good results. God's work done in man's way produces good and bad results.
7. Do not affiliate your church with any church, mission, movement or evangelistic effort which does not fully believe the word of God.
8. Do not affiliate your church with any church, mission, movement or evangelistic effort which does not practice Biblical separation.
9. You cannot preserve a position without crusading for it.
10. When in doubt, don't join.
11. Separation is not the answer to every disagreement between brethren.
12. The Spirit of God has never led one Christian contrary to one word of the word of God.
13. At any given time of Church history God is most severe on those whom He is using at that moment.

I do not expect to have many new evangelical readers. New evangelicals would laugh at the very idea of trying to write axioms from Scripture. When Dr. Ockenga in 1948 called for "a repudiation of separation," he was asking men to set aside careful obedience to Scripture and to rely on human judgment. Likewise, his "summons to social involvement"



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shifted men from Biblical definitions to the outlines of the social gospel as defined by sociologists— particularly those of the National Council of Churches, whose definitions of social involvement have led them to the precipice of communism. When Dr. Ockenga expressed new evangelicalism's "determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day," he led the movement away from the allegiance to the Word of God. You cannot have theological dialogue with the infidels of apostate seminaries if you insist on opening the Bible and stating, "Thus saith the Lord." The foundation of new evangelicalism shifted the whole movement away from an allegiance to the Bible. **Christian Life Magazine**, in a pro new evangelicalism article in March, 1956 stated, "the evangelical scholar does not stab a finger at the Bible and say, 'this is it, take it or go to hell.'" The sentence is worded to be derogatory to fundamentalists; but, as a fundamentalist, I do put my finger on a Bible text and say, "this is it." That is the reason a fundamentalist can have some axioms and the new evangelical can't.

Every farmer takes care of his "line fence" because it defines the borders of his farm. If all line fences were torn down, things would go on fairly well for the generation which knew where the fence used to be. However, there would be trouble in time to come with generations who never knew where the fence used to be. New evangelicalism's founding father tore down the fence and today's generation can't even remember where it was. Scriptural axioms to give guidance to the movement are impossible.

You have read this little booklet. I hope that you do not consider these axioms to be principles only for preachers. They are church principles for all of the Lord's people. That may be one of our problems. We pastors have failed to impress these principles on our people. I have tried to write so that laymen can appreciate these axioms and encourage their pastors to take a stand.

Early in this little volume I referred to the great separation passage in II John. Let me quote verse 8 again.

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought; but that we receive a full reward."

What do we lose if we fail to practice the Bible principle of separation? John's answer is that we lose our work, "those things which we have wrought." It is only as we teach our people to be Biblical separatists that we can preserve our work. There are hundreds of churches across our nation which were once great fundamental works. However, the people did not know the basic principles. These churches are now in the grip of new evangelicalism. Some of them are on their way to reunion with the apostasy from which they once separated. If the pastors who were used of God to build those works were to return to their pulpits they would pronounce anathema on what they would see. Is it worthwhile to practice the axioms of separation? Yes. It is the only way to keep from losing our work in this generation or the next.



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