

# THE ONGOING SAGA OF ABWE

By David C. Bennett, D. Min.

February 21, 2012

“Among the Independents the leaven worked. In the colleges, or academies, as they were then called, the mischief first came to a head. Doctor Doddridge was as sound as he was amiable; but perhaps he was not always judicious; or more probably still, he was too judicious, and not sufficiently bold and decided. As the pastor of an influential church, and as the head of an academy which ranked higher than any other, his amiable disposition permitted him to do what men made of sterner stuff would not have done.

He sometimes mingled in a fraternal manner, even exchanging pulpits, with men whose orthodoxy was called in question. It had its effect on many of the younger men, and served to lessen in the estimate of the people generally the growing, divergence of sentiment. (Emphasis added)”<sup>1</sup>

**“Christian love has its claims, and divisions are to be shunned as grievous evils; but how far are we justified in being in confederacy with those who are departing from the truth? It is a difficult question to answer so as to keep the balance of the duties. For the present it behoves believers to be cautious, lest they lend their support and countenance to the betrayers of the Lord. It is one thing to overleap all boundaries of denominational restriction for the truth’s sake: this we hope all godly men will do more and more. It is quite another policy which would urge us to subordinate the maintenance of truth to denominational prosperity and unity. Numbers of easy-minded people wink at error so long as it is committed by a clever man and a good-natured brother, who has so many fine points about him. Let each believer judge for himself; but, for our part, we have put on a few fresh bolts to our door, and we have given orders to keep the chain up; for, under color of begging the friendship of the servant, there are those about who aim at robbing THE MASTER. (Emphasis added)”<sup>2</sup>**

“Today we are choosing between two alternatives: A LIMITED MESSAGE OR A LIMITED FELLOWSHIP. If we preach all of the Bible truths, there are many places where we will never be invited. If we join hands with the crowd, there will be the limiting of the message of the Bible. **Bear this in mind—it is the Baptist who lays aside the most! It is the Baptist who makes the concessions!**(Emphasis added) Think this through and you will find it to be true. We believe in believer’s baptism. We believe in separation. We preach eternal security. We believe in the imminent coming of Christ. We consider it an act of obedience to reprove unbelief in religious circles. The Sadducee and the Pharisee are to be labeled. But according to a present philosophy, we must lay these things aside for the sake of a larger sphere of service.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, (APRIL 1887) THE DOWN GRADE, SECOND ARTICLE, p.14 (The C. H. Spurgeon Collection)

<sup>2</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL, AUGUST, 1887, ANOTHER WORD CONCERNING THE DOWN-GRADE, p. 27 (The C. H. Spurgeon Collection)

<sup>3</sup> David Nettleton, A LIMITED MESSAGE OR A LIMITED FELLOWSHIP?, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches Archive Collection

Is there any similarity as to what is occurring today with what C. H. Spurgeon was facing in his day? Is the truth of what Dr. Nettleton was speaking about relevant to our day? Are we living in another day of what could be called “The Down Grade Controversy”? Are certain doctrines being laid aside for the sake of unity and fellowship? It does seem that men, churches, Christian organizations, mission agencies, associations and fellowships virtually never stay the same course on which they began.

So it is with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE). ABWE states that it “...was founded in 1927 as an independent Baptist mission. The objectives of ABWE are to establish indigenous Baptist churches...”<sup>4</sup> The question is “Has ABWE stayed true to its course?”

“The year was 1934, and the fledgling General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC) was facing its first crisis. The elder statesman of the GARBC was Oliver W. Van Osdel from Grand Rapids. He had been active in Northern Baptist circles since the 1870s and had been especially prominent in promoting the work of missions. Van Osdel was the man who had erected the GARBC out of the ashes of the defunct Baptist Bible Union (BBU). More than anything, he wanted to see the GARBC establish a mission board of its own, following the associational principle.

Robert T. Ketcham of Gary, Indiana, was the young buck of the GARBC. Like Van Osdel, Ketcham had been involved with the Baptist Bible Union. He had even been on the board of the BBU when it took over the operations of Des Moines University. Events at that university had led to scandal, riot, and the collapse of both organizations. Ketcham was afraid that if the GARBC operated its own institutions, the link between the agencies and the association would prove as poisonous as the tie between Des Moines University and the BBU.

The debate was impassioned. Van Osdel pleaded the cause of missions. Ketcham insisted upon the dangers of the associationally operated agencies. In effect, the two men were replaying the debate between the associational model and the service organization model.

At the end of the debate, Van Osdel and Ketcham were put in a room together and told not to come out until they had a solution to the problem. When they emerged, they presented a plan that served the GARBC effectively for over sixty years. Their plan eventually came to be known as the ‘approval system.’”<sup>5</sup>

Reginald Matthews was active in the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC) till his death. Dr. Matthews wrote approvingly of what was known as the “approval system” of the GARBC when he wrote “It is wonderful to be associated with a Fellowship in which the **approved** mission boards and councils are true to the Word of God in all matters of operation. To these mission agencies the local church can give with confidence (Emphasis added).”<sup>6</sup>

In the Chapter “The Missionary Budget” he wrote that “Approved Baptist missions should be promoted.”<sup>7</sup> Then on page 91 of the same book Dr. Matthews wrote “Once every year each approved agency is required to answer a questionnaire answering such questions...” and he then gives the twelve questions asked. Question number six was **“How many missionaries do you have and are they all required to be members of Baptist churches?”** (Emphasis added) THIS WAS A VERY IMPORTANT POINT BROTHER MATTHEWS MADE AT THAT TIME BUT NOT SO MUCH NOW AS WILL BE NOTED LATER!!!!

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://e-ditionsbyfry.com/Olive/ODE/ABWE/Default.aspx?href=ABWE/2012/02/01>

<sup>5</sup> <http://sharperiron.org/2008/06/10/baptist-church-cooperation-part-4>

<sup>6</sup> Reginald L. Matthews, *Missionary Administration in the Local Church*, Regular Baptist Press, Des Plaines, IL, 1970, p.28.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 83

“Over time, however, the approved agencies came to be regarded (at least popularly) as the property of the association. The Council of Eighteen became very reluctant to pull the plug on any institution. Loyalty shifted toward the agencies, and the result was a de facto return to the associational principle in its most obnoxious form.”<sup>8</sup>

Then “By the 1980s, it was becoming apparent that some of the agencies no longer advocated the historic position of the GARBC. Even though the bond between association and agencies was supposed to be loose, it still provided something of an umbilical cord through which theological and methodological infection was transmitted from those agencies to the churches.

During the 1980s, conservatives within the GARBC attempted to address some of these issues, but the balance of loyalty lay with the agencies. A 1990 proposal to keep agency executives from approving their own schools met a resounding defeat. The balance of sentiment began to shift, however, as the agendas of some institutions became more publicly visible. The approval system was finally dropped in 2000.”<sup>9</sup>

For instance Cedarville University in Cedarville, OH was an approved educational institution with the GARBC for many years. Today Cedarville is an approved school with the Southern Baptist Convention of Ohio (SBC).<sup>10</sup> Then “more recently Western Baptist College in Salem, Oregon, another school partnering with the GARBC, has been endorsed by the Northwest Baptist Convention and its executive board ‘as an educational institution that their member churches should support financially and promote as a preferred college for their young people.’ The Northwest Baptist Convention is associated with the Southern Baptist Convention ([www.wbc.edu/news/stories/NWBCadoptsWB.html](http://www.wbc.edu/news/stories/NWBCadoptsWB.html)).<sup>11</sup> The SBC Baptist Press affirmed that Western Baptist College, now known as “Corban College ...is affiliated with the Northwest convention...”<sup>12</sup>

The point of bringing forth this information is that churches, Christian organizations, mission agencies, church fellowships/associations seem to be in a state of “flux”. Is this “flux” another “Down grade Controversy”? Does this “flux” limit one’s message?

For fourteen years of our lives my wife and I served on the foreign field with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (once an approved agency with the GARBC). Our sending pastor at that time served on the board of ABWE and yet had the cheek to say that he couldn’t work under a field council situation. At the time I had not a clue what he meant. It wasn’t until we arrived on the field that I knew exactly what he meant. After the first field council meeting I told my wife on the way home that we should resign but that didn’t happen until fourteen years later. Nevertheless those were not wasted years, for I believe there was a maturity in many areas of doctrine that perhaps would have taken longer if it was not for those experiences.

Since parting company with ABWE, I have written several articles concerning ABWE and have published them on the web. These public writings led a pastor to email me in February, of 2011 asking “Our church supports an ABWE missionary. I read your article awhile back [from 2003?]. Do you have anything more recent we can base a decision upon?”

My answer was: “Thank you for your email. Please understand my purpose in life is not to denigrate ABWE but churches do need to know ABWE is not what it once was. Personally I believe ABWE is in the new evangelical camp. In one of my Australian Independent Baptist Newsletters I reported on an ABWE

<sup>8</sup> <http://sharperiron.org/2008/06/10/baptist-church-cooperation-part-4>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cedarville.edu/sbc/>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.faith.edu/seminary/faithpulpit.php?article=.%2Ffaithpulpit%2F2004\\_01-02](http://www.faith.edu/seminary/faithpulpit.php?article=.%2Ffaithpulpit%2F2004_01-02)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=22563>

missionary in Brazil that was flown to California to receive an award from Rick Warren for church growth. This tells one a lot about the missionary and ABWE.

This is from the December 2008 Australian Independent Baptist Newsletter which I edit '2008 CANDIDATE CLASS- The Message - Fall Edition 2008 (Edited by DCB) USA - Due to the liberalism of the Northern Baptist Convention, in 1927 the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE) was formed as an independent Baptist mission agency. ABWE once only accepted missionary candidates from independent Baptist churches but that policy seems to be no more. In ABWE's 2008 candidate class there are seventeen people from non-Baptist churches. This includes Bible and Community churches as well as one couple from Mars Hill Church, Seattle, WA. Then there are two couples going out under ABWE that are out of Southern Baptist churches. There are two future possibilities for ABWE and those are they will either drop the name Baptist completely or align itself even closer with the Southern Baptist Convention.'

The 2010 class had several from non-Baptist churches as well."

Unfortunately, I did not keep a hard copy of the Fall 2008 ABWE Message which included the 2008 ABWE Candidates and have searched the internet for it but to no avail as it seems ABWE has removed it from the net. But I did find this in a blog; "Sorry for not getting back to you on the ABWE missionary. First, it was not in last year's candidate class (2010) or 2009's but in 2008's class which happens to be missing in the online magazine version. I did finally find my hard copy from 2008 and yes, a couple who lists Mars Hill Church, Seattle as their church. I brought this up because of the statements made that ABWE was a fundamentalist mission agency. Mark Driscoll has blasted fundamentalism on occasion, so I find it a bit odd that a couple from his church would then go and be accepted for missionary service through a supposed fundamentalist mission agency, in this case, ABWE. 3/30/2011 4:57 PM"<sup>13</sup>

## **WARNING:**

This paper will hopefully help **warn** those pastors who desire to know but may not be aware of what is happening with ABWE so that they may take appropriate action. **This is serious business** for the Lord's churches! The comments in this paper **originate** from the information ABWE has made **public** and other related sources!

The following points will be made in this paper and they are:

- (1) IS ABWE BAPTIST**
- (2) ABWE AND ITS MISHANDLING A PEDOPHILE**
- (3) ABWE BOARD MEMBERS & ECUMENISM**

## **I. IS ABWE BAPTIST?**

*(Numbers 1:52 "....every man by his own standard...")*

As it was stated earlier ABWE has been accepting missionary candidates from non-Baptist and Southern Baptist churches for several years. The 2011 ABWE candidate class had fifty-six in attendance and fifteen of those were from churches not flying the Baptist standard. One of those not flying the Baptist name is

---

<sup>13</sup><http://paleoevangelical.blogspot.com.au/2010/12/six-statements-you-didnt-often-hear-six.html?showComment=1294448126725#c1389149307077139505>

affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and that is The Summit Church, Durham, SC. Churches which do fly the Baptist banner (Calvary Hill Baptist Church, Mesquite, TX and North Florida Baptist Church, Tallahassee, FL) are also affiliated with the SBC. So in the 2011 class you have candidates from SBC churches, Bible and Community churches all serving under an independent, supposedly Baptist mission agency.<sup>14</sup>

How does this work in a field council situation? How does one from a Bible, Community, or SBC church establish an independent Baptist church on the field? Does ABWE require them to attach Baptist to the name of the church? As Reginald Matthews states on page 91 of his book concerning the questions those approved agencies had to answer, Question #12 was "...are your churches known as 'Baptist churches'?" It would be interesting how ABWE would truthfully answer that question today? However, it is probably not a question most if any would ask today! Also does ABWE require its missionaries to establish works with the two offices that Baptists have historically held to, Pastor and deacons? Today, for sure, ABWE could not answer Question #6 truthfully and say they required their missionaries to be members of Baptist churches.

In the 2010 ABWE candidate class five came from churches not identified as Baptist; at least not in name. One such church sending a candidate with ABWE relates that it was; "Formerly known as First Baptist Church of Eastgate...for more than 50 years."<sup>15</sup>

Another couple in the ABWE 2010 candidate class is from Taylor Creek Church in Washington State. Interestingly, this church identifies itself with the GARBC but does not fly the title Baptist in its name.<sup>16</sup> HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED!

Another couple in the 2010 ABWE Candidate class comes from Grace Church of Dupage, Warrenville, Illinois.<sup>17</sup> This church advertises itself as a non-denominational church.<sup>18</sup> Another candidate was from Greenville Christian Fellowship, Piedmont, South Carolina. This church also advertises that it is "...a Christian, non-denominational, Bible-centered church (Emphasis added)."<sup>19</sup>

Now this is not to say these churches that do not fly the Baptist flag do not preach the gospel BUT it does say ABWE is accepting and sending missionaries who are not BAPTIST! Is this not INCONSISTENT with what ABWE states in their objectives? Have the Baptists that once thought they supported supposedly fundamental Baptist mission agencies moved so far from their own standard that it no longer matters?

Now getting back to the point made earlier about ABWE accepting a couple from Mars Hill Church, Seattle, WA. Can anyone who reads this, please send me an email (aussiedubbo@yahoo.com) stating how a couple from Mars Hill Church, Seattle, WA will ever begin an independent Baptist church! That is if you really know!

The pastor of the Mars Hill Church is Mark Driscoll. Most who read this column will recognize the name but for those who do not Mars Hill's web site gives this info concerning him. "Pastor Mark Driscoll is the founding pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington and is one of the world's most-downloaded and quoted pastors. His audience—fans and critics alike—spans the theological and cultural left and right.

<sup>14</sup> <http://e-ditionsbyfry.com/Olive/ODE/ABWE/Default.aspx?href=ABWE/2012/02/01>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.eastgatebible.net/about\\_us](http://www.eastgatebible.net/about_us)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.taylorcreekchurch.org/about-us-mainmenu-2.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/news/article/the-stories-of-the-call/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://au.search.yahoo.com/search?p=grace+church+of+dupage&ei=UTF-8&fr=moz2-yttf-tyc>

<sup>19</sup> [http://gcfchurch.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=64&Itemid=108](http://gcfchurch.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=64&Itemid=108)

He was also named one of the “25 Most Influential Pastors of the Past 25 Years” by Preaching magazine, and his sermons are consistently #1 on iTunes each week for Religion & Spirituality with over 10 million of downloads each year.”<sup>20</sup>

Mark Driscoll, who is he? Is Mark Driscoll an evangelical? Another asks “Is Mark Driscoll a false teacher?”<sup>21</sup> As the bio above states he has his “fans and critics”. One recent criticism laid against Driscoll is his participation in the Elephant Room.”<sup>22</sup>

One of “The Conversations” in Elephant Room 2 was “What are the ‘majors’ of Christian doctrine that cannot be diluted or denied for a person to be a Christian? How can we help one another move beyond the bare minimum of accepted belief, to a pursuit of robust, soul-satisfying, biblical substance? How should we relate to those who do not yet embrace the benefit and priority of sound biblical doctrine? Is there a difference between a person in error and a wolf in sheep’s clothing? What benefits derive from keeping the majors on a separate list and not letting the ‘minors’ divide us? Is it possible to love the truth without compromise and still work passionately for unity?

MARK DRISCOLL & T.D. JAKES | Moderated by James MacDonald”<sup>23</sup>

Paraphrasing what Pastor Spurgeon wrote and quoted earlier in this paper is that we have ABWE accepting as missionary candidates from churches who are pastored by men whose orthodoxy is “called in question.” What ABWE has and is doing certainly has “had its effect on many of the younger men”.

The following comment is made by one who attended “...a simulcast of the event in Lansing, MI at Riverview Church, one of Mark Driscoll’s Acts29 church plants.”<sup>24</sup> This person wrote “The most controversy occurred during the Jakes discussion over the Trinity and some of MacDonald’s pushback towards Cordeiro on how he handles pastors with moral failures. This time around, the conversations were centered on sharing wisdom from the different yet complementary approaches of the participants towards certain topics. There was virtually no disagreement within the room. Most of the disagreement was aimed at people or groups outside the room (this took place in general terms—no names or groups were mentioned, with the exception of fundamentalists).

The Elephant Room 2 was more about what can we learn from others through conversation to unite us and less about the elephant in the room that divides us. There is a place for this, but I’m not sure it is best to do it under the name The Elephant Room. The participants were diverse and it showed. The point of the ER is to have the conversations in public that go on in private. But I fear the elephant in the room was left to be just that, and the Elephant Room event became a means to bring us together.”<sup>25</sup>

Now all of the above concerning the Elephant Room2 is quoted because ABWE has a missionary couple being sent to the field under Mark Driscoll and Mars Hill Church! This should be a **CONCERN** to every independent Baptist pastor and independent Baptist church that supports an ABWE missionary! It will not be a concern however to those who have moved with the “times”!

---

<sup>20</sup> <http://marshill.com/pastors/mark-driscoll>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.driscollcontroversy.com/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.theelephantroom.com/>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.theelephantroom.com/conversations/>

<sup>24</sup> <http://sharperiron.org/article/report-from-elephant-room-round-2>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

## A VOCAL CRITIC:

The Elephant Room is not only criticized by so called “fundymentalists” but also by an SBC pastor from Texas, Voddie Baucham. Baucham is the pastor of Grace Family Baptist Church in Spring, Texas, and “...has released a blog post in which he explains why he turned down an invitation to participate in the second round of The Elephant Room...and left another conference hosted by James MacDonald without fulfilling his speaking duties.

The Elephant Room, a theological roundtable featuring blunt conversations among seven influential pastors, generated a noted level of controversy due to the invitation of Bishop T.D. Jakes, founder and senior pastor of The Potter's House in Dallas... Jakes has been accused of heresy by some in the Christian community for his affiliation with modalism, which explains the Godhead in non-Trinitarian terms.

Modalism, a 3rd-century teaching accredited to theologian Sabellius, purports that the members of the Trinity are not three distinct, eternally co-existing persons, but that instead God, a singular spirit, manifests Himself at different times in three modes – a doctrine espoused by Oneness Apostolic Pentecostal and United Pentecostal Church International denominations.

Pastor Baucham described in his blog that it was that very issue that led him to decline the invitation by Pastor MacDonald, who moderated The Elephant Room discussions along with Pastor Mark Driscoll.”<sup>26</sup>

Another one of Baucham’s criticisms leveled at The Elephant Room<sup>2</sup> was that Jakes “...has brought a charismatic, theatrical, excessive, 'Word of Faith' flavor to the city that permeates many churches (especially black churches)," Baucham elaborated, saying that he has seen firsthand the influence Jakes has had on Texas communities.”<sup>27</sup>

Baucham said “Even if Jakes had come out with a statement on the doctrine of the Trinity, it would not have done anything to change the fact that he preaches 'another gospel.' (Gal 1:8–9) Having studied the 'Word of Faith' movement, and seen the devastation it leaves in its wake, I was disinclined to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the man who has been this country's most popular purveyor of this heresy in the past two decades”<sup>28</sup>.

In Elephant Room 2 “...Jakes acknowledged that he once clung to a modalist position due to his background but he now affirms the conservative evangelical doctrine of the Trinity as one God, three persons. Attendees of the event also expected to hear Jakes address the controversy over the ‘prosperity gospel,’ or ‘Word of Faith,’ of which he is accused of teaching but that issue was not brought up.” No, it wasn’t brought up, for UNITY is the key in the Elephant Room!

However, in Elephant Room<sup>2</sup> Jakes “...added, ‘We are taught in our society that if we disagree within a movement, we leave ... we sever. I still have fellowship associations, relationships and positions within and without Oneness and Trinitarian movements because I believe that until we bridge the gap between our thinking, and humble both sides and say 'we're both attempting to describe a God we love, that we serve and that we have not seen, and that we are viewing Him through the context of the Scriptures but that with

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.christianpost.com/news/voddie-baucham-reveals-rift-with-james-macdonald-due-to-td-jakes-heresy-68276/>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

a glass darkly' – why should I fall out and hate and throw names at you when all that I know and understand, be it very Orthodox, is still through a glass darkly?"<sup>29</sup>

Then Jakes "...acknowledged that he is considered a 'heretic' in many communities, including Oneness and Trinitarian circles, yet it does not bother him, as he is more focused on the Body of Christ working as one unit in love, despite disagreements – the one thing, he asserted, that Christians have the power to do, but fail to accomplish."<sup>30</sup> The key words among evangelicals today seem to centre around Unity and the Gospel!

Enough has probably been said concerning the Elephant Room 2 and Mark Driscoll but what about the couple from the SBC affiliated, The Summit Church, Durham, SC?<sup>31</sup> The Summit Church is another one of those that "began life as a church in the early sixties under the name...Baptist..."<sup>32</sup>

Richard and Julia Rudolph are out of The Summit Church going to Germany with ABWE. ABWE's THE MESSAGE says Richard went to Baptist Bible College (I assume in Clarke Summit, PA). According to Richard's blog he and his wife were "...on the staff of Starkey Road Baptist Church in Largo, Florida as youth interns, and just this week have returned to visit and share with them our hope for the future of ministry in Germany."<sup>33</sup>

The Starkey Road Baptist Church is pastored by Jerry Lancaster who "serves on the General Council of Baptist Mid-Missions, and the Board of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism."<sup>34,35</sup>

NOW PLEASE ANSWER THIS; "HOW DO INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCHES SUPPORT A MISSIONARY GOING TO THE FIELD WITH ABWE AND COMMISSIONED BY A SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH?!"

HOW DO BAPTIST CHURCHES THAT ONCE ADHERED TO THE MATTER OF THEIR MISSIONARIES BEING MEMBERS OF BAPTIST CHURCHES NOW OVERLOOK THAT? TIMES HAVE CHANGED!

Now, after Michael Loftis' departure ABWE installed an interim President whose last pastorate was "The Chapel in East Amherst, NY".<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to note that Baptist is nowhere to be found on The Chapel's web site. What lies ahead for ABWE only time will tell but to be truthful to its constituency ABWE should remove Baptist from its name! May it be suggested that the B for Baptist be changed to M for Missionaries or C for churches. ABWE would then be AMWE or ACWE.

So ends Point I.

---

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.christianpost.com/news/td-jakes-breaks-down-the-trinity-addresses-being-called-a-heretic-67972/>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> <http://e-ditionsbyfry.com/Olive/ODE/ABWE/Default.aspx?href=ABWE/2012/02/01>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.summitrdu.com/index.cfm/PageID/1820/index.html>

<sup>33</sup> PERLINK" <http://richardandjuliarudolph.blogspot.com.au/search/label/Starkey%20Road%20Baptist%20Church>  
<http://richardandjuliarudolph.blogspot.com.au/search/label/Starkey%20Road%20Baptist%20Church>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/about/our-abwe-board/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.srbcb.org/our-staff.html>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/training/pcwe-speakers/>



## II. ABWE AND ITS MISHANDLING A PEDOPHILE

Some months ago I wrote “THE SAD SAGA OF ABWE”<sup>37</sup> which highlights the fact that the sins of sodomy and pedophilia are not only the sins of the Roman Catholics but of the Baptists as well! In that paper I quoted from ABWE about their “Concerns regarding Donn Ketcham’s repeated inappropriate behavior with the opposite sex on the field could have resulted in his termination as early as 1975, but continued indiscretions should have resulted in dismissal no later than 1985. Regrettably, we did not terminate him as a missionary but rather gave repeated opportunities for counseling and remediation which allowed him time and opportunity to sin against you. Please, please forgive us.

A precious 14-year-old child should never have been asked to sign a confession. She was the one who had been abused and sinned against. This was indeed a grievous wrong (Emphasis added).<sup>38</sup>

NOTE, ABWE knew of Ketcham’s adultery, or as they put it “inappropriate behavior with the opposite sex” for years. In fact they knew as far back as 1975 and they allowed it to continue until 1989 and only then did it cease because a 14 year old girl spoke up! The President at that time was Dr. Wendell Kempton. Kempton was complicit in this COVER UP! It was nothing short of “A Good Ole Boys Club! It is hard to imagine SUCH A COVER UP!!

The only reason ABWE is acknowledging the mishandling of this pedophilia case is because some ABWE MK’s began a blog to expose this pedophile! At the blog we read that “This blog is a voice for those of us ABWE missionary kids (MKs) who were sexually molested by Dr. Ketcham in Bangladesh and for anyone who has been abused by him here in the States. We can finally tell ‘our side of the story.’”<sup>39</sup>

Also at the same blog you read that in “July 1989: A young MK visiting the States without her parents tells her sending church pastor that missionary Dr. Donn Ketcham has been sexually molesting her on the field since she was 12 years old. This pastor contacts ABWE, and ABWE immediately hands the girl over to counselor Russ Lloyd and Ketcham’s boss Russ Ebersole to journey alone with the two men back to Bangladesh and the parents—who had no idea why their child was coming back. Lloyd’s diary chronicles what happened in those dark days, from his perspective.”<sup>40</sup>

Earlier it is mentioned that this fourteen year old girl was asked to sign a confession, which she did. This confession that the ABWE leadership had this fourteen year old girl sign reads as;

“Date: July 1989– I, ...r have confessed to my pastor and his wife, Dr. Russ Ebersole, and Dr. Russ Lloyd that I have participated in a physical relationship with Dr. Don Ketcham that transgressed God's Word and that was not pleasing to Him.

Beginning in September of 1988 and continuing into March of 1989 for a total of approximately twelve times, Dr. Ketcham and I would meet alone in the hospital examining room or in his house. During those times we engaged in one or more of the following kinds of physical behavior: kissing on the mouth, touching or fondling of sexual organs, and the intentional stimulating of strong sexual responses in my body.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.biblefortoday.org/bennett/Articles/saga\\_abwe.htm](http://www.biblefortoday.org/bennett/Articles/saga_abwe.htm)

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/news/article/abwe-board-and-administration-confession>

<sup>39</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

I have not wanted to hurt anyone in doing this or in confessing to it, but I know what I did was very wrong, and I am very sorry for it. I have asked God's forgiveness, and I know He has forgiven me. I pray that He will help me and others through this time,- and that I will become the person God wants ...to be .

Signed,<sup>41</sup>

REMEMBER THAT THIS IS FROM A 14 YEAR OLD GIRL! Where is the so-called accountability and compassion; ABWE claims it has? SHAME ON ABWE! SHAME ON RUSS EBERSOLE! SHAME ON RUSS LLOYD!

Here is a portion of Russ Lloyd's diary. "She was unwilling to sign the written confession (see Atch 2) until late in the evening when we arrived at Dhaka and spent more time talking with her (while at Russ' son and daughter-in-law's apartment).

Through all of our discussions with ... Russ and I both have felt that it is highly probable that ... did ... engage sexual intercourse with Donn but is afraid to say so. The more we inquire the more she reveals, it seems, and we both (Russ and I) - sense something else is yet to be confessed. She did say last night that she would ask Donn questions about her body and the male body, and he would answer them both in words and by demonstration."<sup>42</sup>

When all the information related to this incident is read there is an overwhelming sense of SADNESS for that poor fourteen old girl; and anger toward ABWE in this mishandling of the situation! It sounds as though they coerced this fourteen year old into signing this confession! These two men (Russ Ebersole and Russ Lloyd) were more gracious to Donn Ketcham (or at least so it seems from their diaries) than they were to this FOURTEEN YEAR OLD GIRL!

Russ Ebersole was the ABWE field representative over Bangladesh at that time and continues on staff at ABWE in the CARE ministry. This is Ebersole's letter to Ketcham's churches with emphasis added by DCB;

"September 18, 1989

Dear Supporting Friends of Dr. & Mrs. Donn Ketcham:

Greetings from our office here in Cherry Hill.

Recently you have received word from Dr. Ketcham and the pastor of his sending church, Rev. Michael Eleveld. I know that the information contained in those letters was grievous for you to read. Our hearts have been deeply saddened and burdened through this whole experience.

Because of **an immoral conduct** which has disqualified him, the ABWE Board, with deep regret, is terminating the ministry of Dr. Donn Ketcham.

We cannot forget, and are grateful for, **the many years of faithful service** rendered by Dr. and Mrs. Ketcham at the Memorial Christian Hospital in Bangladesh.

And, we thank you for your important part in this ministry through prayer and financial support.

Our hearts and minds have been reminded of the pertinency of God's Word in Galatians 6:1,2: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of

---

<sup>41</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/>

<sup>42</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/>

meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

A beloved brother has fallen! May God help us to biblically restore him and to help bear the deep burdens that he and his dear wife, Kitty, carry at this time.

**In consideration for Mrs. Ketcham**, and at your discretion, we suggest that support be continued through November to allow this couple to become settled, find employment and begin counseling.

Our medical team at the Memorial Christian Hospital, as you can imagine, has suffered a great blow in the loss of Dr. Ketcham. We are working presently with a "skeleton crew" and many medical services have been curtailed. We are trying our best to locate short term doctors who can fill in some of the gaps. Please pray that Dr. and Mrs. Tim Hepworth and Dr. and Mrs. David Walter, appointees for the Memorial Christian Hospital, may soon have their support and be on their way to the field.

We thank you again for your partnership with the Ketcham's in their ministry in Bangladesh and earnestly request your prayers on their behalf during this very difficult time in their lives.  
Cordially in Christ,

RUSSELL E. EBERSOLE, JR., D.D.  
Executive Administrator for the Far East<sup>43</sup>

Note the many years of faithful service and the words, in consideration of Mrs. Ketcham! The parents of the fourteen year old girl were not given as much consideration! This letter sent by Ebersole could make one sick especially when one reads that in the "Mid-'80s - A female missionary to Bangladesh is sent home because of an extramarital affair with DK, and DK's consequence is to be moved temporarily away from the hospital at Malumghat to Chittagong."<sup>44</sup> **Send the woman home in disgrace but move the doctor!**

However, as early as "1974 or 1975 - Donn Ketcham is sent home temporarily for counseling due to an extramarital relationship on the mission field."<sup>45</sup> But even before that in the "Late '60s -Donn Ketcham has a relationship with a student nurse at a Catholic hospital in the midwest while on furlough that results in the dismissal of the nurse from nursing school, according to this eyewitness and former friend of the Ketcham family."<sup>46</sup>

HOW IN THE WORLD DID THIS CONTINUE THIS LONG! SUPPOSEDLY THE MISSION AGENCY IS THERE TO MAKE SURE THESE THINGS DO NOT HAPPEN! But when there is collusion and COVER-UP this all makes sense.

Going back to Ebersole's letter to Ketcham's churches, **NOTE** how Ebersole tells the churches it was "Because of an immoral conduct which has disqualified him" without mentioning it was **pedophilia with a FOURTEEN YEAR OLD GIRL!** That would not read too well would it?

Ebersole even suggests to the churches "that support be continued through November to allow this couple to become settled, find employment..." Ebersole was **CONCERNED** for this pedophile to find "employment" after the pedophile had violated a **FOURTEEN YEAR OLD GIRL FOR TWO YEARS!!!!!!** Is there something in all this that I am missing?

---

<sup>43</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/>

<sup>44</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/timeline/>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

If this pedophilia had occurred in the United States, Donn Ketcham, if found guilty, would have gone to jail. But because it apparently occurred outside the United States he was not brought to justice in the U. S. courts nor was he truly brought to account by ABWE and the churches.

One MUST read all the information at <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/> to get the entire impact of the cover-up and collusion involved in this situation!

Someone wrote a comment to a blog concerning this ABWE COVER-UP asking “It would be interesting to know if those originally involved in the Ketchem decision are still with ABWE and if they were later given promotions, raises, and other perks for ‘faithful and godly’ service after they turned loose a pedophile on their own MKs.”<sup>47</sup>

Well, Russ **Ebersole** who is one of the culpable individuals in this ordeal **is still on the ABWE staff** even though he is now in his 80’s. He is listed as one involved in the Missionary Care Division of ABWE which “...exists to facilitate member care for the entire ABWE mission family through participation with caregivers including regional administrators, sending churches and pastors, member care specialists and peers to equip effective caring communities of kingdom laborers.”<sup>48</sup> In this CARE Division Ebersole is responsible for “DEBRIEFING”<sup>49,50</sup>! This same web page says Ebersole is the “Vice President of Missionary Ministries”<sup>51</sup>. This climbing (supposedly up) the ABWE ladder would probably include some increase in salary and only those in the ABWE “know”, could say what “perks” come with it. If you would like to know, good “luck” in finding out!

Ebersole along with Russ Lloyd<sup>52</sup> and Wendell Kempton knowingly or unknowingly, and it would be hard to imagine Kempton didn’t know, **mishandled** this pedophilia situation. If Wendell Kempton was alive today he should be held accountable and dealt with as to how this FOURTEEN year old girl was mistreated!

As for Ebersole, he is alive and seemingly continuing on as though this pedophilia situation never occurred. Again it is stressed that Russ Ebersole should be held accountable for how he treated this poor fourteen year old girl. Part of this holding him responsible would be his unceremonious dismissal from ABWE! If this had been your daughter what do you think should have been done then and now?!

THE ONLY GOOD THING THAT HAS YET COME OUT OF THIS SITUATION IS ABWE’S PRESIDENT, MICHAEL LOFTIS RESIGNED. Due to ABWE’s COVER-UP and collusion in protecting this pedophile in 1989; ABWE has had to hire a third party (GRACE) to do further investigation. All of this of course is eating up funds that were originally given by churches and individuals for missions!

It is hard to imagine; BUT IT DOES SEEM AS THOUGH very few churches and pastors are really concerned about this whole ABWE COVER-UP. Now, before leaving this COVER-UP of a pedophile by ABWE, do a little searching on the internet concerning New Tribes Mission and Sudan Interior Mission. From various sources it seems New Tribes especially is culpable in covering up pedophiles within their ranks.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> <http://remonstrans.net/index.php/2011/04/04/loathsome#comments>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.ronberrus.abwe.org/missionary-care>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.ronberrus.abwe.org/debriefing>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.ronberrus.abwe.org/missionary-care>

<sup>52</sup> <http://bangladeshmksspeak.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/introduction-to-bangladeshmksspeak/>

<sup>53</sup> <http://fandaeagles.com/about/>

Since writing the first "...Sad Saga of ABWE" other cover-ups of sexual predators within ABWE has come to light. This is a comment from an ABWE MK writing "I am an ABWE MK and I was not abused, but I am grieved to hear this happened. My father an ABWE missionary just two years ago was removed from the field for molesting my 14 year old adopted sister. He was removed from the field, but like in this case there was no disclosure to the churches of what had actually happened. He continued to receive support from churches for four months. Those churches were never told what he had done. My mother left him, and was chastised by our ABWE field counsel and rep for not 'forgiving' my Father. They also sent emails and called my siblings and I to make sure we did not tell anyone and told us that if we did not restore a relationship with my father we were not truly forgiving him. They claimed we should not tell because my adopted sister could sue us. This is ridiculous because she is a minor orphan who lives in a third world country. I grieve your pain and hers and hope that something will be done so that in the future their will be protection of the victim not the perpetrator."<sup>54</sup>

If this girl is to be believed, and there is no reason not to, the churches continued supporting this pedophile for another four months and the churches were NEVER told his crime! Where is the RAGE?

## **BAPTIST PREDATORS**

Then there is the web site whose sole purpose is to identify Baptist predators!<sup>55</sup> Many of those mentioned on this web site are Southern Baptists but some are also independent Baptists. One well known independent Baptist accused of being a sexual predator and pedophile is Bob Gray. Perhaps some of you remember reading his sermons in the Sword of the Lord years ago. "The former pastor of a Florida Baptist mega-church charged with sexually abusing 21 women and one man when they were children won't face his accusers in court. Bob Gray, 38-year-pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., died Saturday, just days before his criminal trial was scheduled to start.

A woman who says she is a former victim told a local TV station she is 'heartbroken' Gray's victims won't get a day in criminal court but glad the civil trials will move forward. The woman, who claims Gray abused her in 1969, wasn't involved in the criminal case because of her case's statute of limitations but will testify in the civil lawsuits.

While most allegations against Gray involve women in their 20s and their 30s, one woman told a Jacksonville TV station that he molested her in 1949, when she was 9 and he was young assistant pastor a Southern Baptist church in Waldo, Fla."<sup>56</sup>

Will hiding a pedophile be the undoing of ABWE? Probably not.

---

<sup>54</sup> <http://remonstrans.net/index.php/2011/04/04/loathsome#comments>

<sup>55</sup> <http://stopbaptistpredators.org/index.htm>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.ethicsdaily.com/news.php?viewStory=11877>

### **III. ABWE BOARD MEMBERS & ECUMENISM**

Another factor that is amazing is that in at least the last two candidate classes there have been candidates from Southern Baptist Churches. Why any Southern Baptist Church or anyone out of a Southern Baptist Church would go with ABWE and have to go out begging, by faith of course, for funds when they could go with the Southern Baptist International Board of Missions, is beyond comprehension! Oh, is it because of ABWE's separation position! I think NOT! ABWE is far from any separation position that they may have once held!

Darrell Beddoe, is one of the ABWE board members and also serves on the Board of Directors of John MacArthur's Masters College<sup>57</sup>. Now that is not an issue in this day of "flux" but it would have once been. It is well remembered when "In 1985, John became president of The Master's College (formerly Los Angeles Baptist College)"<sup>58</sup> and the stir this made at the time within some GARB churches.

Another ABWE Board member is also "a member of the Board of Trustees of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia"<sup>59</sup>. Liberty University is listed as "in partnership with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia"<sup>60</sup>. How times have changed! Those with whom some have separated from in years gone by are now in bed with the same. Interesting times in which we live!

Another of ABWE's Board members is pastor, Mark Willey, of Mt. Laurel, NJ<sup>61</sup> whose church, Fellowship Baptist Church,<sup>62</sup> offers the Alpha Course.<sup>63</sup> The Alpha Course is an ecumenical "evangelistic" tool used in most denominations.

Remember back in the 70's when the independent Baptists of most "fundamental" stripes stood against Key 73? Well, today a new breed of Baptist has come on the scene and the ecumenical Alpha Course is accepted. Alpha is very ecumenical; for as Alpha admits "Alpha is supported by all the major denominations."<sup>64</sup>

Another web site states "Over 15 million people worldwide have now attended an Alpha course, an opportunity to explore the meaning of life, running in tens of thousands of churches of all denominations across the world."<sup>65</sup>

HERE IS AN ABWE BOARD MEMBER WHO USED TO BE A HOME MISSIONARY WITH ABWE, NOW PASTORING THE CHURCH HE PLANTED AND IT HAS THE ALPHA COURSE! But does that really matter? Not to some, for as one Baptist pastor said in an email to me when I wrote negatively concerning an ABWE missionary teaching dance and movement in South Africa as an evangelistic outreach, "At least he is doing something". According to at least some Baptists it doesn't matter what you use or who you run with, as long as you are doing something evangelistically!

The Alpha ecumenism even extends to Rome; as Alpha in a Catholic Context.<sup>66</sup> It has always been a bewilderment as to how a supposedly Bible believing church could use a programme that Rome finds suitable for their use as well.

---

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.masters.edu/abouttmc/board.aspx>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.masters.edu/abouttmc/administration.aspx>

<sup>59</sup> [http://www.calvaryevangelical.org/our\\_pastor.html](http://www.calvaryevangelical.org/our_pastor.html)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.sbc.net/colleges.asp>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/about/our-abwe-board/>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.fbcnj.org/ministries/>

<sup>63</sup> [http://www.fbcnj.org/ministries/alpha\\_class](http://www.fbcnj.org/ministries/alpha_class)

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.alpha.org/alpha/about-alpha>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.alpha.org.au/>

<sup>66</sup> <http://uk-england.alpha.org/catholic-context/home>

For instance “The Alpha course is a parish tool for evangelisation that is being used by thousands of Catholic parishes in more than 65 countries around the world. A 15-session ten week practical introduction to the Christian faith, Alpha is designed primarily for non-churchgoers and new Christians. The course also serves as a refresher course for both practicing Catholics and for those who have lapsed in their faith.”<sup>67</sup>

Continuing on; “The Alpha course that is run in a Catholic context is the same in content and style as Alpha in any other context. Alpha is a very effective initial presentation of the core of the Gospel, the kerygma. Alpha only teaches what all the major denominations are agreed about.

It is wholly compatible with Catholic teaching, but it does not address specific Catholic teachings and ecclesiology. Rather, it works best as part of an overall parish programme of evangelisation or catechesis. It is therefore important that Catholic parishes consider running a follow up course after Alpha to help guests continue to develop in their faith.”<sup>68</sup>

Still on the subject of Rome and the Alpha Course “Archbishop Octavio Ruiz, Secretary to the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation, attended Alpha International Week 2011 in London and praised the way that the Alpha course responds to the call to a new evangelisation. He said: ‘Certainly, in the area of new evangelisation there is also the task of looking for new methods, new expressions to make Christ known and to fall in love with him. We should not be afraid of listening to many voices, among which there is, for example, the Alpha course. This may be something unknown to many, something completely new. But in the Church, we have to use those providential instruments that the Lord gives us to move forward in our search of Christ. Alpha is a simple way, an easy method in the context of an ecumenical experience.

The Alpha course, which I have had the opportunity to attend during this week here in London, is a providential tool because it precisely tries to reach out to those who are far from the Church, who are indifferent to the faith. By means of a very simple and humane tool, based on fraternity and friendship, Christ is introduced to them and enters little by little into their hearts. We know that in the Catholic Church we can provide a follow-up, a catechesis, a deeper teaching that will lead to a sacramental life. This is just a first step; a step we need to take without fear, with great enthusiasm as we look at the fruits yielded (underlining by DCB).”<sup>69</sup>

Now if the above paragraphs do not disturb you perhaps this will; “On 15-16 October 2011, the new council hosted its first event, the ‘New Evangelisers for the New Evangelisation - the Word of God grows and spreads event’ at the Vatican, which several Alpha representatives attended. At this event, the Pope addressed over 8000 people from all over the world, saying: ‘Modern man is often confused and cannot find answers to the many questions which trouble his mind in reference to the meaning of life...’ He also announced that 2012 would be a ‘Year of Faith’, describing it as a new impetus to the mission of the whole Church to lead men out of the desert in which they often find themselves, to the place of life, of friendship with Christ (underlining & emphasis by DCB).”<sup>70</sup>

**Now it is worth considering** that “Whenever a movement or doctrine is examined it is always important to trace it back to its roots. The Lord Jesus Christ declared in Matthew 7:18 - "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Similarly we can say that if a stream is contaminated at its source then the pollutant will be in the river and all who come into contact with that river run the risk of being contaminated. It is therefore essential that at we trace the Alpha course as far back as possible.

---

<sup>67</sup> <http://uk-england.alpha.org/catholic-context/about-alpha-catholic-context>

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> <http://uk-england.alpha.org/catholic-context/alpha-and-call-new-evangelisation>

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

The Anglican Church has embraced the error of the mass even though one of the Thirty Nine Articles denounces it as a "blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit". The course is formally attributed to Nicky Gumbel, Curate of Holy Trinity, Brompton. Immediately this information should cause us great concern. Holy Trinity, Brompton is an Anglican Church. The Anglican Church as a whole has tolerated error for a very long time. Long before the ordination of women became an issue there were very serious doctrinal, and moral issues that the Anglican Church never addressed and certainly never dealt with in the light of Scripture. The Anglican Church has embraced the error of the mass even though one of the Thirty Nine Articles denounces it as a "blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit". It has permitted ungodly men, men who have no knowledge or experience of the rebirth, to minister. It has defended homosexuals among the clergy despite the Bible's condemnation of such practices. It has tolerated men who have denied the virgin birth, the resurrection and ascension of Christ. We say this because if Nicky Gumbel were the spiritual man he and others claim him to be he would not be a curate in the Church of England. God calls men out of apostasy, not into it.

Let us, however, concentrate on Holy Trinity, Brompton. It was there in the early nineties that the 'Toronto Blessing' first showed its ugly and ungodly head in Britain. In fact, Nicky Gumbel was one of the leading lights in the propagating of this evil in this land. Now I have not the time to deal with the Toronto Blessing at this time, but I can assure you that it will be dealt with on another occasion in the will of God, and shown to be the evil that it is. Suffice it to say: the Toronto Blessing is not the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now the main text behind the Alpha Course is the book Questions of Life which is attributed to Nicky Gumbel. The book carries his copyright. The man, therefore, whose teaching lies at the heart of the Alpha course not only belongs to a denomination which has tolerated error; but to a local congregation of that denomination which was responsible for the inception into this country of the Toronto Blessing, which is another great evil and error. Nicky Gumbel may be a very intelligent man, that we do not dispute, but he is obviously a man who can embrace doctrinal error.

We must carefully consider what is taught in the Alpha course because ... it is the teaching of Nicky Gumbel. Now we cannot condemn the Alpha course simply because the man behind it attends a particular Church. Nevertheless the fact that he can tolerate doctrinal error in the Church of England, and not merely embrace the doctrinal errors of the Toronto Blessing but actually support and propagate its errors, should cause us concern and alarm. Everything he holds to cannot be substantiated by the Word of God. Therefore we must carefully consider what is taught in the Alpha course because on the whole it is the teaching of Nicky Gumbel."<sup>71</sup>

In conclusion of the matter;

## **IS ABWE BAPTIST -**

The answer to that question in this day of "flux" can be yes, or no, depending on the person answering. ABWE is all things to all people, or so it seems. It has missionaries sent out from Bible, Community, Southern Baptist and independent Baptist churches. It is not only ABWE that is infected but there is dialogue going on between some of today's "fundamentalists" and those who are considered "conservative evangelicals"<sup>72</sup> within the Southern Baptist Convention. The question is "Who has changed"? It is said that Southern Baptist "Dever is willing to acknowledge the weaknesses of the Southern Baptist Convention. **He admits that there is no way to keep a liberal messenger from voting in the convention** (though he thinks it unlikely that any liberal would want to do this). He also acknowledges that, in very few cases,

---

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.cephasministry.com/alpha\\_pt\\_123.html](http://www.cephasministry.com/alpha_pt_123.html)

<sup>72</sup> <http://sharperiron.org/article/reflections-after-encounter-considering-current-situation-of-fundamentalism-and-evangelicali>



elderly **liberal professors have been retained in the seminaries until they retire**. Nevertheless, he insists that liberalism has been soundly defeated within the SBC, and that its return is highly unlikely. He sees a larger problem in trends like consumer Christianity and seeker-sensitive churches—and, he would point out, those trends are not the sole problem of Southern Baptists. (Emphasis added)<sup>73</sup>

**These dialoguing** “fundamentalists” say “Nevertheless, Pastor Dever is definitely a Southern Baptist. His perception of the convention, however, is not what an independent Baptist might assume. He sees the convention as a service organization, much in the same way that many fundamentalists would view Baptist World Mission or Bob Jones University. For him, to be a Southern Baptist is to be a consumer of the services that the convention provides.”<sup>74</sup>

Let us take a break here for there is much to be said but comparing Baptist World Mission to the Southern Baptist International Board of Missions? Is that all the SBC International Board of Missions within the cooperative program is, simply a service organization?

**Baptist World** is sent candidates from local churches and then Baptist World sends them back to those churches which then send them out “by faith” to “raise” support. Whereas, the SBC system sends the missionary through the cooperative program without the missionary spending months if not years and thousands of dollars going from church to church “by faith” raising support! It is this cooperative program that was rejected in the early days by the fundamentalists but today’s “fundamentalist” or “conservative” the cooperative program is seen only as a service organization. Amazing!

“Pastor Dever was asked repeatedly about his participation in the cooperative program. He indicated that it was a great arrangement for Capitol Hill Baptist Church. Since Capitol Hill sends out many missionaries, it draws more from the cooperative program than it puts in. Dever said that he was more than willing to accept money from a variety of churches to plant strong ones. At that point in the conversation, David Doran replied that it might be a good situation for a church like Capitol Hill, but a small church that had none of its own missionaries would end up giving more than it drew. **Such a church would necessarily be supporting works with which neither it nor Dever really agreed.** (Emphasis added)<sup>75</sup> Times have changed for those things once REJECTED are now ACCEPTED.

## **ABWE AND ITS MISHANDLING A PEDOPHILE –**

Is this the weak link that will bring ABWE down? Who knows? The only result so far from this sordid incident is the resignation of Michael Loftis as ABWE’s president. The interesting thing about Michael Loftis resigning is that it only occurred after the MK’s blog became very public and prominent. Interestingly, in ABWE’s public communication of Loftis’ resignation nothing is said about the pedophilia and Donn Kethcam situation. What the ABWE Board said is “we want to make you aware that Dr. Michael Loftis concluded his faithful service as president of The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism as of June 7, 2011. The Board of ABWE Ministries, Inc., has expressed their appreciation to Dr. Loftis and his wife, Jo Beth, for their 13 years as missionaries in Eastern Europe and 10 years in leading our mission with unquestioned moral and financial integrity.

During those 10 years, Dr. Loftis brought great passion and giftedness to the cause of Christ worldwide. However, **in view of the present needs of the mission and the board’s concern that a change of leadership was necessary**, there was a unanimous decision that it would be best to seek a new president.(Emphasis added)<sup>76</sup> What are the present needs of ABWE? Is it to hopefully wait it out and all this pedophile business will simmer down and go away? Is the ABWE Board waiting for the GRACE

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.abwe.org/news/article/the-future-of-the-mission-abwe-announces-leadership-changes/>

investigation to conclude and they then will form a plan that will solve all future collusion and cover-ups that took place with the Donn Ketcham episode? Whatever the ABWE Board does; as long as one of the main culprits (Russ Ebersole) is left on staff, it shows there is truly no remorse by the ABWE Board for what has occurred!

## **ABWE BOARD MEMBERS & ECUMENISM –**

Those individuals, organizations and associations that were once anathema to some “separatists” are now admired. Previous to this day of “flux” an independent Baptist church offering a course that is also acceptable to Rome would have never been tolerable. How do churches which say they believe salvation is by grace through faith alone and at the same time use programmes that are acceptable to Rome which teaches “491 ‘The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.’”<sup>77</sup> This blasphemy continues “966 ‘Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death.’”<sup>78</sup>

Again allow some repetition. On the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of “...October 2011, the new council hosted its first event, the ‘New Evangelisers for the New Evangelisation - the Word of God grows and spreads event’ at the Vatican, **which several Alpha representatives attended.**” How far does one practice separation? It is PLAIN that the **Alpha Course** is an ecumenical hodgepodge! Where is the earnestly contending “for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”?

As the father of the GARBC, Robert Ketcham, wrote; “Naturally, one could not have much fellowship with others who do not believe as he does about God and His Book, but certainly one ought to have blessed fellowship with all those who do believe as he does.”<sup>79</sup> It seems many independent Baptists have much in common with the whore of Revelation through ecumenical evangelistic tools!

So “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter”. Yes, it does seem many of the churches, Christian organizations, mission agencies (especially ABWE), fellowships and associations are in a state of “flux” as the coming of Christ draws more near. Those individuals and organizations that were once avoided are now entertained.

What has changed? Even though it was written some years ago what Dr. Nettleton said then is still true today. He said “every time we promote the inclusive type of ministry we are covering up a fact that needs to be known.

God has given us a great message to preach. It contains the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, but it is not limited to that gospel. He has commissioned us to preach the gospel, baptize our converts, and indoctrinate them (Matthew 28:19, 20). He has given us the very best system of follow-up work, which is the building of Bible-believing churches and joining converts to them. He is calling us to loyalty and obedience.

---

<sup>77</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P1K.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P1K.HTM)

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P2C.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P2C.HTM)

<sup>79</sup> Robert T. Ketcham, SOME OBSERVATIONS ON BAPTIST INDIVIDUALISM AND THE NEED FOR A COOPERATIVE FELLOWSHIP, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches Archive Collection, p. 2.

We need no new message. We need no new method. We need only the spirit of obedience found in Paul when he testified, ‘For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel for God.’”<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> David Nettleton, A LIMITED MESSAGE OR A LIMITED FELLOWSHIP?, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches Archive Collection