

**THE HISTORY OF  
THE INDEPENDENT FUNDAMENTAL  
BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN  
SOUTHERN AFRICA.**

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## Foreword:

Methodologically, the history of the Independent Baptist Church in Southern Africa was written using a number of research approaches. Broad reading of over three hundred books related to American, British and South African church histories and doctrinal issues. The research in five archives, in three continents and the use of personal interviews, surveys and questionnaires<sup>1</sup> added another dimension. Consideration of Independent congregations and associations of Baptists and a limited consideration of various unions and conventions was also undertaken.

Inclusion of the growing Independent Fundamental Bible churches, especially in South Africa, was also an important feature since these two types of churches interact so closely. This cooperation has been so strong that I have chosen to refer to them as the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. Exceptions do exist and in these cases the Independent Baptists were considered apart from the Bible churches.

Due to the fact that I am one of the three initial Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries sent by a fundamentalist missionary agency, and that I am the only remaining Independent Baptist from those early days, I was often obliged to research my own records and journals. As the first Independent Baptist missionary sent by a fundamentalist missionary agency to minister in more than one Southern African country, my personal knowledge or records of the facts is often all the record that exists. I have made every effort to be objective and to minimise my role as a witness of events.

The fact that there is no other known thesis or book written on this subject gives an additional historical import to the project. This thesis does not attempt to evaluate or compare the Independent Baptists with the Southern African Baptist Union or the Baptist Convention, though together they represent the principal historic Baptist groupings in Southern Africa. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches often have overlapping histories and similar distinctive features with other types of Baptists and with other evangelical churches and this may confuse the reader.

No doubt, some will question the independent fundamentalists' belief that some of their distinctives beliefs, champions, or historic ties are in fact "theirs," but the fact remains that they believe their various perspectives to be correct and they act on these beliefs and interpretations. The overlapping doctrines common to evangelicals and fundamentalists also complicate clarity, since both groups inevitably consider their interpretation correct. Then, there are the peer group changes where the younger generations may differ to some degree from those of earlier periods. The very nature of the differences between various independent congregations further complicates one's understanding of this religious movement. There are radicals and conservatives, extremists and moderates but the material in this thesis will make all such differences less confusing and their general identities more obvious.

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<sup>1</sup> Interviews, Surveys, and Questionnaires, 1996-2001, See Appendix IV for copy of the *Questionnaire*.

## Abbreviations:

ABA	American Baptist Association, 1905. "Landmarkism." [USA]
ABWE	Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1980. [PA-USA]
AEF	Africa Evangelical Fellowship, International (See SAGM) [GB]
ANC	African National Congress (Political Party) [RSA]
BASA	Baptist Association of South Africa. [SABU Affiliate.] [RSA]
BBFI	Baptist Bible Fellowship International, 1980. [MO-USA]
BCSA	Baptist Convention of South Africa (1966) [SABU Affiliate.] [RSA]
BIMI	Baptist International Mission Inc., 1974. [TN-USA]
BBM	Baptist Mid-Missions, Zambia. [OH-USA]
BMW	Biblical Ministries Worldwide, 1992 (See MCI and WEF.) [GA-USA]
BUSA	Baptist Union of Southern Africa (Name adopted-1980 Assembly)[RSA]
BU of T	Baptist Union of Transkei (1980). [RSA]
BWA	Baptist World Alliance, 1905. [GB]
BWM	Baptist World Mission, 1994. RSA)[AL-USA]
CBTC	Calvary Baptist Theological College [RSA]
CGM	Cape General Mission (S. Walton/ A. Murray; See SAGM/AEF) [RSA]
CLP	Cape Leadership Pool (No Formal Membership) [RSA]
CMI	Church Ministries Institute, 1980. (Gauteng and Cape Town) [RSA]
C of C	The Church of Christ (Campbellites). [TN-USA]
EBM	Evangelical Baptist Missions, 1983 (RSA) [IN-USA]
ECSA	Evangelical Church in South Africa, 1904. (See SAGM) [RSA]
FBC	Free Baptist Church. [RSA]
FOBCSA	Fellowship of Baptist Churches in S. A., 1991 [Kwa-Zulu Natal, RSA]
GARBC	General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, [IL-USA]
GFA	Gospel Fellowship Association, 1992. [SC-USA]
GLP	Gauteng Leadership Pool. (No Formal Membership) [RSA]
IBC	Independent Baptist Church (1976) Kwa-Zulu Natal [RSA]
IFCA	The Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA). [NY]
IFM	Independent Faith Mission, 1975. [NC-USA]
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party (Political Party) [RSA]

KJV	The King James Version, 1611.
LMT	The Learning Ministry Team (See GLP and CLP)
MCI	Missionaries for Christ, International (1974, Rhodesia) [See BMW]
NASV	New American Standard Bible, La Habra, Lockman Foundation, 1995.
NCC	National Council of Churches. [USA]
RBA	Reformed Baptist Association, 1990. [RSA]
SABA	South African Baptist Alliance. [SABU Affiliate.] [RSA]
SABU	Variant abbreviation for the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, See BUSA <i>Southern Africa B.U. (1980)/ South Africa Baptist Union (1877). [RSA]</i>
SABMS	South African Baptist Missionary Society, 1892. SABU-1924. [RSA]
SACC	South African Council of Churches. [RSA]
SAGM	South African General Mission (1894-1965) [RSA] SEE: AEF/ECSA
SBC	Southern Baptist Convention. [USA]
SDB	Seventh Day Baptists, 1906. [Joseph Booth Founder]. [RSA]
TAB	The Amplified Bible, La Habra, Lockman Foundation, 1964.
TBG	Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente, Durbanville, Westelike Kaapprovinsie.
TIBC	Transvaal Independent Baptist Church, 1985. [RSA]
TR	<i>Textus Receptus</i> , i.e. the “Received” or “Majority” text.
UCC	United Church of Christ. (1957). [NY-USA]
WEF	Worldwide European Fellowship. (See MCI, BMW) [PA]
WCC	World Council of Churches.

## Glossary.

*Terms viewed from an Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church viewpoint.*

**A. Anabaptists.** Christians who teach that infant baptism or other non-Biblical baptisms are not acceptable. Anabaptists call for the re-baptism of those who were baptised as infants, or who were baptised to obtain (sacramentally) the grace of God for salvation, or who were for any reason were baptised before having accepted personally the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Anabaptists are also identified by various other distinctives, but re-baptism stands out as the most noticeable of these.

**B. Baptist Church -** Baptist churches are patterned around New Testament church principles, polity, doctrinal character and life. The Great Commission is the programme, and purpose of Baptist churches. A Baptist church is comprised from a company of regenerate persons, immersed on profession of faith in Christ; united for worship, instruction, the observance of Christian ordinances, and gospel service. These churches recognise and accepting Christ as their supreme Lord. They take His Word as their only and sufficient rule of faith and practice in matters of conscience, faith and life. (1 Corinthians 1:1; Acts 2:41-43; Philemon 1:27; 1 Corinthians 11:2).

**Baptistic.** A Baptistic congregation is an independent congregation that either uses the name Baptist or not, i.e. Independent Bible churches, but is committed or at least inclined toward maintaining the basic tenants of Baptist faith, i.e. the so-called Baptist Distinctives.

**Baptist Bride.** The belief that only those churches that maintain an especially literal New Testament styled doctrine and ecclesiastical polity have the right to be called the “Bride” of Christ. All other – less consistent – Baptists and all other denominations are excluded from this honour. The excluded Christians are believed to be limited to a position of only being the guest of the Bride at the great marriage feast of the lamb. This view is a minority view and accepted by fewer and fewer – even within their own ranks, i.e. the Landmarkers and other extreme separatists groups.

**Baptist Distinctives.** Biblical truths or principles that are recognised by Baptist as distinctive to their faith and practice. There are various lists of these distinctive doctrinal principles. Rev. C.A. Jensen’s 1890 list included: inspiration of Scriptures, infant baptism unscriptural, recognition of the error of baptismal regeneration, immersion essential to Christian baptism, close communion, church independence, missionary outreach. Jerkin’s theological list included: special providence, the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, salvation by faith, the atonement, the personality of the Holy Spirit, regeneration essential to salvation, predestination, final perseverance, future punishment and the resurrection.

A more contemporary rendering of Baptist distinctives would be found in Donald K. Anderson’s list: Biblical authority (2 Peter 1:21), autonomy of the local church (Matthew 18:17), priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9), two ordinances, baptism (Acts 2:41) and communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-25), individual soul liberty (Romans 14:5,12), saved and baptised church membership (Acts 2:47), two offices, pastor (Acts 20:28) and deacon (1 Timothy 3:13) and the separation of church and state (Matthew 22:21).

**C. Contemporary Christian Music (CCM).** The modern interest in using musical styles to reach-out to youth by using secular musical structure and presentations together with Christian words and messages. This development in worship and evangelism is affecting almost all Christian denominations and is being felt among the independent churches, as well. The Fundamental Independent Baptist and Bible churches tend to reject these more contemporary efforts, but there are changes taking place even amongst these congregations.

**E. Ecumenicals** are those that cooperate with the eventual union of all churches. To be an ecumenical, for example: is to be an individual or organization that practices co-operative evangelism or is inter-denominational (compare non-denominational), or that is generally viewed as sympathetic to Ecumenicalism's de-emphasis on doctrinal differences.

**F. Fundamentalism.** A "historic Fundamentalist" is a Christian or Christian church or organisation who defends the fundamental principles and doctrines of the Bible using literalist interpretation together with dispensational hermeneutics. These "Historic Fundamentals" are: 1. the Bible is the absolute, inerrant and authoritative Word of God, 2. the virgin birth, 3. the deity of Christ, 4. the substitutionary atonement and 5. the truth of the supernatural creation of the earth in seven days and the truth of the miraculous work and power of God as recorded in the Scriptures.

Fundamentalism has different periods with different issues and there are many different interpretations of the issues at stake. The fact of some or another degree of separation from those who are viewed as guilty of *ecclesiastical compromise* is not an arguable point among "historic Fundamentalists." It is important to note that in South Africa many Charismatics and other Evangelical churches would claim to be in one or another way "fundamentalist." Historic Fundamentalists would not accept these claims.

**I. Independent Baptists** are those who have emphasised the independence of the congregation over organisational unity and denominational association.

**N. Neo-Evangelical** is an attitude or position that professes to adhere to the Fundamentals of the Christian faith while advocating an attitude of tolerance toward those who Independent Baptists would accuse of re-examining the Scriptures to see if they are true. Neo-evangelical attempt to dialogue with liberals and others who, in the opinion of Fundamentalists, compromise the truths of the Bible. Independent Baptist accuse Neo-evangelicals of placing a great importance on dialogue due to their emphasis on tolerance and love at the expense of holiness and righteousness.

**Neo-orthodoxy**, to the Fundamentalist's mind, is someone accepting the theological ideas that Jesus, but not the Bible, is the Word of God, that one must have a divine experience (i.e. existential) that transcends rational explanation. Further Adam is not accepted as a literal person, and the atonement is a nebulous doctrinal concept in the opinion of Independent Baptists. Neo-orthodoxy places a strong emphasis on the social welfare of man, insisting that the church must give itself to the needs of society rather than merely rescuing individuals spiritually, i.e. as with Fundamentalists.

**P. Pass Law System** - The Population Registration Act No. 30 of 1950; the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, No. 25 of 1945. Blacks and others of 'colour' did not have the right, under the Apartheid laws, to be in urban areas. They had to carry a "pass" or a

document book that limited the areas where they could travel, work or live. The humiliation and repression of the forced removals - where whole cities and suburbs were levelled, the crude and cruel discrimination, and the many recorded atrocities that were linked to these laws led to thousands being arrested daily throughout the country. What the sale of indulgences was to the Reformation and the British Tea Act with its unfair taxation was to the American Revolution - so too the Pass Laws were to the birth of a New South Africa..

**R. “Radical” Reformers** were those Christians committed to carrying the early Sixteenth Century reformation beyond the boundaries set by men such as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin or their co-reformers. Some of these additional “radical” issues included debate over the relationship of Church and State, a regenerated church membership and the baptism of believers only.

**S. Separation of Church and State.** This Baptist teaching focuses on the equal but exclusive rights and responsibilities of both the church and the state. It speaks of the separation of civil and religious entities as a New Testament concept and rejects any formal or informal alliances between the state and the church. Early Ana Baptist and Baptist of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries rejected the idea of a Christian holding public office due to a conflict of interest principle.

**Soul-liberty or soul-competency** is the Ana Baptist or Baptist doctrine pertaining to the individual’s personal responsibility before God. It includes the right of private judgment, and rejects any form of proxy religion. Second Corinthians chapter three stands as a good example of this message.

**TEE. Theological Education by Extension.** In general, an approach to theological education which implements a variety of administrative and instructional models consistent with the principle of taking the training to the learner as opposed to bringing the learner to a central institution. Thus, theological education by extension can accommodate many instructional models. When learners of necessity must learn on their own generally apart from the group process, instructions often use self-instruction approaches such as the instructional system as the instructional model.<sup>1</sup>

**U. Ubuntu** - Both the perpetrators and victims of an atrocity are caught-up and bound-up together in the process of dehumanising another. In inflicting untold harm and suffering, the perpetrator was inexorably being dehumanised himself.<sup>2</sup> President Nelson Mandela explains: “I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man’s freedom is a prisoner of hatred.”<sup>3</sup> Note: This moral and ethical position is one only now being faced by the new generation of Independent Baptists and was to a great degree ignored by the first generation of Independent Baptists.

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<sup>1</sup> Ford, Leroy, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1991, 282-289.

<sup>2</sup> Tutu, Desmond Mpilo, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, 1999, London, Rider Press, Random House, 34, 35.

<sup>3</sup> Mandela, Nelson, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 1994, Randburg, Macdonald Purnell, Ltd., 617.



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Dr. Kevin Roy and Dr. J. A. Millard have patiently guided this project and it was an honour to work with them both. Dominee F. H. Haus, Stellenbosch, "the last living pastor of the German Bund" made numerous personal and private research notes available. The Reverend Sydney Hudson-Reed, the chief historian of the Southern African Baptist Union, provided source materials and made other documentation available.

I trust this research will encourage better understanding within Baptist circles and that the information gathered will be useful to South Africa's general Christian church history.

## **Introduction:**

The need for a worldwide assessment of Baptist history is especially important for the many who have only a limited knowledge of this broad alliance of Christians known as Baptists. Understanding how and why Independent Baptist congregations emerged from within the larger picture makes the opening chapter important, even to other Baptists. The doctrinal elements of the Independent Baptists that overlap other Christian churches need to be explained in sufficient detail to note the differences that do exist. The numerous ecclesiastical beliefs, known as “distinctives,” are matters of similarity and divergence that exist within the various Baptist groupings. To understand these seemingly minor differences is to come to appreciate the fine details that often divide. Baptist often are divided by these differences of fine detail in relation to their ecclesiastical “distinctives” even more than some of the major doctrines that have divided other churches and denominations. This makes the task of tracing the specific history of Independent Baptists a most complex undertaking.

The ability to understand Independent Baptists as fundamentalists is dependent on understanding their own definition of fundamentalism in the context of American and English conservatism. The highly charged issues related to the fundamentalism between 1880 and 1980 and the influence this period and its concerns has had on Independent Fundamental Baptists and Bible churches is rarely understood. Much of the modern South African political, ethical and religious issues seem far removed from this church but these fundamentalists nonetheless have a perspective regarding the literal interpretation of the Bible that deserves to be heard and may well have a genuine contribution to make.

The Independent Fundamental Baptist missionaries and local church leadership has a character of its own. The development of its leadership and ministry style is directly related to issues such as the literalness of their Biblical interpretation and application in pastoral areas such as preaching, teaching, discipleship and pastoral counselling. Of course there are many variations of leadership style and personality within such a loose combination of church leaders. Understanding the expansion of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches depends on having a useful awareness of the churches and organisations that work behind the scenes, primarily in the United States, to promote this Christian movement with its strong emphasis on Biblical doctrine and distinctiveness.

Learning about churches that are almost totally focused on the simplicity of the Gospel and on the pivotal role local churches should have in the Christian's inner spiritual life and public attitudes is a unique study. Understanding these loosely grouped churches and their missionary and church-planting fervour opens a perspective on Christianity general, though in my opinion, mistakenly viewed as irrelevant today. Their advance and growth raises questions for many who accept the idea that relevancy is dependent on pursuing religious emotionalism or responding to contemporary social change. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are moving forward while following a

philosophy once fairly common among South African Christianity, but now believed to be outdated and unacceptable.

The purpose of this thesis is: first, to clarify who and what the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches really are, and second, to establish their rightful place in the Southern African “family” of Baptists.

Further, by explaining their goals, problems and some of their changing perspectives their historic philosophy of missiology and ministry can be understood together with their outlook on today’s society and social needs. All of this should lead to a better estimate of their future viability and their potential impact on South African religious life.

## CHAPTER ONE:

### THE ORIGINS OF INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS WORLDWIDE.

The history that follows may seem obvious to Baptists themselves, but to those who are not Baptist this first section is vital for them to understand the various factors that have created Baptists in general and Independent Fundamental Baptists in particular. The potential for confusion regarding the differences between "Baptists" in general and "Independent Baptists" in particular, is increased by the Independent Baptist perspective that seems to accept their right to claim any and all Baptist concepts, distinctives, doctrines, and history as their very own. When they choose to reject an idea found among Baptists as "liberal," or just possibly unbecoming of a Baptist, they commonly consider their opinion to be authoritative.

#### **Introduction: The Principle of Independence.**

Modern Independent Fundamental Baptists are a worldwide movement of independent congregations with a strong missionary commitment, distinct doctrines and ecclesiological presuppositions. Their origins are multitiered,<sup>1</sup> multifaceted, and wide reaching but they have no single founding personage or derivation.<sup>2</sup> The Independent Fundamental Baptist movement is a part of a greater global Baptist presence found in every century and every continent.<sup>3</sup> The principles that identify Baptists in general and Independent Fundamental Baptists in particular are especially

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<sup>1</sup> Ruhlman, J. J., A History of Northwest Regular Baptists, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1976, 278-283. "The mainstream of the Northwest Regular Baptist Fellowship today has its tributaries in a number of fascinating sources. Like the varied sources of the mighty Columbia river ... the origins of our Fellowship are wide and diverse." Ruhlman then gives examples of the diverse sources, or "tributaries," he credits for these northwest (U.S.A.) Baptists: non-denominationalism, fundamentalism, pre-millennialism, the doctrine of a pre-tribulational rapture, the Scofield Bible, the influence of international missionary outreach; "Baptist-Calvinism, Baptist distinctives, southern evangelism and the rise of many Regular Baptist schools, training institutes, Bible colleges and seminaries.

<sup>2</sup> Christian, J. T., History of the Baptists, Nashville, Southern Baptist Convention, 1922, 4.

demonstrated in the early period of Baptist history in South Africa. Now, at least in the opinion of many Independent Fundamental Baptists, the emphasis on evangelism, Bible doctrine and local church ministry is being restored in its more simple and original form in the last thirty years of their ministry in Southern Africa. This chapter provides an overview the presuppositions of Independent Baptist's: independence, missionary outreach, doctrinal distinctive, their perspectives regarding their own history, the problem of verifying their history and the basis of their use of the name Baptist. Attention is also given in this first chapter to the Independent Baptists emphasis on the competency of the soul, the priesthood of all believers as major matters of focus in their theological scheme. The approach to Bible interpretation and their limited view of the value of creeds leads to a section describing their emphasis on the local church with attention to the historiographical theories that they have used to support their view of independent congregations.

To trace the origins of these Independent congregations one must look at the early periods of today's Baptist organisations.<sup>4</sup> Independent Baptists believe their original principles and even some of their historic leaders may be discovered by looking into the formative stages of the various unions and conventions, when independence was still a lively issue or at least still under discussion. The historical search for influential leaders and churches among the Independent Baptists must also include those individual ministers and congregations who, over the years, directly challenged or even left their denominational unions and associations. These separatist Baptists were often the more vocal churches and leaders. Many Independent Baptist are convinced

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<sup>3</sup> Latourette, K. S. *A History of Christianity*, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, 1953, 779, 818, 959-60, 1182, 1306.

<sup>4</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., ed., *Baptists in Southern Africa*, unpublished collection of research and writings in five volumes.

that some aspects of their doctrinal positions are also to be found in the early pre-reformation and Reformation developments<sup>5</sup>, movements that were often focused on survival, or driven by persecution or opposition,<sup>6</sup> and thus were not able to give full attention to issues like congregational autonomy and independence<sup>7</sup>. One such Baptist, the famed German pastor, Johann Gerhard Oncken<sup>8</sup> illustrates all three of these influences: firstly, he was a leader within an early radical Baptist movement of independent congregations,<sup>9</sup> secondly, though he would encourage<sup>10</sup> a loose formation of German Baptist associations, and a Triennial German Assembly,<sup>11</sup> yet, he viewed associations as a limited defence against those who opposed Baptists and as a cooperative missionary effort, not denominationalism. He befriended pastors like C.H. Spurgeon, a vocal opponent of compromise and he also encouraged<sup>12</sup> other separatists<sup>13</sup> to stand for Baptist and Biblical principles over cooperation based on compromise.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.1 The Strong Missionary Commitment.

Independent Baptist churches have generally held to a strong missionary emphasis although this has not always been consistent. The Independent Baptists considers themselves to be “missionary minded” people and they use this term regularly to refer

Volume Number I, 2, 45, 64, 200.

<sup>5</sup> Latourette, K. S., *A History of The Expansion of Christianity*, Seven Volumes, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1970, 45. Early Baptists were some of the radical elements in such nations as Switzerland, Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Flanders, the Netherlands, England and New England (Early America).

<sup>6</sup> Ullmann, C., (Translated by Menzies, R.), *Reformers before the Reformation, Principally in Germany and the Netherlands*, Two Volumes, Edinburgh, T& T. Clark, 1855, Volume I, 13 and Vol II, 482.

<sup>7</sup> Cooper, J. C., *Radical Christianity and Its Sources*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1968, 64.

<sup>8</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., *By Water and Fire*, Pietermaritzburg, South African Baptist Press, 1970, 51. “Johann Gerhard Oncken, now recognized as the head of the Baptist movement in Germany.”

<sup>9</sup> Armitage, Thomas, *History of the Baptists*, Traced by their vital principles and practices, New York, Bryan Taylor, & Co., 1887, 828.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 829.

<sup>11</sup> Haus, F.H., *Carsten Langhein*, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, An undated pamphlet, Note: At a later period he encouraged the formation of the ‘German Bund, in South Africa, 10.

<sup>12</sup> Day, R.E., *The Shadow of the Broad Brim*, Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1934, 213. “His Jonathan, D.L. Moody.”

<sup>13</sup> Fisher, G. P., *History of the Christian Church*, New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1892, 547.

<sup>14</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., *C.H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume II, The Full Harvest (1860-1892)*, Edinburgh, and the

to their commitment to missions. Missionary outreach should be mentioned as an essential part of their overall theological position and approach. Independent Baptists believe they have a right to reference the early church planters in South Africa as a part of their heritage since they were not a formal denomination in the earlier years in South Africa. Oncken's statement "Every Baptist a Missionary"<sup>15</sup> and Lehmann's "As long as I have two pennies, I shall give one of them to foreign fields"<sup>16</sup> reflects early Baptist missionary mindedness in South Africa, especially among those that were not strong Calvinists. Since many of the earlier English speaking Baptist churches were formed from settlers or pioneers the issue of missions would only develop at a later period.<sup>17</sup> Kretzschmar points out this reality:

Within South Africa, Baptists trace their origins to the arrival of the British settlers in 1820. Because of this fact, the Baptist church started as a settler rather than a missionary church.<sup>18</sup>

Without question, the arrival<sup>19</sup> of the German Baptists in 1857<sup>20</sup> and 1858<sup>21</sup> resulted in a conscious vision for missionary<sup>22</sup> outreach. Independent Fundamental Baptists often point to their "common ground" or doctrinal heritage with these German Baptists:

Carsten Langhein and his helpers walked and walked – over the hills and Amatola Mountains to Keiskama Hoek, up to Stutterheim and Dohne across the Kubsie, and right down to the 'sea-station.' on the Indian Ocean. These walks were missionary – journeys.

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Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, 353-354, 434.

<sup>15</sup> Hudson-Reed, S. ed., Baptists in Southern Africa, Unpublished collection of research and writings in five volumes. Volume Number V., 17.

<sup>16</sup> Haus, F.H., Carsten Langhein, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, An undated pamphlet, quoting Baptist Union Assembly Minutes, Hamburg, 1849, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Latourette, K. S., A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The Great Century 1800 A.D. to 1914 A.D., 1970, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, Volume 5, 331,359,388,

<sup>18</sup> Kretzschmar, L.; Msiza, P.; Nthane, J., eds. Being a Baptist In South Africa Today, Braamfontein, Baptist Convention College, 1997, 23. (See H.J. Batts, History of the Baptist Church in South Africa and Hudson-Reed, S., Together for a Century, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1977, 11, 17.

<sup>19</sup> Hendricks, J. A., Baptists in Southern Africa, (Published by Bethany Emmanuel), King William's Town, Progress Press Co., 1959, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Hendriks, J. A., Hugo Gutsche -A Biographical Sketch, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1967, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Haus, F.H., "The German Baptist Churches in South Africa", an unpublished set of notes, 1975, 23-27.

<sup>22</sup> Haus, F.H., Carsten Langhein, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, undated pamphlet., 3, 7, 14.

The early German leadership was<sup>23</sup> evangelistic, and missionary oriented. Carl Hugo Gutsche, sent out by Oncken, pastor of the Baptist Missionary Church of Hamburg, was to hold his first missionary outreach meetings within “three months of his arrival in South Africa” in 1867. A Baptist Mission School for “black and white” was established in Frankfort by November 1869. In less than six years Gutsche would ordain Carl Pape as South Africa’s first “evangelist for mission work.” to the Xhosa people.<sup>24</sup>

Traditionally, the historians of the South African Baptist Union churches have considered it only natural that these early pioneers should be considered rightfully a part of their own heritage. The Independent Fundamental Baptists nonetheless are known to refer to these same pioneer Baptists as a part of their own more limited historical claim. These Independent Baptists would obviously base their historic claims more on common principles than on a succession of ministers or churches.<sup>25</sup>

## 1.2 The Distinct Presuppositions.

Many of South Africa’s early Baptist pastors<sup>26</sup> were graduates<sup>27</sup> of C. H Spurgeon’s<sup>28</sup> famous London based Pastor’s College.<sup>29</sup> Whether justified or not, Independent Baptists point out that Spurgeon and his Pastor’s College graduates had strong

<sup>23</sup> *The Baptist Magazine*, July 1854, Vol. XVII, Fourth Series, 432-433. A sense of mission is evidenced in that W. Miller, founder of the first congregation in Grahamstown, reported his progress to a number of London’s missionary magazines. Gutsche was joined by the American Missionary, Peter Rietner in 1874.

<sup>24</sup> Winkleman, Ruth, *Carl Pape: Portraits of the Founders of the South African Baptist Missionary Society*. (S.A.B.M.S.), South African Baptist, 1968, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Cross, K.E., *Ours is the Frontier*, Pretoria, University of South Africa, 1986, 152, 156, 159, 198-199.

<sup>26</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., *The Influence of Charles H. Spurgeon*, M.Th. Thesis, University of South Africa, 46, 164. Note: Stokes, W., the first Pastor’s College student to South Africa arrived in 1867, followed by W. Hamilton to Cape Town - 1876, G.W. Cross 1877, H.J. Batts - 1878, W. Mann - 1880, Evans and Maynard - 1883, H.T. Peach - 1884, IJFM Warren - 1886, Adamson and Hay - 1889, Baker and Russell - 1891, J. Maginnes - 1893, and six more between 1898 and 1921.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume II. The Full Harvest (1860-1892)*, Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, (Revised Edition Originally compiled by Mrs. Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harold)

<sup>29</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., ed., *The Sword and the Trowel*, 1878, Mrs. Spurgeon’s Articles: “Short Histories of the Tabernacle,” “C. H. S.’s own popularity,” “The Pastors’ College,” “Origination of the College Fund,”



independent and conservative tendencies.<sup>30</sup> Independent Baptists are encouraged by the conservative leanings of those early pastors and missionaries. Many of the Independent Fundamental Baptists think their current ministries may be returning a degree of the independence and conservatism once found among some of those early South African Baptists.<sup>31</sup> Those graduates from Spurgeon's Pastors College that eventually made their way to South Africa were generally moderate Calvinists,<sup>32</sup> and were well known for their strong evangelical and fundamentalist influences<sup>33</sup> and held some distinct presuppositions similar to today's Independent Baptists. Granted, their earlier independent<sup>34</sup> mindset eventually give way to what the South African Baptist historian, Sydney Hudson-Reed, called a "premature union,"<sup>35</sup> i.e. South African Baptist Union, but this has not deterred many Independents from identifying themselves with many of those early South African Baptists.

Although the South African Baptist Union<sup>36</sup>, the South African Baptist Missionary Society<sup>37</sup>, the Bantu Baptist Church<sup>38</sup>, the Baptist Convention<sup>39</sup> and others with possible links to Baptists<sup>40</sup> are not featured in this thesis it is important to note that

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"Opening of the New College, other institutions begun etc.," and "Why is Mr. Spurgeon so Successful?", "His Catholicity", Excerpts and References to Cape Town, Mr. Hamilton. 318-319.

<sup>30</sup> Sheehan, R. J., *C.H. Spurgeon and the Modern Church*, London, Grace Publications, 1985, 69-71.

<sup>31</sup> Examples of early (1885 – 1930) Baptists with a strong independent, though cooperative mindset, should include Ernest Baker, Charles Garratt, Grove, D. W., J.D. Odendaal, H.T. Peach and many others.

<sup>32</sup> The term "moderate Calvinists" is commonly viewed by Independent Baptist as representing the Calvinism presented by John Calvin, not that of the later reformed church teachings. This "unlimited atonement" viewpoint is believed to be found in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin, John, (Written: 1559 and Translated by Henry Beveridge, 1845), 1962, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

<sup>33</sup> Hendricks, J. A., *Baptists in Southern Africa*, (Published by Bethany Emmanuel), King William's Town, Progress Press Co., 1959. 30-37.

<sup>34</sup> Also popularly known as "congregationalism" among some circles of Baptist in Southern African.

<sup>35</sup> Wardin, Albert W., ed., *Baptists around the World*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 57.

<sup>36</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., ed., *Together for a Century*, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1977.

<sup>37</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., *By Taking Heed*, Roodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1983, 363. (The S.A.B.M.S. was formed on April 20. 1892 and was reorganised under the Executive of South African Baptist Union in 1924. )

<sup>38</sup> Wardin, Albert W., ed., *Baptists around the World*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 57. The Bantu Baptist Church was formed in 1927.

<sup>39</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 552-553. The Baptist Convention of South Africa, with direct links to the U.S.A. based Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board (FMB-10, May 1845) , established a South African ministry in 1966.

<sup>40</sup> For example: The Independent Zionists, Isaiah Shemba, (d. 1935) was Baptised and ordained in the African Baptist

these historic Christian organisations clearly represent the main body of Baptists in Southern Africa.

This study of Independent Fundamental Baptists and Bible Churches must be carried out in a context of full recognition of other Christians who have many of the same strengths, distinctives and doctrines. The potential for these beliefs to overlap between the Independent Baptists and other Baptists and then between Baptist in general and other Christians does not imply that a common belief in a number of universal Christian truths would indicate a necessary commonality or unity within these circles. The need to consider Independent Baptist doctrine in some detail is required if one is to keep these overlapping beliefs in proper context.

### 1.3 Independent Baptist Perspectives

To understand Southern Africa's Independent Baptists one needs to be aware of their critical<sup>41</sup> perspectives, their various styles of independence and their various doctrinal viewpoints. Their perspectives were developed over time<sup>42</sup> until they formed as special factors, factors that need to be understood in order to clearly comprehend the people called Independent Baptists. Obtaining a basic historical view of Baptists in general is also important in obtaining a proper sense of context. Gaining an overall view of the numerous world-wide types or interpretations of Independent and Fundamental Baptist

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Church in Natal from which he separated in 1911. Shemba founded his own independent church: the Shemba Church of the Nazarites. (Ref.: Honeys, J.W. and Pillay, G.J., *A History of Christianity in South Africa*, Volume 1, Pretoria, HAUM Tertiary, 1994, 238.)

<sup>41</sup> Baker, Ernest, *The Baptist Bible School of South Africa, Second Annual Report*, Cape Town, Townshend, Taylor & Snashall, Printers, 1927. (Photo copy in my file of J. D. Odendaal's personal copy held at the A. B. K. Archives, Kempton Park.) Note: It is clear that the "perspectives" of modern Independent Baptist were also found in some of the Baptist Union's early leaders, thus references to their "own" beliefs must be used cautiously. It is only reasonable to assume that some of these perspectives - may well be the perspectives of other Christian churches.

<sup>42</sup> Garratt, Charles, *The Permanent Character and Value of the Baptist Witness*, Presidential Address from the Chair of South African Baptist Union, City Hall, Port Elizabeth, 16-9-1926. (This address points to some of these factors

is also important for understanding how this religious movement has developed and how it may influence Southern Africa during the twenty-first century. Though attention has not been given to the Baptist Union's development in this thesis there are indications of some similarities of philosophy<sup>43</sup> and doctrinal<sup>44</sup> beliefs. In the section that follows some consideration will be given to the varying or differing perspectives between the Independent and the non-independent Baptists.

The Baptists in Southern Africa, and worldwide, may be divided into two streams of thought: unity and diversity. Both doctrinally and organisationally these two seemingly conflicting viewpoints have melded and divided the people called Baptists. The need for unity has led many Baptists to have a strong appreciation for denominational unions, while those committed to diversity view various types of informal cooperation as sufficient. The stream of thought promoting diversity has often struggled to find the most effective way to encourage Christian unity without yielding their strong emphasis on independence. Unity and diversity within Baptist circles is due, in part, to the differing theological perspectives of pastors, congregations and missionaries.

The paradox of unity and diversity is also found struggling where the earlier Independent Baptist missionaries were found serving within other missionary organisations. This practice of Baptist working within other agencies was especially common due to the interdenominational cooperation among Fundamentalists during

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then present in South African Baptist Union.)

<sup>43</sup> Batts, H. J., *The Batts Papers*, (diary items of 1878-1936, an early history of the Baptist Union, speeches, sermons, and a 193 page autobiography in manuscript form), the University of Cape Town Library.

<sup>44</sup> Grove, D. W., ds., *Notas on Filippense 3:14*, Bethel, (Hand written in Afrikaans ), 28-Januarie, 1924. Additional sermon notes indicate a clear historical position of dispensational, pre-tribulational and pre-millennial interpretation of the scriptures.

most of the previous century.<sup>45</sup> Once Independent and Fundamental Baptist churches were planted by Baptist missionary agencies in Southern Africa in the middle 1970's the earlier interdenominational missionary cooperation would begin to decrease rapidly.<sup>46</sup>

Although these churches are fully independent most of these Independent Fundamental churches maintain some form or degree of informal Christian fellowship. When speaking of Independent Baptist congregations, one should include their "sister churches" the Independent Fundamental Bible churches. The influence the Baptist and Bible churches have upon each other is reasonably strong, especially in the larger South African cities. Due to the recent arrival of both the Independent Baptists and Independent Bible churches on Southern Africa's religious landscape, it is difficult to assess the full extent of their contribution to South African Christianity. The potential of these congregations combined contribution should become evident in this and the following chapters.

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches' doctrine and ministry provides a factual basis for understanding these Christians within the greater context of Christianity, as well as distinguishing them from other Baptists. By clarifying their distinctives and methods of church growth, their missionary and church planting approaches may also be more clearly explained. Baptists are known, in some cases, to

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<sup>45</sup> Baptists have commonly served in many of the non-denominational missionary agencies. Baptists from many lands and many from different Baptist backgrounds such as the Australian Baptist Union, the American Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention and, of course, many from the South African Baptist Union have worked together in these agencies. Independent Baptists from America have also served in these non-denominational agencies but this practice has diminished after Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board entered Southern Africa in the middle 1960s and then the Independent Baptist and Bible church missionary agencies arrived in the early 1970's. Some of the agencies commonly shared by Baptists and others should include the following: The Evangelical Alliance Mission, T.E.A.M.; The Africa Evangelical Fellowship, A.E.F.; Christian Mission International, C.M.I.; Child Evangelism, C.E.; Youth for Christ, Y.F.C.; Campus Crusade for Christ, C.C.C.; and Trans World Radio, T.W.R. A partial listing of Independent Baptists from the United States and Canada that served in these agencies between 1960 and 1980 should include: Davises, Geiners, Bains, Reimsbergers, and Repkes.

be liberal in their theology but most generally they are Evangelicals<sup>47</sup> and in many cases they are Fundamentalists, as well. Independent Baptists are almost exclusively Evangelical and Fundamentalist. Many doctrines that will be attributed to Baptists in general and Independent Baptists in particular can also be recognised in other churches including those that are neither Evangelical nor Fundamentalist, but the level of influence these doctrines have will be noticeably different. The fact remains that the specific doctrines or distinctives that are attributed to Baptists in general, and some more particularly to the Independent Baptists, are central to their character and message.

Nettles wisely points out that the terms we use can both confuse and clarify or even hide reality:

One need attend only one meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (composed of Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Anglicans and others) to see that disagreements in certain theological constructions are pursued with vigour, openness to truth and love. Therefore, the careful analyst does not simplistically identify evangelicalism with hyper-fundamentalism, neo-fundamentalism, aggressive decisionistic soul-winning or strict Calvinism.

While great openness characterizes evangelicalism, definite parameters must exist. Sometimes the nomenclature has been used to hide regrettable slides into heterodoxy and even heresy. Although this has made the word virtually useless in some contexts, historic evangelicals must make the effort to restore credibility to a word with noble heritage.

It is well attested in the documents<sup>48</sup> of Baptist history that Baptists have affirmed this understanding of the gospel in line with others who could be considered evangelical.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The first two Independent Fundamental Baptist congregations were: Brackenhurst Baptist Church in Johannesburg and Baptist Bible Church in Salisbury, both in 1975.

<sup>47</sup> "Evangelical" is used in this document in an American sense or usage, i.e. a church that believes that man is a lost sinner and must be saved by the grace of God through faith in the Son of God. As a designation, it has included all groups that have accepted the truths of the Bible as they support this interpretation of the Gospel.

<sup>48</sup> George, T and D., eds, *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996, 1, 2.

<sup>49</sup> Nettles, Thomas J., *By His Grace and For His Glory, A Historical, Theological and Practical Study of the Doctrines*

Understanding Baptists has always been a complicated matter. Some of the reasons for these complications include such matter as their different<sup>50</sup> national historical roots<sup>51</sup>, and the degree of their individual congregational autonomy<sup>52</sup>. The source materials and various histories are often far from accurate historically; the differences between subjective exaggeration or biased perception, and objectivity must always be kept in mind. This is especially true, as some Baptists tend to view themselves as a persecuted church, at least for much of their history. The emotion and bias that results from this image is incalculable and is explained in later sections.

Central to obtaining a correct perspective regarding Independent Baptists is learning how Baptist congregations operate and how they view themselves, especially as pertains to their own governance, i.e. as autonomous congregations<sup>53</sup>. This issue of congregational autonomy may vary to some degree from church to church; or even from Baptist union to Baptist union (i.e. association, convention<sup>54</sup> or fellowship). Yet, with the variances aside, all Baptist congregations are uniquely and in some sense truly independent. The question of the importance and degree of commitment to independence<sup>55</sup> and their use of this attribute of independence plays an important role in creating a particular identity among the many different types of Baptist

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of Grace in Baptist Life, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1986, 20.

<sup>50</sup> Odendaal II, J. H., Examination Notes, Undated, typewritten. copies in my files: Notes on "Dispensational Truth", and notes on "The Apostolic Age"

<sup>51</sup> Grove, Ernest, Grove, D. W. Ds. -- So Het Ek My Oorlede Vader, Ds. J. W. Grove Geken. An unpublished five page typewritten biography by Ernest Grove of Waterval Boven, the son of D. W. Grove, [Written c. 1958?].

<sup>52</sup> Kunz, D.J., "Afrikaans Baptiste Vereniging" 1941 Minutes, Written and signed by himself and Mr. Lotz. Discussions regarding the ending of their formal ties to each other. 5-10-1941 Also Kunz's own seminary examination Notes, undated, typewritten in Afrikaans.

<sup>53</sup> Jenkins, Charles A. (ed.), Baptist Doctrines, Watertown, Baptist Heritage Press, 1890; Chapter IX, Smith, J.A., (Chicago), "The Independency of the Churches", 230. Note: "The grounds upon which the Baptist belief in church Independency is chiefly made to rest in the Baptist argument may be given as these: 1. The essential nature of the Christian Church; 2. New Testament teaching and practice; 3. the historical value of the principle itself."

<sup>54</sup> Shurden, Walter B., Crises in Baptist Life, The Baptist Heritage Series, Nashville, The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1979.

Also note: Spurgeon, C.H., New Theology & Baptist Union, Article for the Sword & Trowel.

<sup>55</sup> Anderson, Donald K., The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 26.

congregations. The congregation's degree of independence also greatly influences the nature of the overall congregation.

Many nineteenth and early twentieth century Baptist historians believed that Baptist styled congregations, while using various names and upholding various degrees of fidelity to Baptist distinctives, may well have existed in every century since the first century. Thomas Armitage was certainly one of the most vocal among the northern American Baptists.<sup>56</sup> In the south, J..M. Carroll was well known (though often criticised) as a church historian holding the view that:

There were in existence many Christian and many separate and independent churches, some of them dating back to the times of the Apostles, which were never in any way connected with the Catholic Church. They always wholly rejected and repudiated the Catholics and their doctrines. This is a fact clearly demonstrated by credible history. These Christians were the perpetual objects of bitter and relentless persecution ... A striking peculiarity of these Christians was and continued to be in succeeding centuries: They rejected the man-made doctrine of infant baptism and demanded rebaptism ... for all those who came to them having been baptised in infancy. For this peculiarity, they were called Anabaptists.<sup>57</sup>

This belief teaches a possible two thousand year procession of autonomous congregations, all with a degree of faithfulness or witness to certain Baptist<sup>58</sup> distinctives, and it is still a common claim of some, though certainly not all, Baptists even today. Though this view is more commonly found among some of the most

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<sup>56</sup> Armitage, Thomas, *History of the Baptists. Traced by Their Vital Principles and Practices*, New York, Bryan Taylor, & Co., 1887, 1-12.

<sup>57</sup> Carroll, J.M., *The Trail of Blood*, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publication, 1931, 53-54. Biographical note: Carroll was one of the founders of the Landmark Baptists who took an extreme view of each congregation as the "body" and "bride" of Christ. He, and the others of this persuasion, taught that there was a type of Apostolic succession of Baptist congregations down through the centuries. His theological and historical positions led to much dissension among Baptists over the past 75 years.

<sup>58</sup> "Baptistic" is a term commonly used by Independent Baptist and Independent Bible churches when referring to their commitment or (even in some cases) inclination toward maintaining the basic tenants of Baptist faith, i.e. the

conservative Independent Baptists, the belief in this potential historiographical theory is still found among popular writers of this generation in both Baptist and Bible church circles.<sup>59</sup> Though this issue will be dealt with in more detail later, prominent examples should be included now, to establish the relevancy of this matter. Support for the belief that Baptists, or “Baptistic” Christians, were to be found in every century, include two relatively recent publications and a re-print of an earlier volume. First, Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry,<sup>60</sup> edited by Bible church pastor and writer John MacArthur, Jr. and the Master’s Seminary Faculty; second, Earnest Pickering’s Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a pure Church<sup>61</sup>; and the republication in 1996 of Leonard Verduin’s, The Reformers and their stepchildren. Nonetheless, the majority<sup>62</sup> of Baptists forming the denominational unions and conventions have not accepted this more radical view, preferring to limit their own origins to the last four centuries. The British Baptist Union, the various national European Baptist unions, the South African Baptist Union<sup>63</sup> and the many American conventions or associations of Baptists all generally accept the interpretation that their historical links go back no earlier than the sixteenth or seventeenth century.<sup>64</sup> English separatists also look to some of the same origins.<sup>65</sup> One especially interesting

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Baptist Distinctives discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>59</sup> Cooper, John Charles, Radical Christianity and Its Sources, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1968, 111.

<sup>60</sup> MacArthur, John, Jr., ed., Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry, Dallas, Word Publishing, 1995, 41-56.

<sup>61</sup> Pickering, E. D., Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979, 11, 55.

<sup>62</sup> Benson, J., Baptist History and Polity, Clarks Summit, Baptist Bible School of Theology, “An Outline of Church History,” Course Supplemental Notes CH-532, 1,2, 1980. The succession theories are: 1. Apostolic, 2. Baptismal, 3. Church: English Descent and 4. Spiritual Kinship or Faith. The primary, so-called, fathers of “Apostolic” Succession were (A.) Orchard, G.H.; (B.) Cramp, J.M.; (C.) Cathcart, W.; (D.) Christian, J. T., the Anabaptist Spiritual Kinship theorists were (A.) Benedict, D.; (B.) Cook, R. B.; (C.) Armitage, T.; Newman, A. H.; Rauschenbusch, W. The supporters of the English Separatist Descent theory were: (A.) Whitsitt, W. H.; (B.) Strong, Augustus H.; (C.) Latourette, K. S.; (D.) Shakespeare, J.H.; (E.) Vedder, Henry C.; (F.) Torbet, Robert G..

<sup>63</sup> Parnell, Chris W., Being a Baptist, Baptist, Roodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1980, 7. “Although many Baptist lived and died before 1600, the forefathers of most modern Baptists were the little group of people who, during the early 1600’s, met together in Gainsborough, England.”

<sup>64</sup> Latourette, Kenneth Scott, A History of Christianity, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1953, 818.

<sup>65</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, The Baptist Heritage, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, In Amsterdam, the Ancient Church, under Henry Ainsworth, then the splinter groups including those going to England such as Ainsworth himself, Elder Canne of the Broadmeade Baptists, and Elder Blackwell who formed a group that sailed to Virginia in 1619.



historical anomaly is the modern German<sup>66</sup> Baptists' who are linked to nineteenth century American Baptists. Many of the Independent Baptists would look for their heritage much further back into history, at least five hundred years further back and there are some who look a full two thousand years to the earliest church.

In light of their differences regarding their own historical roots and, of course, their differences in doctrine as well, the point may simply be made that that the churches known as Baptist churches are not as easily defined as many people think. Baptists cannot be simply identified as another religious denomination, not in the normal structural sense of hierarchy, synod or national or international memberships. Though Baptist unions and denominations exist in many different countries and for many centuries, the Baptist church has evolved as it has primarily due to the influence of specific principles and interpretations of congregational autonomy. This narrow ecclesiology, i.e. of extreme local congregational independence, complicates the identification process. An example of how complicating this process is, is seen in the difficulty that historian's have had in identifying the origin of Baptists in even one important land such as England. One historian believes that there was such discontinuity between the early General Baptists (J. Smyth, 1611) and the Particular Baptists (H, Jacob, 1638-41) both of seventeenth century England, that "two independent origins"<sup>67</sup> might be the best response.

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28-29. "The Baptist denomination, as it is known today, emerged by way of the English Separatist movement. The best historical evidence confirms that origin, and no major scholar has arisen this half century to challenge it." 31.

<sup>66</sup> *The Journal of the Evangelical Theology Society*, (Article Contributor), W. Detzler. No. 36/2 (June 1993) 233. "The influences that moved Oncken to adopt a Baptist position were not von Lücken and von Bülow, even though the latter was supported by the Continental Society. Oncken was independent of von Bülow, since most agents of the Continental Society were unconnected to each other. Oncken adopted a Baptist viewpoint because of the influence of American Baptists such as Tubbs and Sears. It was their serious, Scriptural approach that laid the basis for Baptists in Europe." [Note: Detzler is a research fellow at Yale Divinity School and is senior pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, 262 Bee Street, Meriden, CT 06450.]

<sup>67</sup> Stassen, Glen H., "Anabaptist Influence in the Origin of the Particular Baptists," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October 1962, 323n.

Among Baptists, the American Landmark<sup>68</sup> Baptists<sup>69</sup>, or the proponents of a 'Baptist Bride',<sup>70</sup> claim to have an actual first century apostolic link<sup>71</sup>. American Independent Baptists readily accept being linked to various (though not to all) European Radical Reformers, but more than likely the majority of modern Independent Baptists look to the more moderate (or possibly more Biblically oriented) Swiss Anabaptists for their origins. In most cases, Independent Baptists prefer to identify their heritage<sup>72</sup> around a Scriptural orientation or focus.<sup>73</sup> Thus, they centre their heritage on distinctive doctrinal themes, not historic creeds, nor historical figures, groups or bodies. Baptists pride themselves as "people of the Book." Independent Baptists especially consider themselves to be more than most the true "people of the Book" since they believe they believe they interpret the Bible in an even more literal way than most other Baptists. Many Independent Fundamental Baptists believe they have a right to find

<sup>68</sup> Shurden, Walter B., *Crises in Baptist Life*, The Baptist Heritage Series, Nashville, The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1979. In this pamphlet on Landmarkism, Anti-mission and Slavery, Landmarkism is presented as a doctrinal error taught by some Southern Baptist of America from 1855 onwards that advocated saving certain "endangered distinctives of Baptist life." This group of Baptists, led primarily by J. R. Graves (1820-1893) taught that Baptist churches are the only true practicing New Testament churches. Many Southern based American Independent Baptist congregations accepted this teaching and a number continue to this day.

<sup>69</sup> Ross, Bob L. *Old Landmarkism and the Baptists*, Pasadena, Pilgrim Publications, 1979, 7.

<sup>70</sup> Baptist Bride: The minority view that only those churches that maintain an especially literal New Testament styled doctrine and ecclesiastical polity have the right to be called the "Bride" of Christ. All other – less consistent – Baptists and all other denominations are excluded from this honour. This group is a small percentage of Baptists and limited to America and some possible missionaries from those circles. The excluded Christians are believed to be limited to be the guest of the Bride at the great marriage feast of the lamb. Also refer to Ephesians and Revelation

<sup>71</sup> Orchard, G.H., *A Concise History of Baptists from the Time of Christ, their Founder, to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publishers, 1956, 36.

<sup>72</sup> James, Robinson B., and Dockery, D. S., eds., *Beyond the Impasse? Scripture Interpretation & Theology in Baptist Life*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992, 257. In James' response to articles discussing contemporary Southern Baptist Biblical criticism and creedalism, written by Southern Baptists Page Patterson and Timothy George, he speaks to an important Baptist issue: "Our Baptist hostility toward binding creeds, though it obviously makes room for freedom, is driven by concern for authority. Why must we remain free in relation to what George calls 'man-made doctrinal constructs'? So that we can believe anything and everything? No, but because that is the only way the Bible, the Word of God, can be our authority, rather than someone's interpretation of it."

<sup>73</sup> Author's note - As regards Baptist heritage: The hostility toward creeds and the commitment to independent interpretation of the Scriptures also creates for many Independent Baptists an equally strong hostility toward crediting specific individuals, congregations or groups as the single origin of Baptists. Personally, as a Baptist myself, I would be of this opinion and would prefer to avoid crediting only one or two sources to modern Baptist history.

aspects of their heritage in anyone or any church that also took the Bible in a more literal way.

However one views the various possibilities of the historical roots of Baptists, it is clear that today's Baptists are rightfully understood as among the modern world's most vibrantly growing Christian communities<sup>74</sup>. This dynamic is created in many ways but one reason for its existence is found in the conservatism and in the respect of most Baptists for the autonomy of the local church. One other dynamic is created when a common conservative direction develops and this merges with a strong belief in local church independence. The result of such a philosophical merger is often the birth of an Independent Fundamental Baptist or Bible church. The fact that the two features of conservatism and independence interplay to expand each other is important if we are going to explain the dynamics of this movement.

Looking closer at these two features, we see first, the matter of a Baptist congregation's identity as an independent body tends to contribute to the growth of theological conservatism. Strong independent identities and attitudes among many Baptists have often led to an independent spirit. This often results in many churches being born from disagreements or splits. Such independence is a major contributing factor in creating a clearly recognisable degree of provincial or narrow styled

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<sup>74</sup> Wardin, Albert W., ed. Baptists around the World. Nashville, Broadman and Holman Publishers, TN., 1995, 473-475. Baptist World Statistics. Africa: 3,084,674, members; 19,572, churches. Asia and Oceania. 2,963,770, members; 22,676. Europe/Eurasia. 918,826 members; 11,081 churches. Latin America and the Caribbean. 1,983,410, members; 12,726 churches. Northern America (Canada and USA). 28,387,511, members; 91,185, churches. Note: There are twenty-four countries with more than 100,000 Baptists, and nine more with memberships between 50,000 and 100,000. Due to the fact of Baptist autonomy and independence together with its lack of infrastructure, these figures are especially conservative and often do not reflect the total membership picture. In North America there are over 8000 Independent Baptist churches not reporting their membership figures – a potential of an additional figure of between 1,200,000 and 2,450,000. In addition no record of independent Bible churches is available, though some estimate the figure to be over 5000 churches and 750,000 to 1,000,000 members.

radicalism. Biblical conservatism when mixed with this independent spirit gives this church a rather enigmatic character. The Independent Baptist enigma often confuses people, even other Baptists, and will only be understood when one fully grasps the high degree of conservatism that is involved.

Second, strong independence also greatly affects the nature of the contribution made by Baptists in general, and by Independent Baptists in particular. The lack of perceived or real co-operation between many Independent Baptist congregations, and the limited formal co-operation with other churches and denominations has often limited the public and social impact of the Independent Baptists. This same independence does lead, on the other hand, to a strong grass roots level activism in the spiritual and the public or social realms. However, recognition for most of these community efforts is often lost on the public due to the relative anonymity that results from Independent Baptist and Bible churches autonomy and independence.

To fully appreciate the nature and history of the Independent Fundamental Baptists one needs an accurate understanding of the theology and the terminology commonly used to define or describe this particular group. Obtaining such a perspective is complicated by the extremely independent nature of these loosely grouped churches. Their own perspective or perception is often hidden by their ultra-independence.

David Moss, when writing on the history of Baptists, states:

Someone might ask, 'What does it mean to be a Baptist?' The technical answer is difficult to determine. It is an interesting phenomenon that Baptist distinctives do not include ecumenism, yet among the Baptists one might find nearly every possible doctrinal position. It is impossible, therefore to provide

a complete and definitive list of which Baptist Churches hold to which theological positions. (The Doctrine) of individual Soul liberty among the Baptists allows for a variety of doctrinal manifestations. The beliefs of some Baptist groups are well defined and the group itself is restricted to only those who agree with the stated position; but some of these groups are not in harmony with one another. For example, some believe in eternal security and others do not. Other Baptist groups are less particular about their membership and consequently, some people who believe completely opposite theologies co-exist in the same denomination. Then there is the myriad of Independent Baptists who vary from church to church and individual to individual.<sup>75</sup>

A problem of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church history is the weakness of good source material and historical documentation. An often overlooked factor related to studying and identifying Baptist origins in general and Independent Baptist in particular is the fact that they, like so many of the Free Churches, have been opposed or even persecuted throughout most of their history. The effect of this opposition complicates the historical process. The realities of a type of “victim’s mentality or mindset” has discouraged general theological writing and limited historical writing, as well. The general belief among the Independent Fundamental Baptists has been that few would be interested in reading about individual churches or the writings of the pastors of such small churches. Since the independent churches often have little ability in centrally archiving their records and minutes the historical source material is often lost or was non-existent.

One Landmark Baptist historian, J.R. Graves, wrote a twenty-three page ‘Introductory Essay’<sup>76</sup> in G.H. Orchard’s Concise History of Baptists with the stated goal of explaining the serious problems persecution caused the historical process in the study

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<sup>75</sup> Moss, D., The Baptists: Their History, York, North Hills Bible Church Publication, 1999, 8.

<sup>76</sup> Orchard, G.H., A Concise History of Baptists from the Time of Christ, their Founder, to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century., Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publishers, 1956. 1-23.

of Baptist origins. Examples of this persecution abound. The Baptist historian, H.

C. Vedder illustrates the extent of the problem as viewed from a Baptist perspective:

Grebel, Manz, Blaurock and others prominent in the (Swiss Anabaptist) movement, were summoned before the (Zurich) council and commanded to retract their errors; on refusal, they were thrown in prison loaded with chains and kept there several months.<sup>77</sup>

Many Baptists in the past, and many Independent Baptist today, believe that they should be likened to or linked with the earliest Anabaptists who were persecuted by the state.

The general edict of Charles the V., executed at Brussels, June 10, 1535, which commanded that all Anabaptists or re-baptisers and their abettors should be put to death by fire; those who sincerely repented and renounced their errors should be beheaded, and the women should be buried alive. Buckle, in his book on the History of Civilisation, estimates that by 1546, thirty thousand persons had been put to death for Anabaptism in Holland and Friesland alone.<sup>78</sup>

In 1560, Elizabeth in England demanded that all Anabaptists leave or be imprisoned.<sup>79</sup>

By the mid-seventeenth century, the period of civil war and of Cromwell's governance, a comparative immunity was enjoyed by those

... who had been persecuted, yet the toleration practically enjoyed by the Baptists was not a legal status; they still had no civil rights.<sup>80</sup>

In France, by 1838 there were seven churches and one hundred and forty-two members connected with the (Triennial Convention's) mission. The revolution... had done much to lessen the hold of the Church of Rome ...but ... the Baptists met with continued and bitter persecution. Every preacher or colporteur was liable to arrest and punishment by fine or imprisonment; and against many of them the law was rigorously enforced.<sup>81</sup>

The name Baptist has been an epithet of scorn and contempt in Germany for centuries. The German people have never been

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<sup>77</sup> Vedder, H.C., A Short History of the Baptists, Valley Forge, The Judson Press, 1907, 137.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

<sup>79</sup> Vedder, A Short History of the Baptists, 195.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 394-395.

able or willing to forget the disorders at Mulhausen and Munster during the sixteenth century, the blame for which was unjustly laid upon the Anabaptists of that period. For a man to profess himself a Baptist in that country is, therefore, to suggest that he is likely to believe in propagating the kingdom of Christ by the sword, in communism, polygamy, and various other horrifying things.<sup>82</sup>

In Hamburg, in the mid-nineteenth century, another well-known illustration of the on-going persecution of Baptists is told: Johann Gerhardt Oncken led the Baptists to establish a church in Hamburg.

This success aroused the ire of the Lutheran clergy, and they complained to the Hamburg Senate, who directed the police to suppress the Baptist meetings. For a time German Baptists suffered severe persecution. Mr. Oncken was several times imprisoned and fined. ... Members of Baptist churches were required by law to bring their children to Lutheran ministers for so-called baptism, on pain of imprisonment or fine.<sup>83</sup>

Examples in the early colonial years in North America<sup>84</sup>, Russia, Spain, Italy, South America and China abound. South Africa also includes many accounts of bias<sup>85</sup> against and persecution of those who re-baptise.<sup>86</sup> The effect of this opposition has both negative and positive outcomes.

The centuries of disruption and persecution often resulted in the loss and destruction of much valuable documentation. Further, this constant opposition has resulted in such a strong independent mentality that it led many Baptists to undervalue the interest in and the importance of publishing their own documents, histories, and

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<sup>82</sup> Vedder, *A Short History of the Baptists*, 396.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 398

<sup>84</sup> Armitage, Thomas, *The History of Baptists*, New York, Bryan Taylor & Co., 1886, 685-687

<sup>85</sup> Raubenheimer, J. G. H., *Notes*. Interview and discussion, regarding the various published and unpublished works in the Afrikaans Baptist Theological Seminary archives in Kempton Park, Gauteng. His personal memories regarding attitudes and history of the period were discussed and noted to my files on 10/9/1990.

<sup>86</sup> Batts, H.J., *The History of the Baptist Church in South Africa*, Cape Town, T. Maskey Miller, 1921, *Illustrating: The denouncing of "Wederdoopers" by the Dutch Reformed Church*, 66.

theologies. Many normal means of historical identification such as consistent lists of membership, official minutes, detailed records of property, congregational credal statements, or good historical detail have not always<sup>87</sup> been maintained<sup>88</sup>, or were violently destroyed. With this lack of good archival documentation, accurate identification has been complicated for later generations. Many<sup>89</sup> historians have looked to the English Separatist, John Smyth (c.1570-1612) as the fountainhead<sup>90</sup> of the English General Baptists and any truly consecutive Baptist history<sup>91</sup>. Yet, the Independent Baptists often refer to the fact that Smyth “progressed through the stages of being an Anglican, then a Puritan, a Separatist, a Baptist and eventually tried to join the Mennonites”<sup>92</sup> and though an important Baptist historical figure is something less than a fountainhead of Baptist history. This confusion and fluctuation is but one example of the problems plaguing the history of Baptists.

It might be simpler to overlook these historic biases but to do so, in this case, will surely lead to a degree of failure in understanding the dynamic forces that moulded Baptists in general and Independent Fundamental Baptists, in particular. Non-Baptists have often arrived at mistaken notions regarding Anabaptists<sup>93</sup> and those who identify themselves with this historic world-view. The facts surrounding the problems related to clear historical identification have also led to Baptists themselves holding a weakened or

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<sup>87</sup> Research has revealed that a general failure of maintaining detailed records is a common problem of these churches.

<sup>88</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 31. “That Baptist emerged from Separatism is clear, what is less clear is exactly why.”

<sup>89</sup> Underwood, A. C., *A History of the English Baptists*, 45; Tull, J. E., *Shapers of Baptist Thought*, 9; Ivimey, J., *A History of the English Baptists*, 1:117.

<sup>90</sup> McBeth, H. L., *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 33.

<sup>91</sup> Baker, R. A., McBeth, L. H., and May, L.E. These three Southern Baptist Historians writing for The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville agree that their denomination looks no further back than the English Baptist exiles of John Smyth (Amsterdam 1608/1609) and Thomas Helwys (London 1611) as a branch of the Amsterdam English exiles who returned to England.

<sup>92</sup> McBeth, H. L., *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 33.

<sup>93</sup> Calvin, John, *Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines*, 1544, (B. W. Farley, Trans.), Grand Rapids Baker Book House, 1982 Copyright.



confused view<sup>94</sup> of their own history. It could be relatively easy to ignore these doctrinal interpretations now being popularised by many Independent Baptists. At first, these viewpoints do not seem to speak to the more important social needs of a modern world. Nevertheless, these historic biases serve as a window to understanding the Independent Baptist's world-view with its strong underlying independent mentality. One additional reason for giving attention to the peculiarities of Independent Baptist's beliefs is the help this offers in identifying their current and potential spiritual and social contributions to our modern society.

#### 1.4 Proximate Historical Verification

It is a serious oversight to assume that the Independent Fundamental Baptist uses of theological terms, otherwise common to Protestant terminology, are equivalent to one's own church terminology. There is also a possibility that the non-Independent Fundamental Baptist reader may confuse his or her own denominational terminology or possibly their own ecclesiastical experience<sup>95</sup> as the norm of another similar Evangelical body like that of the Independent Fundamental Baptists.

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<sup>94</sup> McBeth, The Baptist Heritage, 21. Note: McBeth, as a Southern Baptist historian admits, "The story of Baptist beginnings, however, is surprisingly complex." But he nonetheless joins the ranks of most of the non-Independent Baptists and simply declares, "The Modern Baptist denomination originated in England and Holland in the early seventeenth century." His unwillingness to deal with the previous three centuries - to establish the historicity of his statement - is just one example of an adaptive, if not a de-constructive view of history increasingly popular among modern Baptists.

<sup>95</sup> Friedrich, Carl J., ed., The Philosophy of Kant, Reference to Immanuel Kant's The Critique of Pure Reason, "Prolegomena to Every Future Metaphysics That May Be Presented as a Science," New York, Modern Library, 1949 [1784], 132, 139. "The intellect does not derive its laws (a priori) from nature but prescribes them to nature.." NOTE: As regards historical objectivity and experience: I realise that our post-modern thinking rejects the simple discovery of the objective in history and believes we prescribe or project them on our human consciousness. Nonetheless, though many believe reality is little more than a reflection of that which is understood under the limitations that our senses impose, I believe the historian must encourage the reader of history to attempt overcoming or at least "forgive" a history's inevitable partiality, personal biases, and /or its interpretive cultural axioms. True historical understanding is possible, though never absolutely exhaustive or perfect, but the true thoughts of the author are possible only when as we read - as best that we can - from the writers base of information, not our own.

Thomas Oden sums up the importance of our obtaining as objective a historical overview as possible. The issue of verification in history is especially important for anyone studying an area of history outside of his or her own normal experience or regular field of study. Oden states:

The heart of scientific method is verification. Historians cannot achieve verification, since the events have disappeared into the past. History cannot be re-enacted. There is something amusing about the spectacle of historians seeking absolute verification. Proximate verification must depend upon the testimony of witnesses and the evidence of past documents fairly and honestly analysed.<sup>96</sup>

For the Southern African reader a misconception may well result from confusing the Independent and non-independent<sup>97</sup> Baptist's contributions to South African society. The non-independent Baptists operate or minister in unions, and close knit associations and thus their individual and collective contributions are more easily studied or recognised. The value of Independent Baptist beliefs, ministry efforts and other social or spiritual contributions are more often only observable as disconnected or detached efforts and can only be collectively understood and studied with great difficulty. Further, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches must be viewed, in the light of their relative short presence in Southern Africa, and thus can

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<sup>96</sup> Oden, Thomas C., *After Modernity... What? Agenda for Theology*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990, 123.

<sup>97</sup> Wardin, Albert W., ed., *Baptists Around the World*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 55-58. The South African Baptist Union (1877), Note: In 1924 the SABMS came under the wing of the SABU, and in 1976 the South African Baptist received into affiliation the South African Baptist Alliance (previously Western Province Coloured Baptist Association, later superseded by a Federation of Coloured Baptist Churches which ultimately became the SABA), the Indian Baptist Mission and the Bantu Baptist Convention; The Baptist Convention of South Africa (1966); Baptist Union of Transkei (1980); Independent Baptist Church (1976) Kwa-Zulu Natal, This ministry was founded in 1892 by the Free Baptists of Sweden who also formed a similar body in the Transvaal in 1985, The Free Baptist Church, Transvaal.

The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Membership Information for 2000 Statistics: (BASA) Baptist Association of South Africa, 26 churches with 3500 members and adherents; (BCSA) Baptist Convention of South Africa, 120 churches with 10,000 members and adherents; (BUSA) Baptist Union of Southern Africa, 457 churches with 51,107 members and adherents (includes figures from all associated churches including BASA and BCSA above). Note: The Baptist World Alliance is a fellowship of 201 Baptist unions and conventions comprising a membership of more than 43 million baptised believers and a community of more than 100 million Baptists worldwide.

only be expected to have a relatively small impact on the overall<sup>98</sup> South African Christian scene. But, on the other hand, since the Independent Baptist churches are growing rapidly,<sup>99</sup> some future contributions to South African society by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches should be assured. A further confusing issue for some Afrikaans South African readers could relate to the fact that Baptists were often presented to them as a sect<sup>100</sup> or even a cult in the past. Many Independent Baptists believe this type of opposition or bias is a part of their own historic fabric and explains much of the confusion between themselves and the Christian community today. Independent Baptists point to recent publications that support this thinking. One writer explains that:

Baptists were at first erroneously labelled “Anabaptists” because they called for believer’s baptism, and their enemies wanted to associate them with the behaviour of the sixteenth-century Münster radicals.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Fundamental Churches of Southern Africa. Appendix L. The Independent Fundamental Churches [combining Baptists and “Baptistic” Bible Churches: 115 (An updated estimated membership of 8500 and 5000 affiliated). Also note: Hildenbrandt, J., History of the Church in Africa, African Christian Press, 1996, 275. This source of information provides additional information and variant membership figures on Baptists in South Africa: The Baptist Convention: 634 churches (35,572 members and 71,000 affiliated); The Baptist Union: 489 Churches 38,175 Churches and 64,000 affiliated.

<sup>99</sup> South African Christian Handbook, Durbanville, Christian Network, 2000. Independent Baptist and Bible churches have grown from two congregations in 1975 to over one hundred and fifteen congregations in 1999. Over one hundred thirty-five missionaries and pastors are active in ministry.

<sup>100</sup> Muller, Jac. J., Die Christelike Sektewese, Kaapstad, Citadel-Pers, 1935, 68, 69, 81 “Gelowiges- of volwaasenesdoop by alle baptistiese sektes ...”; 89-90 “Die sekte wil die gemeenskap van die “heiliges,” die “ware” Kerk wees;” 108, “Die Chiliasme is ‘n eskatologiese leerstuk van haas elke sekte.”; 124 “Met die grootste eensydigheid en willekeur word die Skrif uitgel in fundamentalistiese, tipologiese of allegoriese sin, net na dit nodig is, en “soos die Gees hul lei.” Daar is geen vaste hermeneutiese reël of objektiewe maatstaf van Skrifuitleg nie...”; 148 “Want dan sou die plig en roeping van elkeen wees om te verbeter wat nie goed is nie, om te help regmaak wat verkeerd is, om te hervorm en te repareer, maar nie om te separeer nie.”; 155 “Juis hieruit tog blyk die skreiende gebrek by die sektes aan historiese sin en aan onderwysing deur die vroere geskiedenis van die Kerk. Die sektes beweer wel dat hul in verbinding is met die Apostoliese geloof, maar hulle het die draad van historiese ontwikkeling geheel kwytgeraak, en besit nou die Christelike godsdiens in ‘n sporadiese en fragmentariese vorm.”; 157 “Nie evangelisasie van ongeevangeliseerdes nie, maar proselietmakery is dikwels die vernaamste sendingarbeid van die sekte.”; 162 “Teenoor die aangsvallig-eensydige standpunt van sektes soos die Darbisme wat afwysend staan teenoor die wereld, sy kuns, kultuur en politiek, besef die Kerk dat die Christen ook ‘n roeping het teenoor die maatskappy en die Staat.”

<sup>101</sup> The Baptists: “A People Who Gathered - To Walk in All His Ways.” Christian History, Issue 6, Carol Stream, Christianity Today, Inc. 1997, 3.

Few South African Reformed Christians recognise that the Baptist churches, when collectively thought of, represent one of the world's largest Protestant groupings<sup>102</sup> nor do they usually understand the implications of Anabaptist and Baptist thought as another level of Reformation thought itself. The Independent Fundamental Baptists to a large degree represent this more radical Reformation element, at least so far as the Anabaptist doctrines are to be found among Baptists. On the other hand, those Baptists<sup>103</sup> who would find their history in the English Particular Baptists and who are less polemical and independent consider themselves more a part of the general Protestant Movement.

Though Baptists are historically linked to the Protestant movement, one should be careful in crediting too many similarities between Baptists and the various Reformed or Protestant state<sup>104</sup> or national churches.<sup>105</sup> The differences between Independent Baptists and the State Churches are not always limited to doctrinal matters either. The differences should focus on the Baptist contributions and the Baptist's cultural<sup>106</sup> message, as well. An accurate understanding of the influence of the Radical

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102 Wardin, Albert W. ed., *Baptists Around the World*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 8. "In 1852 there were about 1,167,000 Baptists. By 1904 ... 6,188,000 in about forty-two countries and territories. Ninety years later in 1994 Baptists had grown to thirty-seven million in about 180 countries and territories." Although another source, *Christian History*, Issue 6, Carol Stream, Christianity Today, Inc. 1997, places "over 45 million Baptists in over 175 groups worldwide by 1985. In the United States alone there are over 30 recognized groups claiming the name 'Baptist.' Together they form the largest category outside of the Roman Catholics. In addition the millions of Independent congregations based on Baptist doctrine but not using the name is beyond estimating"

103 Certainly in the case of South Africa's Baptist Union and the Southern Baptist (U.S.A.) missionary outreach – the National Baptist Convention – this distinction and link to the English Baptists is generally accepted. Some more Calvinistic Independent Baptist would also chose to be identified with the English (Particular i.e. Calvinistic) Baptist History.

104 Protestant, Charismatic, Christian cults and, of course, even the Orthodox and Roman Catholic religion use many of the same terms, though the meanings and interpretations obviously vary greatly. Though these Christians were a real part of the Reformation, and thus 'Protestant' in character, Baptists' doctrinal terminology should often be noted as having its own particular emphasis or interpretation.

105 The Reformed Baptist Church is without doubt the closest Baptist Church to traditional or magisterial Protestantism but the relatively strong Calvinistic influences to be found in almost every Baptist church, group or association is a testimony to the high level of Reformed thought or at least Calvinistic thought to be found in modern Baptist churches.

106 The cultural message: How we see an enterprise, its values and beliefs, its developmental history, its cohesiveness i.e. shared understanding or lack there of, the way it learns, its institutional style, its motivations and incentives, and

Reformation's Anabaptists and the Baptists could change one's own perspective regarding some of the most revolutionary forces related to the Reformation and modern democracy. One example of this is the strong influence the Baptist patriots of early American history had on the "Bill of Rights," one of America's and the World's most formative democratic documents.

Baptists have ever been the ardent friends of civil and religious liberty. Their history in the New World overflows with testimonies of this character.

The American Revolution secured a fund of glory sufficiently large to give an ample portion to every one who shared in its struggles and sacrifices. Men of nearly every Christian creed, and the author of the "Age of Reason," and "The Rights of Man," aided in obtaining for our country its best temporal blessing, and for the world the richest gift of a beneficent Providence. All Christian communities in the "Thirteen Colonies" laboured with quickened zeal to secure our liberties, and they achieved unbounded success.

Denominations, whose principles today accord with universal liberty, are not responsible for the persecutions inflicted by their religious ancestors in Colonial times. Nor are modern Baptists entitled to any credit for the glorious doctrines and practices of their fathers in Revolutionary days. But we naturally take a special interest in our sainted and heroic predecessors, whose sacred worth and patriotic deeds have justly earned for them a respectable share of the admiration of mankind.

Our Baptist fathers demanded full liberty of conscience for themselves, and for all others and gloried in disobedience to all persecuting laws. Before the revolution Rhode Island was the freest (sic) Colony in North America, or in the history of the race. Her Baptist founders had made their settlement a Republic complete in every development of liberty, even while under the nominal rule of a king; they created a government with which there could be no lawful interference by any power in the Old World or the New.

Baptist were the chief instruments in completing the Constitution of the United States, the charter of revolutionary liberty, by adding the amendment securing full religious freedom. <sup>107</sup>

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its mission and vision. Ref: Thurbin, P. J., Implementing the Learning Organisation, London, Pitman Publishing, 1994, 104-134.

<sup>107</sup> Cathcart, W., Baptist Patriots and the American Revolution, Grand Rapids, Guardian Press, 1976, 4-7. (Original Title: The Baptist and the American Revolution, Washington, 1876.)

Many social, political, moral and spiritual aspects of history are directly related to Baptist contributions.<sup>108</sup> To fail to grasp this point is to fail to grasp some central details in world and church history.

Few South Africans really understand the historic link between early American democracy and today's worldwide democracy, and human rights. Few South African's would have any reason to link the Anabaptist and Baptist doctrines of soul-liberty<sup>109</sup>, the separation of church and state, and the autonomy of the local church with anything that would relate to their own modern situation on another continent and in another political dispensation. Though the strong English Baptist history, with it's Biblical doctrine of separation of church and state, has had a positive influence in South Africa, only the more recent influence<sup>110</sup> of America's Southern Baptists and that of the Independent Baptists can make the strong historic contribution relating to political freedom so needed in South Africa and all of Africa today.

In the early development of the American Revolution, Baptists became "active patriots in the Revolutionary War. With their demands for religious liberty, they included a cry for political liberty. They loyally supported patriots<sup>111</sup> like Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Washington, and received their praise. Baptists in the South (Southern regions of the United States) played an important role in securing the adoption of religious liberty in Virginia.

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<sup>108</sup> McBeth, H. L., A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1990. Reference: "Religious Liberty" a confessional written by John Smyth, 1612., 70; Isaac Backus (1724-1806) 170; John Leland "The Rights of Conscience Inalienable" 1791. "he is often credited with having influenced James Madison to introduce the Bill of Rights as amendments to the (United States) Federal Constitution. (Source: L. F. Greene, ed., The Writings of the late Elder John Leland (New York, G.W. Wood, 1845, 179-186.)

<sup>109</sup> Day, R.E., The Shadow of the Broad Brim, Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1934.

<sup>110</sup> Wardin, Albert W., ed., Baptists around the World, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 59. Their official arrival in the late 1960's "With a request of assistance from the Baptist Union, Southern Baptist entered South Africa to help in theological education, evangelism, church development and relief."

<sup>111</sup> One should note that these "patriots" of that time were generally recognised as "non-Christian" or "unsaved" by Fundamentalists and Evangelicals since they are acknowledged to have been everything from Freemasons to Deists. Nonetheless, the point of this section is to show the appreciation of the political leaders for the various Baptists who were actively contributing to the establishment of democratic values of that day.

Like their fellow Baptists in the North, they helped lay foundations for the national Bill of Rights which guaranteed religious liberty for all in the Constitution of the United States<sup>112</sup>.

Further complicating the issue of obtaining a correct historical perspective regarding Baptists is the Independent Baptists "spirit of individualism." Independent Baptists openly prefer the tension of disagreement and even division to accepting a unity that has been forged from one or another type of compliance or regimentation. The Independent Baptists have a genuine willingness to serve and work together, but they place real limitations on the value of this togetherness, since they consider both their religious and political liberty a higher calling than their unity. In another way of speaking, the "boiling pot" of Baptist thought is "fuelled on the logs" of the individual's soul liberty before God. Independent Baptists as the more conservative, fundamentalists and even more radical of the Baptists play an important role, even among other Baptists, in promoting an extreme and highly visible appreciation for these principles. These fundamental beliefs in soul liberty or the "competency of the soul"<sup>113</sup> before God, the freedom of human expression and the freedom of personal conscience are all essential elements that, along with the tensions of one's rights to creativity and individuality, keep Baptists and especially American Independent Fundamental Baptists from finding full agreement even among themselves. Yet, this emphasis on freedom allows these Independent Baptists the personal sense of security that is required for maintaining an ongoing dialogue with others that can result in real social and spiritual change.

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<sup>112</sup> Baker, Robert A., *Southern Baptist Beginnings*, Nashville, The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1979, 3.

<sup>113</sup> Mullins, E.Y., *The Axioms of Religion*, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1908, "To be responsible the soul must be free. The appeal of the moral axiom is to our self consciousness. This is what gave it power when the theologians after the Reformation urged it against the extreme Calvinism of the day. Men knew they were free, and therefore no theory of God's decrees which ignored this fact could permanently hold its place in the doctrinal system. The reaction went too far, but it was wholesome and necessary." 150.

It is useful, then, to recognise that Baptist churches, in general, and Independent Baptists, in a more specific sense, are extraordinary congregations, distinct even from one another. Their atypical interpretations are not viewed as “dogmatic” declarations, but the individual privilege of local autonomy. In this sense, the local Church’s autonomy stands as a watchman against blind compliance.

Each particular church has a complete power and authority from Jesus Christ to administer all gospel ordinances, provided they have sufficient, duly qualified officers to receive in and cast out, and also to ordain their own officers, and to exercise every part of gospel discipline and church government, independent of any other church or assembly whatever. Several independent churches where Providence gives them a convenient situation, may and ought for their mutual strength, counsel, and other valuable advantages, by their voluntary and free consent, to enter into an agreement and confederation.

All Baptists consider themselves as somehow linked to the interpretation of church polity known as congregationalism, but this aspect of their identity, though important, is not sufficient to fully demarcate who or what Baptists actually are.

Congregationalism is only one of a number of balancing forces in their understanding of the Christian life.

An exception to the Baptist view of individual liberty is, of course, related to those typically Christian “fundamental truths”. When a clearly universally accepted Biblical doctrine is at stake, Baptists generally become relatively dogmatic. For example, Baptist history reveals a general rejection of almost any teaching of soteriological universalism. Independent Baptists consider salvation in Christ truly and totally exclusive to the Christian faith and on such subjects become adamant! It is also



helpful to note that Baptists, Independent or otherwise, claim no exclusivity. The late Baptist theologian, Mullins clarifies the concept of interdependence when he states:

We do not believe any form of Christianity which breaks with the Scripture as the revealed and authoritative word of God can long serve the interests of God's kingdom on earth in any thoroughgoing way.<sup>114</sup>

In regards to the doctrines of salvation and the other great Biblical themes all Baptists fully recognise they are only one part of the Christian faith.

Some strong theologically liberal influences are evident in Baptist history, but theologically and emotionally charged battles have always ensued in relation to these influences. Liberalism has often won the day in these theological battles within Baptist unions, conventions and fellowships, but amongst Independent Baptists these battles generally served to increase their ranks. There is no record of an Independent Fundamental Baptist congregation turning to liberal theology. A famous example of a theological battle being lost to liberal elements and the resultant growth of the Independent Baptists is seen in the life<sup>115</sup> of C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892).<sup>116</sup> Though London's and arguably the world's most famous Baptist pastor would take a clear and strong stand against the compromises of his day, the majority of his own Baptist brethren would never quite understand all the issues. He simply took his stand too late for others to have the time to assess the situation. The British Baptist Union went

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<sup>114</sup> Mullins, E.Y., *The Axioms of Religion*, Philadelphia, The American Baptist Publication Society, 1908, 26.

<sup>115</sup> Referring to Spurgeon as an Independent Baptist may seem most unusual to those in the Baptist Union since they might well believe he would have remained within the Baptist Union had the union listened to his warning regarding compromise of some fundamental Biblical truths. In context to the Independent Fundamental Baptist viewpoint, many Independent Baptists (worldwide) would have remained in the British Baptist Union or its equivalent American bodies were it not for these organisation's compromise of certain fundamental truths.

<sup>116</sup> Day, R.E., *The Shadow of the Broad Brim*, Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1934, 148. The "Downgrade" controversy began in Spurgeon's fifty-third year (1887).

toward Liberalism, and Spurgeon and some of his friends went toward American Fundamentalism.<sup>117</sup>

Independent Baptists view Spurgeon's withdrawal from the British Baptist Union as a major historic issue. The fact that he became independent<sup>118</sup> at the zenith of his most popular ministry is historically significant. The fact that he joined the ranks of the Independent and Fundamental Baptist movement is often overlooked, but not by the Independent Baptists. His son, Thomas Spurgeon, would later become one of the contributing authors of the momentous four volume set: The Fundamentals<sup>119</sup> in 1917 and this fact again is most important to Independent Baptists who identify themselves with similar actions and thinking. The cause and the radical response to both the father and the son was primarily related to their absolute rejection of the liberal, higher criticism and Universalist compromises<sup>120</sup> that they believed existed within the British Baptist Union in the late nineteenth century<sup>121</sup> and early twentieth century.<sup>122</sup> Independent Baptists are convinced that the fact that Spurgeon's Tabernacle moved toward the Independent Fundamentalists and dispensationalism<sup>123</sup> following Spurgeon's death had everything to do with his own shift towards the end of his life.

<sup>117</sup> Sheehan, R. J., C.H. Spurgeon and the Modern Church, London, Grace Publications, 1985, 84-85.

<sup>118</sup> Murray attempts to focus Spurgeon's theological unhappiness on matters related to Arminianism, and then attempts to link the superficiality of Arminianism to superficial evangelistic appeals. In this emphasis, Murray fails to notice that Spurgeon was making genuine evangelical appeals and increasingly "courting" American evangelists who were emphasizing something not generally accepted within Calvinism, i.e. the need for personal adult conversion—exclusive of the teachings of Covenant or Reformed theology. Murray, Iain, The Forgotten Spurgeon, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, p 99-106.

<sup>119</sup> Torrey, R. A. and Dixon, A. C. eds., The Fundamentals, IV Volumes, The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917. Reprinted, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1980. (Spurgeon, Thomas, Vol. III, "Salvation by Grace," 110-127.)

<sup>120</sup> Day, R.E., The Shadow of the Broad Brim, Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1934, 134. "These battles were ... first on the left wing, against superstition (mysticism), and then on the right wing, against modernism. Finally, he cast off ambiguity and specified members of the British Baptist Union. This forced his withdrawal from the organization, and the Union passed a vote of censure upon him." Also note: Murray, Iain, The Forgotten Spurgeon, Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1966, 254.

<sup>121</sup> Spurgeon, C. H., Ed., "New Theology & Baptist Union," The Sword & Trowel, London, Published by the Metropolitan Tabernacle, 1878. (On file, a photocopy of the original comments on New Theology.)

<sup>122</sup> Sheehan, R. J., C.H. Spurgeon and the Modern Church, London, Grace Publications, 1985, 85, 97-98.

To Independent Baptists this swing away from Union membership serves as a good historical example for their own actions.

The many splits and divisions within the twentieth century North American Baptists<sup>124</sup> were also caused, to a great degree, by disputes over the increasingly vocal liberals and the Universalists within their own ecclesiastical ranks. The denial of the absolute exclusivity of Christianity, a subject then being heatedly debated within the large American and Southern Baptist conventions literally created the momentum for the early twentieth century growth of the Independent Baptist movement. Carl Henry, a contemporary American theologian, believes the issue will soon return:

The Religionsgeschichte theory, which regards all religions as having been woven on the same loom and denies essential differences as well as the biblical insistence on true and false religions and on its own salvific exclusivity, will likely be debated anew along with a wide range of mediating projections.<sup>123</sup>

Independent Baptists rarely disagree over their soteriological beliefs – that Christ alone can save and change the soul of man. Their belief in the absolute exclusivity of the Biblical Christian faith and of Christ for salvation is such a core issue of their faith and theology that the issue is simply not open for debate. The Independent Fundamental Baptists and the similar Bible Churches consider such doctrinal shifts as the new hermeneutics, theological deconstructionism and post-modernism as “warning signals” forewarning the church of Jesus Christ to be objective and learn from the mistakes of the past. Fundamentalist Baptist and Bible churches consider any new interpretative cultural message as a threat to the church today. In defence of

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<sup>123</sup> Though Spurgeon was a strong Calvinist and was most of his life critical of Dispensationalism, many Independent Baptists believe this was undergoing change in his later years. See: Fuller, David O., ed., *Spurgeon's Sermons on the Second Coming*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1943.

<sup>124</sup> Beale, David O., *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, Greenville, Unusual Publications, 1986, 173-190.

the Independent Baptist notion that an objective view of all the various churches within our culture needs clear identification, I submit D.A. Carson's thoughts:

Belonging to one or more overlapping interpretive communities ... can be a good thing. Suppose the interpretive community in question is a group of sincere, committed, knowledgeable Christians. To put this in contemporary terms, this group has been shaped by the biblical text. This does not mean that all their understandings of the Bible are correct. It does mean that at least some of their number have spiralled in on the text again and again; they have taken pains to approach it asymptotically, believing or even fearing that they cannot approach it absolutely; they have tried, again and again, to fuse the horizon of their understanding with that of the text, as they themselves are being shaped by the community. And they have taught their findings to others in their community of faith and lived them out, thereby shaping the entire community of faith by the text.<sup>126</sup>

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are committed to recognising or identifying the compromises of truth in our day – even at the cost of being considered “negative” or “unloving”. Carson continues:

By the grace of God, there may be a much earlier and deeper personal grasp of the message of Scripture than would be the case if the individual belonged to an entirely alien interpretive community. Indeed, such an interpretive community may help many of those who are nurtured and shaped by it to avoid foolish and dangerous mistakes .... That does not mean it is necessarily a good thing .... All traditions tend to wander off in time. That is one of the reasons why constant checking and reformation are needed. Interpretive communities can also keep one from hearing the gospel: one thinks, for example, of societies that are tightly tied together by sets of cultural assumptions.... But that is why the Christian community must consciously seek its own reformation by conformity to the Word of God, and all that means for conduct, worship, service, creed, God-centeredness, repentance, faith and so forth.<sup>127</sup>

As we have seen, arriving at a proximate historical verification of the relationship between the world's Baptist community (on a macro basis) and the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches is complicated by their congregational

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<sup>125</sup> Henry, Carl F.H., *Gods of this age or God of the Ages?*, Nashville, Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994, 312

<sup>126</sup> Carson, D. A., *The Gagging of God*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, 127.

autonomy, many splits, and divisions. Though Fundamentalist thinking encourages the idea that people of faith should be clearly identified, their own identity on a macro basis remains complicated by their extreme Fundamentalist doctrinal exclusivity<sup>128</sup>. To find “common ground” on anything but the most basic essential doctrines is most difficult. This same proximate historical verification between the Baptists of South Africa and the South African Independent Baptist community (on a micro basis) though a most important goal will be equally complicated. Though my own role, in initiating many of these new churches and training many of its pastors, gives me a first-hand knowledge of much of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church history, it also leads to difficulties in objectivity. Just the task of identifying Fundamentalists and Independents can easily lead to one seeming to be defending one or the other view. Describing the narrower thinking and comparing it to broader views or perspectives also seems to lead to one looking as if he is critical himself. Being objective and academically critical, especially within the confines of narrow issues, can be a most elusive goal.

### **1.5 The Name: Baptist.**

Understanding the name Baptist as it is used in history is to understand it, as different groups and peoples perceived it. As a part of the process of identifying Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches one must appreciate the many interpretations and variations of the name: Baptist. Independent Baptists explain that the name Baptist was originally used by the opponents of those “radical reforming” churches or groups who, among other things, rejected infant baptism and accepted

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., Carson, 127-128.

<sup>128</sup> James, Robinson B., and Dockery, David S., eds., *Beyond the Impasse?*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992, 132.

only baptised believers as members of their congregations.<sup>129</sup> Their insistence upon this interpretation of the history of their name plays a role in the development of their own definitive identity. Independent Baptists point out that the earliest form of this name was Anabaptists<sup>130</sup>. Such Anabaptists, or rebaptisers, as they were referred to, were names used as terms of derision by the Roman Catholic and the Reformed churches alike. It was also somewhat common to mix terms like mystic or sect together with the term Anabaptist, and to charge one individual or congregation with the errors of another individual or congregation,<sup>131</sup> while referring to this generic group, i.e. the Baptists,<sup>132</sup>

A thorough understanding of Baptist history should include an awareness of the different names and epithets used by the “enemies” of the Baptists. Although terms of derision many of them would finally be adopted by the Baptists themselves. Though the name, Baptist, was not commonly accepted before the middle of the sixteenth century, with the passing of time, the name was accepted by the Baptists

<sup>129</sup> Pickering, Ernest D., Baptist Principles vs. Interdenominationalism, Clarks Summit, Baptist Bible College & School of Theology Publications, 1976, 5.

<sup>130</sup> Modern Mennonites especially lay claim to this name, *Anabaptists*, and to much of it's history, but a good number of Baptists, and especially a good percentage of the Independent Baptists, also find their heritage in this history and in a certain usage of the term Anabaptist. “Eventually the (old) Radical Reformation came about through the efforts of utopian fanatics like Thomas Munzer, and the work of spiritualistic pietists like Menno Simons. The work of the Anabaptists or rebaptisers, as they were called, soon found refuge – and flowered – among the tolerant Dutch. From Holland the ideas of the Radical reformers crossed the channel to England...” (Cooper, John Charles, Radical Christianity and Its Sources, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1968, 08)

<sup>131</sup> Farley, Benjamin W., ed. and Translator, John Calvin – Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1982, 20 “In 1534, while at Orleans, Calvin came in contact with two groups who espoused variant views of the soul's state after death. He describes one group (psychosomnolents) as holding the unconscious sleep of the soul and the other (thnetopsychists) as teaching that the soul ‘perishes along with the body,’ though the soul is revived when the whole man is raised. Calvin lumped both these groups under one rubric, the Psychopannychistia. In the preface to the 1534 and 1536 editions of the Psychopannychia he designated them as Anabaptists, calling them Catabaptists in the body of the work. However, it is doubtful that the psychopannychists were, strictly speaking, Anabaptists. Indeed, it is difficult to know to what extent either of these positions was espoused by the Anabaptists of Cornaux or LaNeuveville. It is possible that French-speaking Anabaptists maintained belief in some form of psychosomnolence, but the Mennonite scholar Christian Neff denies that the sleep of the soul was ever a tenet of the Anabaptists anywhere. (Christian Neff, “Sleep of the Soul,” Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. 4., 543.)

<sup>132</sup> Orr, James, The Progress of Dogma, London, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1897, “In Anabaptist and mystical circles the tendency was to the rejection of the forms of an imputation theology, and reversion to the notion of justification by imparted righteousness.” Ch. VIII. ‘Doctrine of Osiander,’ 271.

themselves. For Baptists, the title Anabaptists or Baptist generally describes those who are concerned with an emphasis on the maintenance of a literal and Biblical perspective of the truth,<sup>133</sup> in other words, those who were clearly outside the Roman Catholic<sup>134</sup> interpretation of Scripture with Roman Catholic "Tradition," and to varying degrees even the Reformation<sup>135</sup>, circles of religion. Baptism<sup>136</sup>, itself, was secondary and symbolic of the greater issues related to literalism<sup>137</sup>.

Most of these people, as simple Christians, preferred their own local or regional identifications to those given them by those who were opposing them. Names misused in this way may mislead. If we give attention to the distinctive convictions, or matters of conscience of these Baptists, by whatever names they are called, we may find the indications of the true nature of their beliefs and lifestyles and their congregational worship!

It is important that the various names given to Baptists by others be viewed on the basis of the changing times and contexts or historic developments. An understanding of the evolution within Anabaptism will show that the names and meanings also evolved and changed. Only as one understands the different streams or sub-

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<sup>133</sup> Authority, inerrancy, sufficiency, harmony and verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture; preservation: divine and canonical evidences; unity: infallibility and integrity of the Bible; perspicuity, illumination and the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of the Scriptures. Ref. Bush, L. Rush and Nettles, Tom J., Baptist and the Bible, The Baptist doctrines of biblical inspiration and religious authority in historical perspective, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980, 28, 32, 264-265, 291-295.

<sup>134</sup> Berkov, L., The History of Christian Doctrine, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949, 237.

<sup>135</sup> Estep, W. R., Revolution within the Revolution, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990, 25. "Luther was on record as approving execution as a cure for Anabaptism." One must remember that Reformers were considered only relatively better than Romanists by the Anabaptists..

<sup>136</sup> Orchard, G.H., A Concise History of Baptists from the Time of Christ, their Founder, to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publishers, 1956, 71 (95). Orchard was an English Baptist pastor and published his first edition in London in 1838. It was republished in America under the auspices of one of the world's most influential Baptist leaders, J.R. Graves. The thirteenth edition was dated 1855. In Orchard's foot note on the Donatists and in connection with their argument with 'Augustine', Orchard points out: "This question shows that the Donatists required scriptural authority for their faith and practice." 95.

<sup>137</sup> James, Robinson B., and Dockery, David S., eds., Beyond the Impasse?, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992, 29.

groupings, with their collective and overlapping influences on one another, will the doctrinal 'evolution' of Baptist thought begin to make sense.

Anabaptism took form or shape at various times throughout history. Though it would seem unlikely to many modern Baptists, many Baptists of past generations and in particular many Independent Baptists today, believe that the Waldensians role in their history is genuine and that these early separatist groups, such as the Waldensians,<sup>138</sup> had an influence<sup>139</sup> on the evolution of Baptist thought. Examples of the Waldensians influence on Baptists, in general, and Independent Baptists, in particular, are provided by many, if not most, Baptist histories<sup>140</sup>, but Ernest Pickering a Independent Fundamental Baptist summarises the Waldensians role or influence on Anabaptists and thus eventually on Independent Baptists as: 1. evangelicalism; 2. lay preachers; 3. separatists; 4. identified and responded to error; and 5. were bitter foes of the Roman Catholic church.

- i. One of the largest and most prominent of the more evangelical groups in the Middle Ages was the Waldensian Church.
- ii. They believed in lay preachers, a concept almost unheard of in that day, and one for which they were especially denounced by Rome.
- iii. Most certainly the great majority of Waldensians were separatists. [Ref. The Articles of the Waldensians, 1160 A.D.]
- iv. The Waldensians were not bashful about identifying error, nor were they hesitant in prescribing response to error as it had embodied itself in the established church.
- v. The Waldensians were bitter foes of the Roman Church whom they felt had ensnared the souls of thousands and had spilled the blood of many of God's people.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Farley, Benjamin W., ed. and Translator, John Calvin—Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1982, 74, 163, 317

<sup>139</sup> Verduin, Leonard, The Reformers and Their Stepchildren, Grand Rapids, W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, 44, 64, 127, 152, 173, 175, 178, 195.

<sup>140</sup> Anderson, Armitage, Bush & Nettles, J.M. Carroll, Christian, G., Gillette, Huss, Jenkins, Latourette, McBeth, Newell, Orchard, Pickering, Ross, Torbet, and many others.

<sup>141</sup> Pickering, E. D., Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979 35-38.



It is also important to realise that many of the names used in derision were not used with any historical or doctrinal accuracy, but served only to mock. It is important to note that any number of independent churches can feel justified in finding aspects of their roots or heritage in the same historical groupings.

### 1.5.1 General Terms for Anabaptists:<sup>142</sup>

Though to varying degrees, Baptists in general and Independent Baptists, more particularly, identify themselves with the term "Anabaptist." Their general or free usage of the term "Anabaptist" is their choice of a name to describe those who in one or another sense reflect the Independent Baptist understanding of this abstract and generic group of detractors<sup>143</sup> of the Roman Catholic Church, and to a lesser degree those who were critics of the Reformers, as well. Baptist historian, H.C. Vedder wrote:

The attempt has been made, at one time or another, to identify as Baptists nearly every sect that separated from the Roman Church. In many instance the purest life of an age is to be found, not in the bosom of the Catholic Church, but among these despised and persecuted sectaries. Not one of them failed to hold and emphasize some vital truth that was either rejected or practically passed by in the church that called itself orthodox. God did not leave His truth without witnesses at any time.<sup>144</sup>

Rutgers points to a direct connection between the Anabaptists and similar groups with the modern premillennialists, literalists and dispensationalists like the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches:<sup>145</sup>

Others advancing chiliastic views were the English Mede and the French Peter Poiret. The Dutch theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries represent a wide

<sup>142</sup> Nederlands: door: - Oehninger, Friedrich, *de Geschiedenis des Christendoms in den Loop der Tijden*, Naamlooze Vennootschap Vrukkerij, J, De Longte – Dordrecht.

<sup>143</sup> Lindsell, Harold, *The New Paganism*, San Francisco, Harper & Row Publishers, 1987, 37-39.

<sup>144</sup> Vedder, Henry C., *A Short History of the Baptists*, The Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1907, 8-10.

<sup>145</sup> Rutgers, W. H., *Premillennialism in America*, Goes, Holland, Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1930.

divergence of opinions, rejecting some and accepting other doctrines held by the chiliasts. A new influx of millenarian hopes came from the Pietists, Spener, Bengel and his disciple Crusius.<sup>146</sup>

Ryrie also lists these separatist names or "epithets" under the term or title

"Anabaptists" and draws a clear connection<sup>147</sup> between the doctrine of these Radical reformers with what the Independent Fundamentalist Baptist and Bible churches,<sup>148</sup> and others,<sup>149</sup> would include in their doctrinal heritage:

1. Wederdoopers,<sup>150</sup> Catabaptists<sup>151</sup>, Heretics, Waldenzen, Weavers<sup>152</sup>[Kleedermacker<sup>153</sup>, Winckler (Leufern),] Nicodemitism<sup>154</sup>, Donatists<sup>155</sup>, Rationalists, Manicheans<sup>156</sup>, Cathars<sup>157</sup>, "The Stepchildren of the Reformation,<sup>158</sup>" The Second Front, Rottengeisters<sup>159</sup> (a clique, agitators),
  2. Inspirationists (Spiritualists):<sup>160</sup>
- Zwickau Prophets<sup>161</sup>, Fanatisme<sup>162</sup>, "Theocratische Democra tie en Monarchie"<sup>163</sup>, Kommunisten<sup>164</sup>, Socialists<sup>165</sup>, "Stormers and Stressers"<sup>166</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Rutgers, W. H., *Premillennialism in America*, 78.

<sup>147</sup> Ryrie, Charles C., *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, Neptune, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1953, 33.

<sup>148</sup> Pickering, E. D., *Biblical Separation, The Struggle for a Pure Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist, 1979 11-41.

<sup>149</sup> Jacobs, Charles M., *The Story of the Church*, 1925, The Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America - the Muhlenberg Press, 263-265. ( Referred to as: "Quietists" and "Revolutionaries.")

<sup>150</sup> Often overlapping and often misapplied: "At times the Anabaptist Reformation has been misunderstood because of the confusion in the use of terms..." Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 1, 182.

<sup>151</sup> Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (Written: 1559 and Translated by Henry Beveridge, 1845), Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962, 521.

<sup>152</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 165. Also Fleming Hans Busschaertm called de Wever (the Weaver), ordained an elder by Menno Simons in 1555. Reference Verheyden, A.L.E., *Anabaptism In Flanders 1530-1650*, Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, Scottsdale, Mennonite Publishing House, 1961, 39.

<sup>153</sup> Foxe, John, door Rossouw, D.P. *Het Nieuwe Martelaarsboek*, Amsterdam, Hoveker & Zoon, 1894, 578-579.

<sup>154</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 176.

<sup>155</sup> Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (Written: 1559 and Translated by Henry Beveridge, 1845), Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962, 521.

<sup>156</sup> Note references by Calvin to these men as "Chiliasts", ii 265, "Valentinians, Cerdonites, Manichees [Institutes, I, 109]" such references were made on the basis that their teaching was in Calvin's opinion "the same master, who has of old raised up ancient heretics..." [Farley, B.W., See: *Treatises Against...* 190]

<sup>157</sup> Such identifications or "epithets" were used by the detractors of Anabaptism but were certainly not viewed as justified by the Anabaptist of that time or of today's Independent Baptists.

<sup>158</sup> Bossert, Gustav, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*, 1930, Vol I, 40.

<sup>159</sup> Brecht, Martin, (Translated by Schaff, James L.), *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation 1521-1532*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1990, 444, 446, Note: A term commonly used by Martin Luther and many others.

<sup>160</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 1.

3. Quintinists <sup>167</sup> Of the “les principaux capitaines,” Calvin reports:

For the sect has comprised different groups, some in Holland, some in Brabant [Belgium], and some in the regions in Lower Germany... of the French Tongue ... to begin with, Chopping, a Fleming and native of Lille, began to stir up this filth... afterward helped by another named Quintin (of Hainaut, a tailor; he served as an usher in the court of Marguerite of Angouleme, 1492-1549) accompanied by a Bertrand of Moulines and Claude Perceval (active in Strassburg and stayed in Martin Bucer’s home on occasion).<sup>168</sup>

4. Libertines: <sup>169</sup> Historians of later periods, such as J. Frederichs<sup>170</sup> and Williams preferred to make this group a subgroup of the Spiritualists. Many later historians came to believe that Calvin had altogether mistaken the one group for the other and thus maligned them unreasonably in so doing.

5. Biblicists<sup>171</sup>: This term, later to be attached to Fundamentalists, was based on the Anabaptist belief that the Word of God alone was sacramental (i.e. a means to or a conveyor of grace), and not the rites of baptism or communion as was widely accepted by the Reformers.

6. Mennonites: Holland<sup>172</sup>, and Flanders.

The Brotherhood<sup>173</sup>, Baptisten, Doopsgezinden.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Moeller, William, History of the Christian Church, Three Volumes. (Edited by G. Kawerau, Translated by J.H. Freese), 1893, London, George Allen & Company, Note: Volume III [AD 1517-1648], p36, Zwickau, “Thomas Munzer (amongst others) had preached, a man in whom medieval mysticism and apocalypticism were combined with passionate zeal against the existing ecclesiasticism.” Also note 6265

<sup>162</sup> Fanatisme (dweepzucht) Oehninger, Friedrich, de Geschiedenis des Christendoms in den Loop der Tijden, Dordrecht, Naamlooze Vennootschap Vrukkerij, J, De Longte, 365

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*, 364

<sup>164</sup> Belgic Confession, Article 36.

<sup>165</sup> Moeller, W., History, 64

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, 64 (The Zurich “Stormer and Dringer”).

<sup>167</sup> Calvin, John (Farley, Benjamin Wirt, ed. Translator) Calvin, John, Treatises Against the Anabaptist and Against the Libertines, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House Company, 1982, p. 163. (Based on the Calvin Opera, Vol. 7 Columns 49-248) 8 Note: Such names of derision were obviously used to imply that the Anabaptists were heretics.

<sup>168</sup> Farley, B.J. Translator’s Footnotes in Calvin, John, Treatises Against the Anabaptist and Against the Libertines, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House Company, 1982, 201.

<sup>169</sup> Calvin, John (Farley, Benjamin Wirt, ed. translator) Calvin, John, Treatises Against the Anabaptist and Against the Libertines, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House Company, 1982, 200 - 203; Note., Radical Reformation, 354, 599.

<sup>170</sup> Frederichs, J., Die Secte der Loisten of Antwerpsche Libertijnen: 1525-1545, 1891, Graven, Ghent and the Hague,

<sup>171</sup> James, R. B., and Dockery, D. S., eds., Beyond the Impasse?, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992., 131, 147.

### 1.5.2 The Doctrines distinctive to Baptists and similar churches.

The Anabaptists<sup>173</sup>, Baptists<sup>176</sup> in general and the Independent Baptist<sup>177</sup> churches in particular are recognized as characteristically distinct in the following areas:

- (1.) The Bible is their “only rule for faith and practice.”
- (2.) The autonomy of the local church as a paramount principle.
- (3.) A regenerated church membership is essential.
- (4.) Two officers: pastor (s) and deacons are the general practice. <sup>178</sup>
- (5.) Two ordinances: believers’ baptism (immersion); communion, a memorial.
- (6.) Soul competency (or liberty). Personal responsibility and individualism.
- (7.) The priesthood of all believers.
- (8.) The separation of church and state.
- (9.) The Biblical doctrine of separation.
- (10.) The indwelling Spirit of God.
- (11.) The family and social perspective.

To say that these distinctives are unique to Baptist or Bible churches or even to Independent Fundamental Baptist Churches would be misleading. The combined effect of adherence to most of these Baptist Distinctives would indicate that one was

<sup>172</sup> Oehninger, Friedrich, *de Geschiedenis des Christendoms in den Loop der Tijden*, Naamlooze Vennootschap Vrukkerij, J, De Longte – Dordrecht, Menno Simonsz, Mennonieten, 367.

<sup>173</sup> Verheyden, A.L.E., *Anabaptism In Flanders 1530-1650*, Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, Scottsdale, Mennonite Publishing House, 1961, 54.

<sup>174</sup> Oehninger, F., 367.

<sup>175</sup> Snyder, C.A., *Anabaptist History and Theology. An Introduction*, Kitchener, Pandora Press, 1995. Schleithem Articles, February 24, 1527.

<sup>176</sup> Parnell, C. W., *Being a Baptist Baptist*, Roodepoort, Publishing House, 1980, 7-68.

<sup>177</sup> Anderson, Donald K., *The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 10-11.

<sup>178</sup> Elders, a type of second tier of pastors is found among reformed Baptist and more common outside the USA.

uniquely “Baptistic,” i.e. Baptist in principle and many modern Evangelical denominations could rightfully claim any number of these distinctives as partially representative of their own theological positions.

### **1.5.3 The Analogous Churches.**

The purpose of this section is to establish analogy, i.e. a partially similar or parallel history, or distinctiveness held among otherwise disparate churches. The indirect heritage and influences found in these churches establish not only analogy, but this heritage and the various influences played a genuine role, although sometimes negative one, in the formation of the outlook and attitudes of many Independent Baptist churches. There is no claim being made that there is a formal relationship between these groups or with general Baptists or particular Independent Baptist congregations. The extent of commonality in matters such as church order, the manner of interpreting the Scriptures, the historical paths, the mutual problems or even the imperfect parallels have had a real influence on the development of the so-called American “Bible-belt” mentality. This “mentality” is commonly found among Independent Baptist churches. These influences, whether positive or negative, explain some of the differences between the South African Baptist Union, with their more British ecclesiastical influences<sup>179</sup> and the Independent Fundamental Baptist churches with their somewhat different histories and influences often influenced by the role of the “analogous” religions and their histories. To understand these unique influences will help the non-American reader understand much of the mindset (both

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<sup>179</sup> Cross, K.E., *Ours is the Frontier*, Pretoria, University of South Africa, 1986, 200. Cross complains that the early Baptists influenced by the British, Welsh and Germans were already being “submerged by new influences from the united States of America, that most materialistic country in the history of the world. Old stalwarts and pioneers, laymen like King and Grocott as well as ministers like Cross and Gutsche, were regarded as slow and old-fashioned by the aggressive new ministers who were coming in to the church.”

positive and negative) among the Independent Baptists now ministering in Southern Africa.

- **The Amish (Swiss and American).**<sup>180</sup>

The link between Anabaptists, Independent Baptists and the American branch of the Amish church is accepted as fact by most Independent Baptists. Certainly, the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement of the sixteenth century was so significant and vital in developing the "Free Church" point of view on Soul liberty and Separation of Church and State that its influence upon early English Baptists must not, in the opinion of Independent Baptists, be overlooked.<sup>181</sup> The Independent Baptist interpretation of Scripture on these subjects is identical and historically grounded in the teaching of the Mennonite and Amish groups.<sup>182</sup>

One branch of the Anabaptist – Mennonite – Baptist movement should include the followers of Jakob Amman, i.e. the Amish.<sup>183</sup> Under Zwingli's leadership Conrad Grebel, the famed Swiss Anabaptist, and a small group that included J. Amman studied the Greek classics. These were the early years of the Anabaptist movement. The division with Zwingli, the persecution and a growing doctrinal conviction would lead Amman to develop his own following in Switzerland during the latter part of the

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<sup>180</sup> Latourette, Kenneth Scott, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age*, Vol. III., Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1969, 45 Note: The Amish were attracted by the religious liberty offered in Pennsylvania between 1760-1820.

<sup>181</sup> Torbet, R. G., *A History of the Baptists*, Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1980, 23.

<sup>182</sup> Snyder, C. A., *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*, Kitchener, Pandora Press, 1995, Teachings that are highly influential on Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in South Africa today: "Being resolutely committed to the letter of the Scripture and to the teaching that inner regeneration and the presence of the Spirit must produce visible, outward fruits of personal separation from sin and disciplined lifestyles." 161; "That Baptism must precede taking the Lords table." 160; "Christocentric and separatists definitions define one's ethics." 197, "The Swiss socio-economic reality directed inward, to the church and society was left to its own devices." 225; "The equality of persons before God." 228.

<sup>183</sup> Latourette, K. S. *A History of Christianity*, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1953, p 784-785.

seventeenth century.<sup>184</sup> All of these men should be recognised as the true “stepchildren” of the Reformers. For the Amish, baptism was “an answer of a good conscience toward God.”<sup>185</sup> Baptism was to them a pledge that the believer was not only right with God, but that baptism pictured one going down into death and rising again in newness of life, the believer being baptised was in principle at least, once more a being with whom God was well pleased. It was an act of spiritual obedience and a step in spiritual growth – even maturity. The Anabaptists contended that in the baptism experience they experienced was a “Grosse erkickung des gemots” (great refreshing of soul)<sup>186</sup>. On the other hand, many of the Reformers considered this as nothing more than “old wives tales.”<sup>187</sup>

For the Reformers, baptism spoke principally of pardon; for their stepchildren, it spoke most eloquently of renewal.<sup>188</sup> The Anabaptists and Baptists have held to their opinion that traditional baptismal rites of both Rome and the Reformers had lost the dynamic of inner renewal and in the believer’s baptism, i.e. the act of obedient – even submissive Biblical re-baptism, it was being restored to its Biblical symbolism, and significance. It is valuable to understand the clear relationship between the Amish, and Mennonite seventeenth century doctrines of chiliasm<sup>189</sup>, though not accentuated in later years, and the Independent Fundamentalist Baptist and Bible church’s pre-millennialism

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<sup>184</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans 1975, p 26, 205.

<sup>185</sup> 1 Peter 3:21 and Romans 6:2-7.

<sup>186</sup> Verduin, Leonard, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing, 1964, 216

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 218-219

- **The Church of Christ (Campbellites).**

Though far less analogous, and less Evangelical, the Church of Christ as a denomination holds any number of similar though, in the opinion of Independent Baptists, more shallow interpretations of these somewhat similar distinctives. The historical roots with the Baptist, Independent Baptist and Bible churches are mostly reactionary and negative matters, nonetheless the role these debates and periods of opposition played in strengthening Baptist doctrine makes the Church of Christ a real part of modern Baptist and Independent Baptist development.

The Church of Christ<sup>190</sup> was founded by the Campbells. Alexander (1788-1866) was the central role player in the development of this church, though Thomas, his father, should also receive credit for the earliest developments of the movement. In 1813 they joined the Redstone Association of Baptists in western Pennsylvania. In the 1830s Alexander led a major schism in American Baptist life by leading his own Baptist church and many other congregations out of their membership of the Baptist church. They formed what they first called the “Christian Baptists,” or what became commonly known as “the Campbellites.” One Baptist author summarises the matter from a Baptist viewpoint:

Alexander Campbell agitated such issues as Old Testament authority, the role and status of the ministry, the nature of saving faith, and the place of Baptism in the salvation experience.<sup>191</sup>

The Campbellite churches taught that adult baptism regenerated the individual, leading to remission of sins and to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Campbellites

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<sup>189</sup> Rutgers, W. H., *Premillennialism in America*, Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1930, 83.

<sup>190</sup> The Church of Christ, is not to be mistaken with the (UCC) United Church of Christ, a far more liberal church with totally different roots, though also a part of some common early Pennsylvania pioneer American history.



taught that they were restoring the true church and preferred to refer to themselves as the "Restoration Movement." By the 1820s "hundreds of Baptist churches left the Baptist denomination to line up with Campbell's Reformers.<sup>192</sup>" The conservatives of this group eventually called themselves the Church of Christ and the more progressive groups referred to themselves as the "Disciples of Christ."<sup>193</sup>

One of the "ordinances" Alexander Campbell and the other leaders of the Stone-Campbell Movement sought to restore was weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. They rejected missionary societies, instrumental music in worship, use of written confessions, providing regular salaries for ministers, use of ministerial titles and other lesser practices.

Eventually these churches would be known for their acceptance of the New Testament as the sole authority of their faith, and observing the ordinance of the Lord's Supper weekly on each Lord's Day (Sunday). They were organized congregationally. Each congregation was considered autonomous and led by self-chosen elders and deacons. The confusion over their various names were further acerbated by:

Tensions within the movement in the early twentieth century led to its division into three major branches. The introduction of organ music in the late nineteenth century became a major issue that led many congregations to separate around 1906 and they are today known as the "Churches of Christ (Non-Instrumental)."

Over the years they divided further. Disagreements over the development of structures beyond the local congregation led to a second division. Those who rejected that move toward centralization are now known as the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. The Churches are known for their biblical conservatism in relation to the more liberal Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and have made no attempt to relate to the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1990, 241.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 377.

<sup>194</sup> Melton, J. G., ed., *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Chicago, Gale Publishing Co. the 6th edition, 1999.

The historical and to some degree doctrinal link between this movement and the Southern Baptist Convention cannot be denied. Independent Baptist have added “fuel to the fire” by openly opposing these churches as being, in their opinion, heretical. The Independent Baptists make this claim of heresy due to the Church of Christ’s doctrine of baptismal regeneration, something the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches consider to be at the core of Roman Catholic doctrinal heresy. The role of the Campbellites has been viewed by American Baptist in general, and Independent Fundamental Baptists in particular, as harmful and heretical. To understand the roots of the polemical spirit common to Independent Baptists one needs only to observe these two opposing religious groups when they make contact with each other. Non-Americans, even non-American Baptists, would find the degree of fierce argumentation and provocation hard to understand without sufficient knowledge of these two religious movements and their history of launching attacks upon one another.

- **The German Baptist (Brethren) Church, and other Triune Immersionists.**

A more clearly analogous group of small denominations that still holds a number of overlapping distinctives, doctrines, and historical roots with general Baptists, the Independent Fundamental Baptists and even the Bible churches is the German Baptist Brethren, founded by Alexander Mack. This group of believers was begun in Southern Germany in 1708 and was, in time, almost entirely relocated to the United States. They were generally known as German Baptists until 1883 when they divided into three groups: German Baptists, Old German Baptist Brethren, and The Brethren Church (renamed in 1908 as the Church of the Brethren) which split around

fundamentalist issues and the personages of Alva J. McLean and A.J. Holt in 1937.

This division emerged on the one hand as the new Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches with control of the Grace Theological Seminary<sup>195</sup>. The division left the original group with the name General Conference of the Brethren Church.

In Ireland and England yet another branch of Brethren would surface. These conservative Bible oriented believers were known as the Plymouth Brethren. Under the teaching ministry of the eighteenth century Bible teacher, John Nelson Darby<sup>196</sup> the Plymouth Brethren grew to a relatively influential size. Most brethren practiced triune immersion.<sup>197</sup> It is important to Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church history to point out that the defectors from this group often moved to Bible churches or somewhat later in history, even to Independent Baptist churches and the influence on their theology and dispensational hermeneutics<sup>198</sup> was direct and major by the early part of the twentieth century.

The Bible College movement<sup>199</sup> and the Independent seminaries like Dallas Theological Seminary were all directly influenced by these Brethren leaders and their doctrinal conservatism and literal hermeneutic. Dispensationalism, a major influence among the Independent Baptist and Bible Churches, has origins in<sup>200</sup> the conservatism of the various Brethren churches.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Winnona Lake, Indiana

<sup>196</sup> Pickering, H., Chief Men Among the Brethren, Neptune, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1986, 99-104.

<sup>197</sup> Moss, D. E., "Rejoicing from the Hills," Dec. 1998, periodical. Church of the Brethren, www <brethren.org>, <cob-net.org>; Grace Brethren, <fgbc.org>; United Brethren <ub.org>; <storm.ca/~sabigal/gags/pbbhist.html>).

<sup>198</sup> Rutgers, W. H., Premillennialism in America, Goes, Holland, Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1930, 100-101.

<sup>199</sup> Dollar, G.W., A History of Fundamentalism in America, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973, 71.

<sup>200</sup> Pickering, Henry, Chief Men Among the Brethren, Neptune, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1986.

<sup>201</sup> Dollar, G. W., A History of Fundamentalism in America, 71.

- **The Independent Fundamental Churches of America (I.F.C.A.).**

Another of the analogous modern Evangelical bodies that was opposed to denominationalism but was a closely knit fellowship holding many Baptist distinctives, conservative fundamental theological positions, and to a lesser degree some possible historical roots with the Baptists was the I.F.C.A.. These churches are often referred to as *Bible Churches*.

To a large degree the member churches of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America practised baptism by immersion though they generally accepted the baptism of other churches (including those who had been sprinkled as babies, as long as the individuals testified to a personal conversion experience). A good percentage of the so-called "Baptist distinctives" were accepted as distinctive to these Bible churches as well, and some of these I.F.C.A.<sup>222</sup> or Bible churches would have accepted all of them. A number of these churches had backgrounds in the Presbyterian, Congregational, Evangelical United Brethren, and Northern Baptists. Most separated from these denominations due to liberalism, modernism and general compromise in the fundamental Biblical doctrines.

The IFCA was founded in 1930 as an association of independent churches standing for the fundamentals of the Christian faith. The I.F.C.A. was constituted with well over a thousand churches, most of which used the name "Bible Churches."

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<sup>222</sup> Beale, D. O., In Pursuit of Purity. American Fundamentalism since 1850, Greenville, Unusual Publications, 1986, 365-366.

The I.F.C.A. foundational Cicero Bible Church is an example of many of these churches born from the early twentieth century fundamentalist and liberal debate. Many of these churches were independent, community churches and joined the Independent Fundamental Churches of America for one reason, greater fellowship.

A number of Independent Baptists also joined the I.F.C.A. and played a role within this religious group. One of the leading Independent Baptist pastors and theologians, Earnest Pickering, was one of the IFCA National Executive Directors (c.1956).<sup>203</sup>

- **The Independent Community or Bible Churches.**<sup>204</sup>

There were hundreds of independent community or Bible churches that never joined an organisation such as the I.F.C.A.. These independent congregations generally accepted most of the Baptist distinctives as essentially their own doctrinal position as regarded church polity. How many hundreds or thousands of these independent congregations there actually are no one has been able to determine, but their numbers continue to grow worldwide.

Linking Bible churches and Baptist churches as one practical grouping is far more a reality in Southern Africa than in America where they tend to have less to do with one another, though holding almost identical doctrinal positions. The unity shown in South Africa is primarily caused by the high degree of cooperation shown by the missionary church planters working with (BMW) Biblical Ministries Worldwide, the (IFM)

<sup>203</sup> Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity, American Fundamentalism since 1850*, 366-367.

<sup>204</sup> Gonzalez, J., L., *The Story of Christianity*, San Francisco, Harper, 1985, Volume 2, 257.

Independent Faith Mission and the Cape Town concentration of missionaries linked to the (ABWE) Association of Baptist for World Evangelism. Another contributing factor to the overseas unity is the tendency of American Based Baptist and Bible churches to support missionaries across the boundaries of the three agencies already mentioned.

- **The Mennonite Church (Dutch - American)** <sup>205</sup>.

Another religious group that is analogous to the Independent Baptists is the Mennonite Church. Their relationship to one another is rooted in the Radical Reformation. Though their interpretation of the autonomy of the local congregation is different and though theological changes and differences have evolved there is no question that their major differences with the Magisterial Reformers and with Reformed ecclesiology and eschatology clearly establish their analogous doctrinal principles and their common ethical influences.

Menno Simons (1496 - 1561) was a Roman Catholic priest who was led to reconsider the Scriptures due to the martyrdom (beheading) of Sikke Frerichs, a tailor who had been converted and re-baptised. In his search of the Scriptures, he found nothing in the Bible about infant baptism and this and the corresponding studies led him to accept Christ as his Saviour and then undergo believer's baptism in 1536. At first, Simons was a student of the writings of Martin Luther. Simons taught three ordinances: *Believer's Baptism*, *the Lord's Supper*, and *Washing the Saint's Feet*. He believed there was one sin that could cause a person to lose their salvation; it was blasphemy

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<sup>205</sup> Estep, W. R, *Revolution within the Revolution*, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishers, 1990, 32

against the Holy Spirit. Unlike the Magisterial Reformers, Menno Simons as an Anabaptist, divorced general religion from Christianity, separated Christianity from the State<sup>206</sup> and he made every effort to restore the heart and soul of Christianity. By offering people salvation and a simple but effective relationship with God, through faith alone in His Son Jesus Christ, Simons was used to lead many people to conversion and a new lifestyle. His literal interpretation of the Bible and its implications were clearly explained for the common man in his presentation of the Anabaptist faith and practice in his book, the Foundations.<sup>207</sup>

Simmon's writings contained all of the common themes of the Anabaptists movement of that time: The new birth, foundations of Christian doctrine, and Christian baptism. The modern Mennonite Church<sup>208</sup> lays claim to being the "original" Anabaptist church. There is no doubt that they are Anabaptists, but many others also lay claim to the same roots. Their link to the Baptists through mutual dissent, imprisonment and persecution is well documented, as is their support for re-baptism, and the early English Baptists.<sup>209</sup> The analogous role for the Mennonite in relation to the Independent Baptists is multitered, i.e. their historical example regarding separation of church and state, their extreme literal interpretation of Scripture, re-baptism, that only believers should be members of local congregations, and their concepts of congregational autonomy, the role of pastors and officers and congregational democratic polity, local church discipline, and millennial eschatology – and yet this

<sup>206</sup> Latourette, Kenneth Scott, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, Five Volumes, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1970, 44.

<sup>207</sup> Estep, W. R., The Anabaptist Story, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 122.

<sup>208</sup> Latourette, K. S., Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, (A History of Christianity in the 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries), Five Volumes, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1970, 168. "An attempt was made to inaugurate a national structure for the various Mennonite congregations." (Siegmond-Schultze, Ekklesia, Die Evangelischen Kirchen der Niederlande, 22, 23, 75)

<sup>209</sup> Estep, W. R., Revolution within the Revolution, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990, 70.

reflects only a fraction of the many aspects of analogous beliefs held between these two groups. One key issue is the non-independent Baptist's general refusal (in modern times)<sup>210</sup> to link their heritage to anyone before the Gainsborough congregation under John Smyth of England and this should be compared to the Independent Baptists' tendency to identify their history and doctrinal development with Anabaptists of Southern Germany, the Swiss and then to the Flanders<sup>211</sup> and the Frisian Lowlands,<sup>212</sup> eventually to all of Holland and then and only then to England and beyond.

- **The Free and Separatist Churches**

Analogous Evangelical denominations and independent<sup>213</sup> churches and groups have existed in England since 1534.<sup>214</sup> These radical influences led some of the Puritans toward a doctrinal position of Separatism, i.e. those who refused to accept the new canons resulting from the Hampton Court Conference of 1604. They considered the Church of England beyond reformation and decided it was a false church, a Babylon. One of the first separatists was John Smyth who by 1607 had led his congregation, The Ancient Church, to immigrate to the Netherlands, and due to his doubts about the Calvinistic footnotes in the Geneva Bible would, in time, move away from the Calvinistic Puritan tradition. A member of his church John Robinson established a congregation in Leyden and from that church came the famous church of the American Pilgrim Fathers that was established in Plymouth.

<sup>210</sup> Torbet, R. G., *A History of Baptists* (Third Edition), Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1963, 29.

<sup>211</sup> Verheyden, A.L.E., *Anabaptism In Flanders 1530-1650*, Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, Scottdale, Mennonite Publishing House, 1961, 22-23.

<sup>212</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 114.

<sup>213</sup> Newman, A. H., *A Manual of Church History, Two Volumes*, Philadelphia, The American Baptist Publication Society, 1902, 273.

<sup>214</sup> Horst, I. B., *The Radical Brethren, Anabaptism and the English Reformation to 1558*, Nieuwkoop, B. de Graaf, 1972, 32.



In 1610, branching out of Smyth's church, others like Helwys, who unlike their mentor, the Mennonites, were now influenced by the Remonstrants at Rhynsburg<sup>215</sup> and no longer refused to keep employees of the Magistracy out of their church. This group led by Mr. Thomas Helwys returned to England to establish the first recorded Baptist<sup>216</sup> church on English soil.<sup>217</sup> He was eventually jailed by King James and died in prison in 1615. The American Baptist historian, Robert Torbet defines the analogous relationship between these Baptists and the *Free Church Principle*:

Baptist can be understood best by seeing them as a part of the expression of the Free Church movement in Christianity. The Free Church understanding of the church's nature did not preclude authority. To be sure, this authority was not in terms of external political or ecclesiastical pressures, but of the inner leading of God within the community of faith. The congregations claimed to be governed by the Holy Spirit as He led them to understand the mind of Christ, the rightful head of the church. They sought, therefore, means by which they could arrive at a consensus as to the will of God. Through congregational Bible study, discussions, prayer and decision, the congregation explored matters concerning their understanding of faith, morals, ethics, church organization, mission, and education. Basic to their discussion, and not subject to debate, was the fact of faith. Thus, the principle of consensus by which the congregational meeting ordered its common life became the legacy of Anabaptists and English Separatists to Protestantism. In this principle was laid the foundations for the pattern of voluntarism in church life in the nineteenth century.<sup>218</sup>

From this time forward Separatist and Baptist congregations sprung up throughout England and the Free Church movement was begun. The nomenclature: Bible Church would come much later, through American Fundamentalist developments in the 1930s,<sup>219</sup> but the Free and Independent congregations over the centuries hold many, if not most, of the doctrines and practices found in today's Community or Bible churches.

<sup>215</sup> Grimm, H. J., *The Reformation Era 1500-1650*, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973, 443.

<sup>216</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 225.

<sup>217</sup> Newman, A. H., *A Manual of Church History*, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1902, 280-281.

Numerous churches decided to secede from regular denominations to start independent fundamental churches... many smaller independent churches ... remained unaffiliated, although their sympathies for the most part were with the fundamentalists.<sup>220</sup>

The Independent Baptists find their analogous relationship primarily in their similar insistence on autonomous congregations, literalist and Fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture and their commitment to evangelism and missions – all strongly held beliefs central to the life of both Bible churches and Independent Baptist churches.

Louis Gasper explains the fundamentalist heritage and its relationship to both the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches by pointing out that many trace the “spirit” of fundamentalism:

Although religious fundamentalism as an organised movement in American Protestant Christianity is comparatively youthful, the tradition from which it sprang is very old: some scholars trace the spirit of fundamentalism back to the Reformation. There are fundamentalist leaders however, who declare that it goes back to the New Testament period and the apostles, and that the Reformation only restated the neglected fundamentals of the gospel.<sup>221</sup>

As regards these analogous churches, with their doctrinal similarities and historic connections it is not uncommon to find church members in many of these different churches, denominations or groupings who prefer being baptised by immersion, and were often baptised in Baptist churches. More importantly, there are many pastors in these various groups or denominations who were originally ordained as Independent Baptists and who now minister in one or the other of these analogous churches. Other ministers, though ordained in one of these more distantly related churches, now serve in Independent Baptist pulpits.

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<sup>218</sup> Torbet, R. G., *A History of Baptists* (Third Edition), Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1963, 29-30.

<sup>219</sup> Gasper, Louis, *The Fundamentalists Movement 1930-1956*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981, 23.

<sup>220</sup> Gasper, L., *The Fundamentalists Movement 1930-1956*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981, 22.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

Equally important is the overlapping influences between these generally Baptist and evangelical churches, whether or not they be referred to as “free” or “Bible” or “non-denominational” churches, theologians or Bible Colleges.<sup>222</sup> Thus one must conclude that these distinctive beliefs (in their collective form) are indicative of the nature and identity of those who use the name Baptist but no less represent, at least in part, the distinctive beliefs of many other evangelical, “free churches,” such as the Fundamentalist and the non-denominational Bible Churches.

Thus, one must conclude that these distinctive truths are not exclusively Baptist teachings, at least, not in their individual form. One should always keep in mind that though the collective use of all these distinctive teachings may well indicate that a church is a Baptist, or Baptist Bible church, the fact that some lesser percentage of these truths are evident would not make a congregation a Baptist or necessarily even “Baptistic.”

#### **1.5.4 The Doctrinal Distinctives of Independent Baptists.**

The exact identification of these doctrinal distinctives in history and even within the various different Baptist circles is complicated by the Baptists’ rather confused historical development. Some Baptists offer eight<sup>223</sup> distinctives, some nine<sup>224</sup> and yet

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<sup>222</sup> For example: All Baptist colleges and seminaries, internationally and universally, train students for ministries in Bible churches and numerous other free or independent Evangelical congregations. Equally true, the interdenominational colleges such as Moody, Philadelphia, Talbot, Wheaton, Bob Jones, Northlands and many other similar Evangelical or Fundamental institutions are staffed by ordained Baptists, and have student bodies with strong percentages of Baptists. The fact of these overlapping influences, in the United States, South Africa or wherever they exist, is so pervasive that no further supportive evidence is required. The facts and high percentages of overlap are common knowledge and simply unchallengeable reality.

<sup>223</sup> Anderson, Donald K., *The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 10-11.

<sup>224</sup> Jackson, Mark, *Ready, Set, Grow! - A Faith and Practice Primer for Regular Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1989, 83.

others list even twelve<sup>225</sup> (or more) distinctives. Due to the earlier mentioned autonomous nature of each Baptist congregation the reasons<sup>226</sup> for new churches being established or “born” are often unrelated to a systematic<sup>227</sup> church growth impetus. As often as not a congregation may be formed out of doctrinal contention,<sup>228</sup> possibly out of a certain individualistic practical<sup>229</sup> need or even the simple spiritual need for personal pastoral care, i.e. something often more readily available in smaller or younger congregations. These “birthing” realities are true world-wide and across the natural boundaries between liberal, evangelical, conservative, fundamental or any other distinction one would care to consider. Denominational Baptist and Independent Baptist alike face these same patterns of “birth” or formation. It is the nature of the autonomous church doctrine<sup>230</sup> that lies at the root of these anomalies.

Beyond the distinctiveness of autonomous congregationalism, other distinctives such as soul liberty, separation of church and state, may add to these “birthing” issues.<sup>231</sup>

Strong convictions have motivated or driven much of the church planting within the Baptist community and there are no more obvious examples of the strong stimulus of

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<sup>225</sup> Parnell, Chris W., *Being a Baptist, Baptist*, Roodepoort, Publishing House, 1980, 3.

<sup>226</sup> Starr, A. Timothy, *Church Planting Always in Season*, Toronto, Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada, 1978, 173.

<sup>227</sup> Armitage, Harold E., *The Church Planter's Manual*, Cherry Hill, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1985, 11-22.

<sup>228</sup> The Fundamentalist Movement divided many Baptist over the question of liberal versus conservative interpretation. Congregations split over matters relating to interpretation of the relatively isolated issues of Baptist distinctives or even issues of one's level of Calvinism or Arminianism, one's level of separation from personal or ecclesiastical compromise or even one's level of applying church order or discipline, sic., or a closed, close or open communion. See Torrey, R. A. and Dixon, A. C. and other contributing authors, *The Fundamentals*, IV Volumes, The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917. Reprinted, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1980., and Armitage, T., *A History of the Baptists: Traced By Their Vital Principles and Practices*. New York, Bryan, Taylor & Co., 1887.

<sup>229</sup> Greenway, R. S., ed., *Guidelines for Urban Church Planting*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1978, 12.

<sup>230</sup> Johnson, K., *Local Church Missions: A Doctrine and Practice Manual*, Lubbock, Tabernacle Baptist Church Publishers, 1984, 40-41.

<sup>231</sup> Jackson, P. R., *The Doctrine and Administration of the Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1980, 133-146.

doctrinal conviction motivating church planting than in the Independent Baptist church movement.

The name Baptist, Independent Baptist or by whatever name they be known, often complicates the public's understanding of the distinctiveness or uniqueness of the churches and they are generally, though mistakenly, accepted as if they were a specific church body or denominational grouping. Without over simplifying the issue of their identity, Baptists in general and certainly Independent Baptists must be regarded as a loosely generic configuration and not a monolithic denominational structure.

Certainly, where one congregation may be formed out of a doctrinal battle, another may well have a far more social or spiritual basis for its creation, the differences in purpose alone need to be understood as truly differentiating.

It is not unusual, to find those who chronicle the world histories of Christianity only focusing on Baptists as people allied through unions, conventions or major groupings such as the Baptist World Alliance, while ignoring Independent Baptists.<sup>232</sup> To be fair, one must recognise that the radical commitments, involved convictions and matters of conscience, among Independent Baptists make them difficult to study. The added problems of the periodic disturbances due to persecutions have made their history difficult to record and interpret. The fact that they were known by dozens, if not hundreds, of regional names and often were referred to by derogatory epithets only further complicates their identity and history.

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<sup>232</sup> Wardin, A. W., ed., *Baptists around the World, A Comprehensive Handbook*, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995. 55-59.

The baptism of believers is often considered the most obvious element in identifying these Baptist congregations, at least, by those who are outside the direct circle of Baptist influence. An example of a non-Baptist perspective is found in the Edinburgh Cyclopaedia (Presbyterian), which states:

It must have already occurred to our readers that the Baptists are the same sect of Christians that were formerly described as Anabaptists. Indeed this seems to have been their leading principle from the time of Tertullian to the present time.<sup>233</sup>

Yet, an insider's interpretation of the central issue motivating Baptist thinking, points out that since the time of the Early Church period there have been those who have sought to maintain truth.

Lethargy marks the time of the Lord's return. In light of that, the true church of Jesus Christ, represented by faithful, Bible-believing Baptist churches, must determinedly submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and honor Him with every fiber of their being.<sup>234</sup>

Baptists are usually identified<sup>235</sup> as one of the Protestant groups which have sought to maintain the historic Christian truths. During the Middle Ages these groups were given various names but were always among the people known to be committed to maintaining a literal interpretation of the Scriptures.<sup>236</sup>

Of course, some of these groups and congregations were more distinctively Baptist than others. In fact, many who were called "Anabaptists" were not totally consistent as regards the so-called distinctives of Baptists. Often no more than one or two of

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<sup>233</sup> Carroll, J.M., The Trail of Blood, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publication, 1931, Quotation of the Edinburgh Cyclopaedia by Clarence Walker in his Introduction to Carroll's booklet, 4.

<sup>234</sup> Jackson, P. R., The Doctrine and Administration of the Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1980, 9.

<sup>235</sup> Jacobs, C. M., The Story of the Church, Philadelphia, The Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America - the Muhlenberg Press, 1925, 304.

<sup>236</sup> Anderson, D. K., The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 13.

these major doctrinal distinctives, out of a possible eight to twelve<sup>237</sup>, may actually be evident in congregations or groups known otherwise as “Baptists” or “Anabaptists.” In certain historic instances<sup>238</sup> the name was truly misused<sup>i</sup> against some who had no real identity with Baptist distinctives,<sup>239</sup> but this is to be expected since to many the name Anabaptist or Baptist was little more than a term of derision.<sup>240</sup> With all the difficulties related to identifying and selecting the distinctives of Baptists it is nonetheless the only direct way to identify these otherwise autonomous congregations. Referring to these distinctives, the American Baptist church historian, Henry C. Vedder points out that:

...the distinctive teachings of Baptists today, and the men who held these truths from the twelfth century onward, under what various nicknames it pleased their persecutors to give them, were our spiritual ancestry, our brethren in the faith.<sup>241</sup>

Mark Jackson, an Independent Baptist leader also believes that:

Other church groups may believe nearly all of these distinctives, but a difference of opinion in even one area has generally been sufficient to drop them into some other denominational niche.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Some Baptists offer eight distinctives, some nine and yet others list even twelve (or more) distinctives.

<sup>238</sup> Armitage, T., A History of the Baptists, Traced By Their Vital Principles and Practices, New York, Bryan, Taylor & Co., 1887, 234

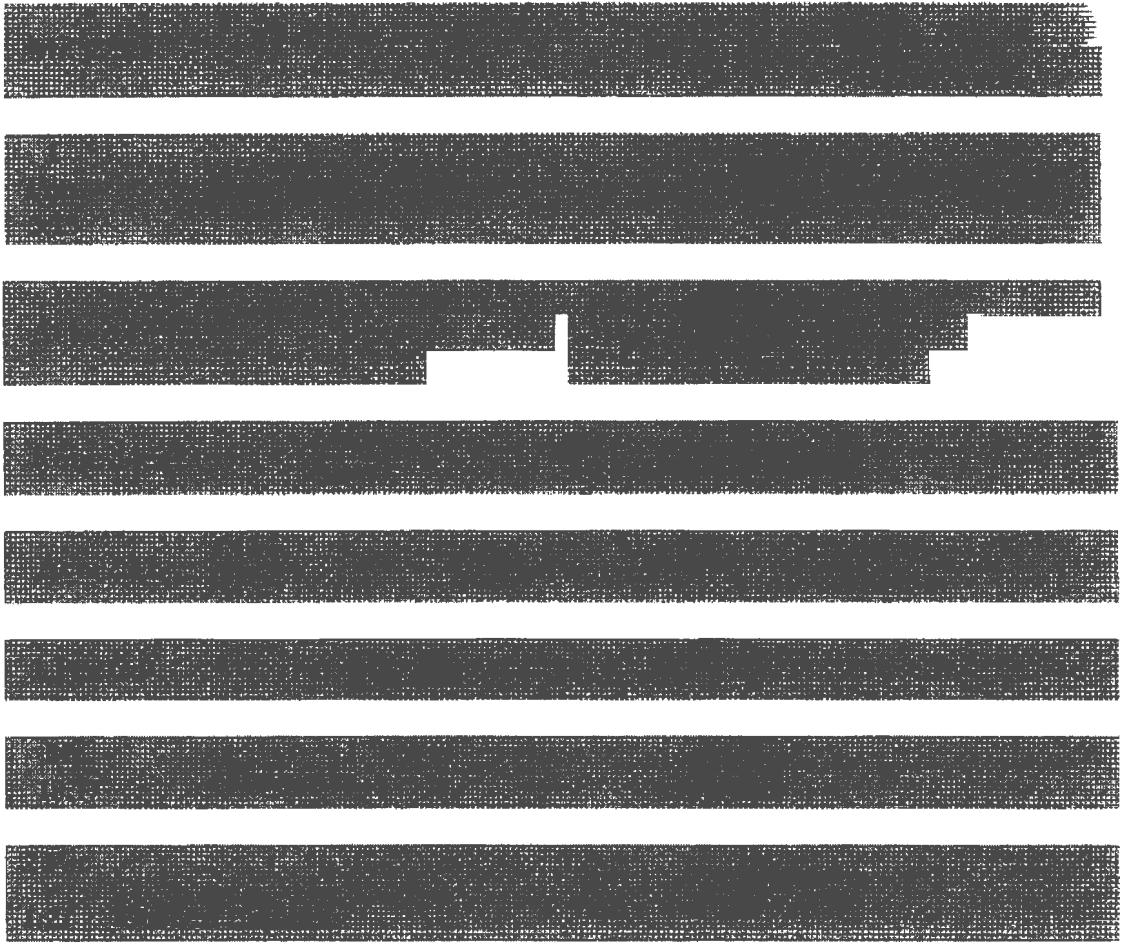
<sup>239</sup> Schaff, Germany: Its Universities, Theology, and Religion, Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1857, 139. Note: Although Schaff and indeed several German scholars saw a clear difference between the modern Baptists and their Anabaptist ancestors, the Lutheran establishment was seized by Münster mania. For almost a decade the German Baptist minister Oncken suffered from this fallacious identification, and indeed suspicions of sectarianism dogs the German Baptists over hundreds of years even to this day. My own personal visits to the church planting regions of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism confirms that these suspicions remain and not only in Germany, but in many European countries and certainly in South Africa to this very day.

<sup>240</sup> Calvin, J., Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines, (1544, Farley, B.W., Translator and ed.) Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1982, 20. “Calvin lumped both these groups under one rubric, the psychopannychists. In the prefaces to the 1534 and 1536 editions of the *Psychopannychia* he designated them as Anabaptists, calling them Catabaptists in the body of the work. However, it is doubtful that the psychopannychists were, strictly speaking, Anabaptists.”

<sup>241</sup> Vedder, Henry C., A Short History of the Baptists, Valley Forge, The Judson Press, 1907, 102

<sup>242</sup> Jackson, M., Ready, Set, Grow! - A Faith and Practice Primer, Schaumberg, Regular Baptist Press, 1989, 83.

## A TRADITIONAL ACROSTIC USED BY BAPTISTS.



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Identifying Independent Baptists may be accomplished by identifying a relatively clear point of distinction – their particular interpretation and application of the Biblical doctrine of separation from compromise. In this light, then, Independent Baptists are Baptists that hold the same historic doctrines and distinctives as the denominationally oriented Baptists, but are Baptists who have separated, or broken off, from these denominational groupings and unions over issues of compromise. Noel Smith, himself once a Southern Baptist, serves as one example among the thousands who left

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<sup>243</sup> Anderson, D. K., *The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 9.



the Southern Baptist Convention over the issue of doctrinal and ecclesiastic compromise. He wrote:

The Southern Baptist Convention has repudiated its historic position that the Bible and the Bible alone is the sole rule of faith and practice for all Baptists, individually and collectively. For the authority of the Bible, this convention has substituted the authority of "customs and practices." Added to its ecclesiastical power, the Convention has money and numbers. It is one of the great ecclesiastical, political and economic forces in the country.<sup>244</sup>

A good number of the early post World War II generation of Independent Baptist churches were previously congregational members in the Southern or American Baptist churches. These churches removed their congregations from Conventions or associational membership and have criticised their previous denominational bodies. The Independent Baptists view the leadership of these denominational groupings and unions as guilty<sup>245</sup> of a breach of doctrinal or organisational trust with the member congregations. Issues such as theological compromise or relaxed moral standards in the seminaries or with the departments or commissions of education have often led to sharp divisions.

To further complicate matters, it is clear that many other Independent Baptists were congregations who were independent from the time of their formation<sup>246</sup>, and as Louis Gasser rightly points out

...they continued to think and act as independents, primarily because of the fear of ecclesiastical control of local congregations. This state of mind has persisted among many fundamentalists to this day.<sup>247</sup>

<sup>244</sup> Smith, N., The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches, Springfield, Baptist Bible Tribune, 1963, 65.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 75-76.

<sup>246</sup> Gasper, Louis, The Fundamentalist Movement, 1930-1956, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 94.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 22.

These Independent Baptist congregations have generally placed a greater degree of emphasis<sup>248</sup> on fidelity to the issues of both Biblical doctrine and Baptist distinctives than is the case with those congregations that are more denominationally or associationally oriented. Such 'denominationally oriented' Baptists have, for the sake of greater unity or more effective ministry, taken a broader view on many of these issues.

The modern American church history of Independent Baptist churches followed three streams: one stream of a total history of Independence; a second stream where from independence they joined associations<sup>249</sup> or conventions and then later withdrew; or a third stream where they were fully reorganised as a new congregation focused around some particular organisational or doctrinal idea that led them to disassociate and become a totally independent congregation again. Born out of a reaction to perceived doctrinal<sup>250</sup> compromise within denominations or unions, most of the modern Independent Baptist congregations were congregations originally organised as living statements of disapproval toward denominational structures and the real or perceived dangers<sup>251</sup> associated with such hierarchical structures or relationships.

## 1.6 The Cornerstone Principles of Independent Baptist Theology.

The Independent Baptists use of the term *soul competency* (or soul liberty) to speak of their belief in the competency and right of the individual soul to enjoy a special

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<sup>248</sup> They have also emphasized the independence of the congregation over organizational unity and association.

<sup>249</sup> The Philadelphia Association, founded in 1707. Gillette, A.D., ed., Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association from 1707 to 1807, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1851.

<sup>250</sup> Bush, L.R. & Nettles, T.J., Baptists and the Bible, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980, 361.

<sup>251</sup> Clearwaters, R.V., The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise, Minneapolis, Central Seminary Press, 1962.

freedom granted under God. One of the texts commonly used to explain this doctrine is found in 2 Corinthians 3:4-5 “Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent <sup>252</sup> in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competency comes from God.”

### **1.6.1 Soul Liberty: The individual’s competency before God.**

To understand the origins and historical significance of Independent Baptists in South Africa, one should recognise the importance of this “cornerstone” principle: the competency of the soul in religion and how it effects these churches. Soul competency (or liberty) is at the heart of their emphasis on personal responsibility and individualism. At the root of Baptist rejection of proxy religion i.e. any individual or religious body acting on the individual’s behalf, is the belief in the absolute and personal responsibility for one’s own relationship with God. Since Independent Baptists understand the spiritual walk of faith, obedience, death, and judgment as personal matters of issue between the believer and God they have generally emphasised the individual’s soul liberty or competency to stand before God as the God given right of mankind. This liberty gives the individual the right to practice their religious beliefs without limitation from the state, another person, i.e. even a parent , or organisation, i.e. a family church. Every form of coercive restraint or constraint of an individual in their communication and relationship with God is viewed as a sin against God, the individual and human welfare <sup>253</sup>.

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<sup>252</sup> NASV. (sufficient - KJV; adequate - NASV, competent - TAB )

<sup>253</sup> Cook, H., What Baptist Stand For, Guildford and London, Billing and Sons LTD., 1973, 169.

The truths of this doctrine overlap into other doctrinal issues such as the right of or freedom of choice on matters of faith, the priesthood of the believer, and the separation of church and state. Every individual has, according to this doctrine<sup>254</sup> the liberty or right to choose, follow their conscience or do as their conscience (soul) decides is best.<sup>255</sup> Of course, disobeying God's Word has consequences, but soul liberty or soul competency teaches the individual's right to choose! As a valuable religious, historical and social development of mankind this doctrinal contribution adds another dimension to Christian thought. Soul liberty or competency is not a self-sufficiency, nor is it a matter of taking issue with the doctrines of sin, and human depravity. By speaking of the competency of the soul there is no reference to human ability in the moral or theological sense, or in any sense of independence from the revealed Word of God, the Scriptures.

Independent Baptists find support for this doctrine primarily in the promises of grace made to the believers in Christ as guaranteed through the New Covenant.<sup>256</sup> The individual's ability to receive and respond – to be able to understand and thus be responsible to God is the gift of genuine choice making. The individual is viewed as a person, not a puppet, nor an animal and is not coerced by God. Individuals are free to choose, and thus are accountable to God for the choices they make. This competency is God oriented and the individual's ultimate accountability is, then, to God, not to others.<sup>257</sup> Practically speaking, the Independent Baptists view the principle of soul competency in religion as excluding all human interference in religion such as episcopacy, infant baptism, religious proxy, governmental authority in religion,

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<sup>254</sup> Romans 14:5-12,

<sup>255</sup> Anderson, D. *The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 61.

<sup>256</sup> Isaiah 9:6; 55:3; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 11:16-27; Hebrews 9:15; Ezekiel 34:23-25; 37:24-26; Daniel 9:24-27.

religious involvement in government or the state, and religion involving itself in the political consciences of individual men or using the church as a platform for political pressure.

Although Baptists believe in the Sovereignty of God, the Lordship of Christ and the authority of the Scriptures, they whole-heartedly insist on the right of every individual person to decide for themselves on all matters of religion. Mullins, one of America's most famous Southern Baptist Convention leaders, wrote in 1908:

But all the churches which adhere to infant baptism or episcopacy in any form come short of the New Testament principle in certain important respects. These bodies in fact represent a dualistic Christianity. They attempt to combine the Romish principle of incompetency with the antithetic principle of competency. Insisting upon the doctrine of justification by faith they recognise the principle of competency, but in retaining infant baptism or episcopacy they introduce the opposite view. Infant baptism takes away from the child its privilege of initiative in salvation and lodges in the hands of parents or sponsors the impossible task of performing an act of religious obedience for another..<sup>257</sup>

Yet, though they may be in full disagreement with one another on a matter, Baptists teach the right of every church and individual to differ, choose, or even disagree while following their conscience and understanding of the truth of a matter. This is not post-modern tolerance reaching out to every man's idea but instead it is a tolerance for every man as individuals who are created by God. Baptists accept six basic axioms in regard to religion and faith. Theologically, that God has a true right to sovereignty. Anthropologically, that all souls have an equal right to direct access to God. Ecclesiastically, that all believers have an equal right to equal privilege and responsibility in the church, and hamartiologically, that all men are morally responsible and must be

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<sup>257</sup> I Cor. 4:1-8; Acts 5:29.

<sup>258</sup> Mullins, E. Y., The Axioms of Religion, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1908, 65.

free from coercion or proxy control. In civics, they believe that both religion and the state have the right to be free of each other's control or coercion. Socially, Baptists believe that the Christian is to love all the world, no matter race, colour or creed, i.e. his neighbour as himself.

In relation to the general Baptist doctrine of competency, Mullins summarises this concept for all Baptists, Independent and otherwise:

Properly understood the doctrine of the soul's competency in religion is the summary of our progressive life and civilisation. The religious principle is always the dominant force which gives its leading characteristics to any civilisation. The competency of man in religion is the competency of man everywhere. Every significant movement of our day is one form or another of that high purpose of man to make his way back to God. Art is simply the assertion of man's inherent capacity for beauty, the claim that he is competent to trace out in time all the subtle lines of grace, all the varied hues and forms of a manifold and wonder-crowded universe... Science is the corresponding quest for truth, the assertion that the soul was made for truth, its competency to find and its capacity for truth, its deathless struggle for truth until it stands in the presence of Him who is the truth.<sup>259</sup>

## 1.6.2 The Priesthood of all believers.

The priesthood of believers is a historic reformation truth that Baptists relate to soul-liberty, conversion and the Christian's walk with God. Of course, the priesthood of the believers stands on its own right as a New Testament biblical doctrine. The priesthood of all believers is the believer's collective privilege and personal ability and responsibility to intercede directly in prayer without the aid or help of others, such as priests, pastors or even parents or family.

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<sup>259</sup> Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion*, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1908, 66.

Some Southern Baptist historians have added an interesting perspective: as regards this teaching. For these Baptist the priesthood of all believers (plural), a historic Reformation principle with corporate implications, may have

...devolved into the priesthood of the believer, a lonely, isolated seeker of truth, whose connection to the visible congregatio sanctorum was tenuous at best.<sup>260</sup>

This interpretation of the priesthood of the believer has, according to some, removed (at least for Baptists) any remaining potential for giving respect to hierarchical leadership and/or control. This unbalanced attitude toward the priesthood of the believer may be a more isolated and private interpretation of individualistic personalities rather than accepted teaching within Baptist circles, but the fact that individualism obviously exists within Baptist circles cannot be denied. Some have mistakenly linked the Independent Baptists' interpretation of individualism, soul liberty and the separation of state and church with a predilection toward modern social and political trends of democracy, individualism, and even humanism. The possibility that American social and political history has been highly influenced by this confluence of Baptist teaching has been considered by numerous academics. This potential cultural influence is possibly one of the greatest contributions Independent Baptists can make on future South African social and political thought.

### **1.7 The Independent Baptist approach to Biblical interpretation.**

Hermeneutically, Baptists look to such passages as II Timothy 2:15 and I Corinthians 2:13 to provide insight into their characteristic conviction that the Bible must be

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<sup>260</sup> James, R.B., and Dockery, D. S., eds., *Beyond the Impasse? Scripture Interpretation & Theology in Baptist Life*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992, 204-205, Contributor T. George, "The Priesthood of All Believers and the Quest

interpreted by or within itself. Hermeneutics among conservative Baptists have always followed the principle that Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture. Any relatively obscure passages are to be interpreted by clearer passages.

Biblical interpretation has varied widely among Baptists. From mystical and extreme to a more commonly accepted objective and logical approach, Baptists have accepted that individual Christians were endowed with the right and capability to interpret the Scriptures. James T. Jeremiah,<sup>261</sup> an Independent Baptist pastor, outlines four principles that are basic to comprehending and rightly interpreting the Scriptures. These principles would not necessarily be peculiar to Independent Baptists but the Independent Baptists place a great emphasis on adhering literally and strictly to these principles:

A. The Principle of First Mention as a "key" to proper understanding the meaning of a doctrine. "Whenever any person, place, important word, or subject is first referred to in Scripture, all subsequent recurrence of the same is forecast or hinted so that such first glimpse indicates its relation to the entire testimony and teaching of Scripture. The Spirit of God thus supplies in such primary mention a clue to all that follows on the same topic."<sup>262</sup>

B. The Principle of Progressive Mention gives us the truth progressively revealed through a series of references, thus to have the whole truth one must have the whole Bible.

C. The Principle of Comparative Mention will lead the Bible student to understand the distinct meaning in their use and relation one with the other. Pierson adds: "....and to compare them in things which they are unlike and learn a lesson in contrast..."

D. The Principle of Full Mention directs us to look for full treatments in specific sections of Scripture in areas or subjects vital to our spiritual welfare. It is important that we recognise that the Scriptures have inherent structural ability for their own practical use and correct interpretation. It is vital that we trust

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for Theological Integrity," *Criswell Theological Review* Number 3, (1989), 284-94.

<sup>261</sup> Jeremiah, J. T., *The Importance of Inspiration*, Des Plaines, Regular Baptist Press, 1972, 51.

<sup>262</sup> Pierson, A. T., *Knowing the Scriptures*, Fincastle, Scripture Truth Book Company, (1910) 1975, 259.



Scripture's ability to accomplish this function amidst variations caused by limitations of language, version or translation.

Over the last few centuries those called "liberals" and "neo-orthodox" cast doubts regarding the basic reliability of God's Word, and the Evangelical and Fundamentalists in various centuries responded by affirming the "original autographs." Thiessen reminds us that:

"... inspiration is affirmed only of the autographs of the Scriptures, not of any of the versions, whether ancient or modern, nor of any of the Hebrew or Greek manuscripts in existence, nor of any critical texts known."<sup>263</sup>

The challenge to the belief in a verbal and plenary approach to the inspiration of Scripture has always been a highly <sup>264</sup>visible issue among Independent Baptists. How conservative Christians, Baptists or others, are to respond to those who are casting doubt on God and His Word is an important modern issue and has drawn the attention of most Baptists.<sup>265</sup> Over the past half century, some Independent Baptists have responded in a rather simplistic<sup>266</sup> way, attempting to refute the errors of liberalism by holding to a position that declares one particular Hebrew, or Greek text source as the only true manuscript line through which the Scriptures are made available by God. But many scholars, like P.W. Comfort, point out that the evidence speaks against this view:

The early manuscripts present a very different kind of text. Furthermore, not one of the early church fathers used the kind of Greek text that is found in the *Textus Receptus* or Majority Text. The Majority Text is a text supported by thousands of manuscripts dated from the fifth to the fourteenth centuries, but

<sup>263</sup> Thiessen, H.C., *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951, 107.

<sup>264</sup> Bush, L. R. and Nettles, T.J., *Baptist and the Bible*, The Baptist doctrines of biblical inspiration and religious authority in historical perspective, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980, 397-436.

<sup>265</sup> George, T. and D., eds., *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, 139-202.

<sup>266</sup> Moorman, J., *Forever Settled: A Survey of the Documents and History of the Bible*, Johannesburg, Gethsemane Bible College, 1985, 24-29.

these manuscripts are basically replications of a fourth-century recension (produced by Lucian of Antioch) that incorporated hundreds (if not thousands) of textual changes in the New Testament text. This does not present the original wording of the Greek New Testament.<sup>267</sup>

Christians have left their churches, congregations have separated or refused to fellowship with other congregations, missionary organisations and efforts have been divided and Bible Colleges and Seminaries have been forced to take one or another side in the textual argument – all in relation to the question of the original Biblical text. Evangelicals and Fundamentalists now sow the seeds of further doubt and confusion among their congregations by preaching against any translation or version that did not follow the source material of their choice: i.e. the *Textus Receptus*, (TR) the “Received” or “Majority” text. Others claim that the English Translation, the 1611 King James Version, alone is the “inspired Word of God.” Some, of these “King James only” advocates will allow for other language translations as long as they, like the King James Version, are built on the Majority Text alone, while amazing as it sounds some are demanding the English King James Version be used as the source for missionary outreach and that any translations be “literal translations of the English KJV”. Comfort, the senior editor of the Bible department at Tyndale Publishers, explains the issues further:

There are those who believe that the text was never corrupted and has never needed to be recovered. Unable to imagine that God would allow the text to become marred, they believe that God sovereignly preserved the original text in the majority of manuscripts. They defend the fidelity of the *Textus Receptus* and/or what is called today the Majority Text. This is the text, they say, that the church preserved throughout the ages and is therefore the text that contains the original wording.<sup>268</sup>

<sup>267</sup> Comfort, P. W., *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1992, 10.

<sup>268</sup> Comfort, P. W., *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1992, 10.

Historically, Independent Baptists have maintained their belief in the verbal plenary inspiration of the “original autographs.”<sup>269</sup> Independent Baptists, like many others, believe this inspiration of the “original autographs” took place out of the divine workings of God’s will, character, and nature<sup>270</sup>. They teach that God wants to communicate and that God would naturally ensure that He was precisely understood. The scribes and translators would, according to this interpretation, be sovereignly overshadowed. The original wording and content has been, according to this view, truly protected within the wide range of languages used and breadth translation efforts. By God’s direct providence, and through the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, every believer submitting to its teachings will assuredly enjoy its full benefits and promises.<sup>271</sup>

This view of the history of transmission of the Greek text and the translations to the many world languages allows for divine and sovereign recovery of corrupted manuscripts through the restoring balance of other source manuscripts. According to this view, no necessity for an “Original Text” is required, though the pursuit of that goal is, like that of the high priest Hilkiah<sup>272</sup>, truly a worthy goal.

Young<sup>273</sup> points out that in making their translation the New Testament writers did not seek to give a slavish literal rendering, but rather, by the use of suitable Greek words that were at their disposal, sought to bring out the true sense of the Old Testament passage. In making their quotations the New Testament writers do not

<sup>269</sup> George, T and D., *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, 1996, 77.

<sup>270</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology: Systematic and Biblical*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1976, 39.

<sup>271</sup> Those Independent Baptists holding this view have defended their position by referring to Isaiah. 40:8 and 66:2; John 10:35, and Luke 21:33.

<sup>272</sup> During the spiritual revival and reign of Josiah. See: 2 Kings 22:8-13.

necessarily reproduce the Old Testament verbatim. They often prefer merely to give the sense of the Old Testament.<sup>274</sup>

In summarising the primary views regarding the Bible as God's Word, among Independent Baptists circles, we should clearly identify that though the Bible is the Independent Baptist's rule for faith and practice, it is has a higher purpose, i.e. it is their belief that it is the only means available for arriving at truth itself. There are those who question the reliability of certain Bible versions or argue over which document family or text sources is authoritative, but Independent Baptists have been quick to point out that there is sufficient cause to believe that all of God's Word is fully available<sup>275</sup>.

With the exception of those now promoting the idea of a "KJV only" or a "TR only," Independent Baptists reject any idea that the Spirit of God somehow could have less ability to use the Word due to an erosion of the text.<sup>276</sup> God's ability to convict, direct or work His Divine will through the means of the Scriptures is not being questioned by Fundamentalist Baptists.<sup>277</sup> Yet, the question of which version is most reliable continues to trouble sectors of the Independent Baptist movement throughout the world. This is especially true wherever the English language is predominant. For most Independent Baptists, the King James Version still remains the most popular and trusted version in use today.

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<sup>273</sup> Though a Presbyterian, Edward Y. Young's works are commonly used as texts and reference works in Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church Bible colleges and theological seminaries.

<sup>274</sup> Young, E.Y., *Thy Word is Truth*, Banner of Truth Trust Publishers, 147.

<sup>275</sup> Carson, D.A., *The King James Version Debate, A Plea for Realism*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1979, 24.

<sup>276</sup> Ankerberg, J., Weldon, J., *The Facts on the King James Only Debate*, Eugene, Harvest House Publishers, 1996, 8.

<sup>277</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1976, 22.

As Fundamentalists, the Independent Baptist and Bible churches, have rejected the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New English (NEV), the Good News for Modern Man (GNB), and the Living Bible, International (LBI) as they regard these versions to be guilty of introducing the personal, denominational, and theological views of some of the more liberal theologians and translators. In South Africa, within the Afrikaans language group, the Independent Baptists have not promoted the Nuwe Vertaling (i.e. the New Translation or Version) for many of the same reasons as relate to the modern English translations, though the opposition has not been as vocal as is among the English congregations. Yet this is not to say that the majority of Independent Baptists are unrealistic or intellectually dishonest as regards the source issue. Most Independent Baptists, acting on their belief that the original documents were inspired by God, accept all the "catholic" versions as being fully God's Word though accepting that there are some minor human translation errors.<sup>278</sup>

Many Independent Baptist and Bible church pastors use aspects of their expository and textual preaching to explain why certain KJV wording could be better understood with a more literal translation. The 1611 word or term usage is often obsolete and in some cases even potentially misleading.<sup>279</sup> Using the Old Testament word "Hell" in the KJV for example, many Fundamentalists acknowledge that the New American Standard Version, and others like it, have done Christianity a service by properly translating the original as it was in Hebrew (or in the Greek or Aramaic in the N.T) with "Gehena, Hades, the grave, the Lake of Fire, and Hell". Equally true is the fact that the King James Version may weaken one's full understanding of verses

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<sup>278</sup> Grisanti, M.A., ed., The Bible Version Debate: The Perspective of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, C.B.T.S. Publications, 1997, 10-12.

<sup>279</sup> Harrison, Waltke, Guthrie and Fee, Biblical Criticism, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1978, 127, 128.

like Titus 2:13 and II Peter 1:1 or concepts such as the Deity of Christ when compared to the New American Standard Version or other modern translations. Most Independent Baptists, in fact, would enjoy reading a version of the Scriptures that literally and directly translates such key words as "bishop", "baptism", "church", "Ghost", "perfect", and a number of other translation errors or problems common to the King James Version. Nonetheless, the majority of Independent Baptists, like the majority of other conservative Evangelicals, remain convinced that no essential truths have been effectively compromised or lost, nor has God failed his church at all<sup>280</sup>.

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches maintain their belief in the inerrancy, inspiration and sufficiency of the Bible.<sup>281</sup> Yet, these Independents are spending an increasing amount of time arguing for and against the dominance of the King James Version while many among the larger Baptist denominational conventions and unions are accepting a more critical and liberal approach.

### **1.8 Five primary credal formulations of Baptists.**

For most of Christianity credal formulations have served the purposes of defending<sup>282</sup> and interpreting<sup>283</sup> Christianity down through the centuries<sup>284</sup>. Giving assent to these doctrinal statements was also a common practice but even this has not always been required. Harold Lindsell illustrates the changes and refers to its dangers:

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<sup>280</sup> White, J., *The King James Only Controversy. Can you Trust the Modern Translations*, Minneapolis, Bethany House Publishers, 1995, 224.

<sup>281</sup> Seger, P., *Contending for the Faith*, Tygerpark, Cape of Good Hope Ministries, 1994, 15.

<sup>282</sup> Tillich, P., *A History of Christian Thought*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1968, 71.

<sup>283</sup> Leith, J. H., *Creeeds of the Churches*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publishers, 1973, 1, 5, 9, 12.

<sup>284</sup> Bettenson, H., *Documents of the Christian Church*, London, Oxford University Press, 1963.

The Church of England has been noted for its Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, which have been the backbone of Anglicanism across the centuries. The Religious News Service reported the action taken by the 1968 Lambeth Conference in London: 'Assent to the 39 Articles –the Church of England's code of doctrine – is no longer to be required for clergy ordination' ... So the action of the Church of England also indicates how far one can stray from the most holy faith once the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy is forsaken.<sup>285</sup>

Baptists have also experienced similar changes in attitude, but it is important to note that although Baptists were not opposed to written statements of their principles of belief,<sup>286</sup> they generally viewed credal statements as of limited value. The Bible was to be held supreme and credal statements were believed by many, especially the Independent Baptists, as detracting from the authority of the Scriptures. The fact of credal statement in Anabaptist and Baptist history is clearly demonstrated by the paper known as the "Brotherly Union of a Number of Children of God Concerning Seven Articles<sup>287</sup>" made at Schleithem, Germany in August 1527. But even more important for understanding Baptists and Independent Baptists in particular, is appreciating that such statements, confessions or "creeds" were not intended to be authoritative or binding on individuals or congregations.

Baptists in general viewed these credal statements as responses to critics or information to those who sought to understand the Baptist faith from outside. In this sense, the preamble of the Report of the Committee on Baptist Faith and Message, The Southern Baptist Confession (1925), is most important. Some important statements from that document follow:

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<sup>285</sup> Lindsell, H., *The Battle for the Bible*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing, 1976, 147.

<sup>286</sup> George, T. and D., eds., *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, 3.

<sup>287</sup> Clement, Otto, "Brüderlich Vereinigung etlicher Kinder Gottes, sieben Artikel betreffend, *Flugschriften aus den ersten Jahren der Reformation*, Vol. 2., Leipzig, Halle, 1907, 11, 13.

...some such statements will clarify the atmosphere and remove some causes of misunderstanding, friction and apprehension ... they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptists ... not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament ... that they do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility ... that the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures ... confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience... not to hamper freedom of thought or investigation.

Possibly, one of the earliest confessions in England and Holland was the Short Confession of Faith in Twenty Articles, by John Smyth, 1609<sup>288</sup>. These early confessions were often as not directed against other Baptist congregations that accepted the title "Anabaptist" and were usually not as Calvinistic as were those writing most of the confessions.<sup>289</sup>

### 1.8.1 The Second London Confession of 1677.

The London Confession of 1644 was written by Seven Particular Baptist Churches in London and then further developed as a strong Calvinistic confession by the Second London Confession of 1677, and revised in 1689.<sup>290</sup>

The London Confession shows an increase in Presbyterian and Calvinistic influence extending even over matters of discipline and church polity as well as doctrine. To appreciate the Presbyterian influence over the "Particular Baptists" it is helpful to note that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was born under the leadership of John Knox. Whereas Baptists did not have a national figurehead or leader, the Scottish Presbyterian Church had a charismatic figure to lead them and influence others such

<sup>288</sup> George, T. and D., eds., Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms, 8.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, 35, 53.



as the English Particular Baptists. During Knox's five years of exile in Geneva (1554-1559), during the reign of "Bloody Mary," he came to believe that what he found in Geneva was "the most perfect school of Christ that ever was since the days of the Apostles."<sup>291</sup> Using the Geneva model he led the Scottish people and acquired a name that, next to those of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, is the greatest in the history of the Protestant Reformation.<sup>292</sup> Knox, after having studied under Calvin further developed his reformation modifying it more on a Puritanical interpretation of Calvinism. This interpretation of Calvinism would eventually influence some important Baptist thinking, as well.

The Westminster Confession, adopted by the Scottish in 1647, governs the Presbyterian Church, and the historian Philip Schaff points out that the Westminster Confession<sup>293</sup> also greatly influenced ... "the Congregational or Independent, and the regular Baptist Churches of the British Empire and the United States."<sup>294</sup> Many differences in the degrees of Calvinism being accepted by different Baptist groupings have existed since that time. The Puritans of England <sup>295</sup>adopted the Westminster Confession in 1648, <sup>296</sup> the early English Baptists of that day, though in large agreeing with the fundamental doctrines of the Puritans, nonetheless had some of their own perspectives on matters of doctrine and especially as regarded church order and polity. Thus, a Baptist confession was prepared,<sup>297</sup> but this was primarily a response to

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<sup>293</sup> Baptist Confession of Faith, 1682, London, The Wakeman Trust, 1981.

<sup>291</sup> Schaff, P., History Of The Christian Church, Volume VIII, History Of Modern Christianity, The Reformation. From AD 1517 To 1648, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910, 708.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, Schaff, 669-685.

<sup>293</sup> Westminster Confession of Faith, Simpsonville, Christian Classics Foundation, 1996.

<sup>294</sup> Schaff, P., History Of The Christian Church, 685-813.

<sup>295</sup> Cairns, E. E., Christianity Through the Centuries, Revised Edition, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1979, 370.

<sup>296</sup> Hodge, A.A., The Confession Of Faith, Edinburgh, The Banner Of Truth Trust, 1869, Reprint 1958, 202.

<sup>297</sup> Houghton, S.M., A Faith to Confess: The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1682, Sussex, Carey Publications Ltd., 1975, 7.

the need to reply to the other English Reformers. Its alternative title was the “Old London Confession.” It should be remembered that this document only represented the beliefs of the Particular Baptists or in other words, the Calvinistic English Baptists.

The less Calvinistic Baptists were even less confessional in style than their Calvinistic brothers, and thus have few similar responses or documents, but their silence needs to be understood as their statement regarding the place of the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God in directing their faith and practice. To fail to understand this fact, as regards confessionalism, is to fail to understand Baptists in the large and Independent Baptist in particular.

### **1.8.2 The Philadelphia Confession of 1742.**

In 1744 the earlier British 1689 Confession was officially adopted by the Calvinistic Baptists of North America, and was given the title: “The Philadelphia Confession of Faith.” This confession was not especially popular among the early American Baptists who were pre-occupied with the 1776 Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution. <sup>258</sup>

### **1.8.3 The New Hampshire Confession (1833).**

In 1833, the New Hampshire Baptists published a “Declaration of Faith” which would have far-reaching influence on Baptists. In 1853 J. Newton Brown, one of the original drafters of this Confession, revised the document, and added it to his new

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<sup>258</sup> Christian, J. T., History of the Baptists, Nashville, Southern Baptist Convention, 1922, 384.

publication The Baptist Church Manual. J.M. Pendleton repeated the New Hampshire Confession in his own Church Manual. According to John Leith:

This confession reflects the moderate Calvinism of the time. Its re-publication, in 1853, includes some revisions by J. Newton Brown, editorial secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society, giving it an even wider distribution. Unlike earlier Baptist confessions, it is silent on the doctrine of the universal Church; and this has made it especially attractive to those who emphasise the local congregation and to the Landmark Baptist movement.<sup>299</sup>

An example of this strong local church emphasis, an emphasis popular among Independent Baptists today, follows:

[We believe] That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptised believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus<sup>300</sup>.

This confession would eventually displace the Philadelphia Confession in the South and after the Southern Baptist produced their own confession, "The Baptist Faith and Message" in 1925, the Independent Baptists took the, now modified, New Hampshire Confession as the most popular confession used among their circles. The New Hampshire Confession was formally adopted by some of the larger Independent Baptist associations and fellowships namely, the Baptist Bible Union of the United States<sup>301</sup> in 1920 and then by the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, USA<sup>302</sup> in 1932 with some eschatological changes to allow for their strong premillennialism. Both of these groups are informal Independent Baptist fellowships

<sup>299</sup> Leith, J. H. Creeeds of the Churches, 1973, Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publishers, 335.

<sup>300</sup> George, T. and D., eds., Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms, "The New Hampshire Confession," (1833), Article XIII. "Of a Gospel Church," 131.

<sup>301</sup> Delnay, R. G., A History of the Baptist Bible Union, Winston Salem, Piedmont Bible College, 1974, 40.

<sup>302</sup> Hiscox, E. T., New Directory for Baptist Churches, Grand Rapids, Kregel, 1967.

and they reflect the general Independent Baptist inclination for moderate Calvinism or even opposition to Calvinism, together with dispensationalism, literalism, premillennialism and strong local church authority.<sup>303</sup>

#### **1.8.4 The Abstracts of Principles.**

The "Abstracts" was adopted by the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky in 1859. This doctrinal statement, like the London Confessions, was greatly influenced by the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterian Church. This statement was, in fact, a turning point in much of modern Baptist thought. The special change to occur would be in one particular area, the concept of the church universal. Article XIV departs more clearly than ever before from most of Baptist history as regards the doctrine of the church. This document signals a measure of concurrent thinking with historic Reformation doctrine as regards the church of Jesus Christ.

Traditionally Baptists held to the concept of local congregations (for example, one should note the New Hampshire Statement) as the only Biblical teaching on the church (generic or particular), but now the Universal (or Catholic) Church would be recognised: "The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government..."<sup>304</sup>

#### **1.8.5 Faith and Message, Southern Baptist Convention (1925).**

The Faith and Message was a confession primarily developed by E.Y. Mullins but also included other committee members. It was primarily a revision of the *New Hampshire Confession of Faith*. It is especially interesting to note the two special additions

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<sup>303</sup> Jackson, P. R., *Doctrine and Administration of the Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1980, 151-159.

to this confession. These additions were caused by the “prevalence of naturalism in the modern teaching and preaching of religion,<sup>305</sup>” in that day. One should especially note paragraph 3, which added an anti-evolutionary statement on the subject of the creation of man; and of paragraph 4, adding a fundamentalist statement on the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Paragraphs 16 to 25 also added matters that dealt with the return of the Lord, religious liberty, peace and war, education, social service, co-operation, evangelism, missions, stewardship and the Kingdom. All of these additions were developments within American Baptist thought and were brought about by the changing social, cultural, religious and moral tides of that day.<sup>306</sup>

#### **1.8.6 Greater diversity develops within the Baptist faith.**

To summarise: from the late 1800s, a somewhat evolving development, or what many believed to be a heretical <sup>307</sup> deterioration, took place within Baptist ranks. The Independent Baptists would, if anything, move in the opposite or more conservative direction. A modernistic attack against many of the core Baptist beliefs was underway and would be the motivation for many Baptists to undergo major doctrinal strengthening and revision. To understand these developments one must note that Modernism<sup>308</sup> in theology was on the rise during this period and the Evangelical Fundamentalist<sup>309</sup> movement was also growing and developing from the late 1800's onwards. Many had inherited their traditions by birth and education rather than loyalty to Scripture.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> George, T. and D., eds., *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*, 94.

<sup>305</sup> Leith, J. H. *Creds of the Churches*, 1973, Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publish, 344.

<sup>306</sup> George, T. and D., eds., *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*, 136-146.

<sup>307</sup> “Heresy” and Theological Modernism and/or Liberalism are synonymous terms to Independent Baptists.

<sup>308</sup> Dollar, G. W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973, 12.

<sup>309</sup> Beale, D.O., *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, Greenville, Unusual Pub., 1986, 175 .

<sup>310</sup> Murray, Iain, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1973, 195. (Spurgeon as London's most famous Baptist minister shocked the world when he withdrew from the Baptist Union over theological compromise spreading within the Baptist Union of Great Britain.)

The controversies of Spurgeon's life are unified when we see them as parts of his total commitment to the Word of God. Disunity, Spurgeon argued, is caused by the intrusion and toleration of beliefs and practices which are products of human wisdom alone: the Lord's will is in the Scriptures.<sup>311</sup>

## 1.9 The Independent Baptist Concept of a New Covenant Church.

As mentioned earlier, a major distinctive of Independent Baptist Churches is their strong emphasis on the central place of the local<sup>312</sup> congregation and its leadership. The local congregation is accepted as a totally separate and vital part of God's plan for Christian growth in the New Covenant period, or the Dispensation of Grace<sup>313</sup>. The church is never mixed or mingled with the Old Testament concept of the Jewish religion<sup>314</sup>, the Jewish people as a "volk", or as a nation. Independent Baptists reject any idea that the concept of the church is a development of the idea of the Jewish Synagogue. All dispensationalists make a clear distinction between the church and Israel.<sup>315</sup> This clear distinction in the time and nature<sup>316</sup> of the church serves to greatly simplify Baptist leadership roles, and general congregational life.

### 1.9.1 The Autonomy of the Independent Baptist Church.

The autonomy of South Africa's Independent Baptist Churches' governance is an essential element of its dynamic effectiveness. By the use of the term, "the autonomy of the church," Independent Baptists mean that the local church is a fully self-governing body<sup>317</sup> and cannot be a part of any other controlling body. By self

<sup>311</sup> Murray, Iain, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, 203-204.

<sup>312</sup> Pickering, Ernest D., *Baptist Principles vs. Interdenominationalism*, Clarks Summit, Baptist Bible College & School of Theology Publications, 1976, 7.

<sup>313</sup> These three terms are viewed somewhat synonymously by Independent Baptists and other Fundamentalists.

<sup>314</sup> Chafer, Lewis Sperry, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 4, Ecclesiology – Eschatology, Dallas, Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, 144–153; 205.

<sup>315</sup> Scofield, C.I., *Holy Bible: New Scofield Study System*, New American Standard Bible, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, Israel – 1604, Church – 1732..

<sup>316</sup> Showers, Renald E., *There Really is a Difference! A comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology*, Bellmawr, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc. Publishers, 1990, 169.

<sup>317</sup> Runquist, Felix, *Baptist Distinctives*, Minneapolis, Central Press, undated, 16.

governing, Baptists are directly referring to the involvement of the congregation in the “decisions about the church’s life and work.”<sup>318</sup>

The Independent Baptist congregations in South Africa are always governed by a simple and straight-forward consensus of its members. Independent Baptists believe that during the period before the New Testament Scriptures were completed the church also had the benefit of the ministries of the Apostles, those who had actually seen Christ; and the prophets, i.e. those given the temporary gift (I Corinthians 13:8) of telling forth the New Covenant message. But Independent Baptists usually teach that this special period before the New Testament Scriptures completion ended and the church today is given evangelists (missionaries), pastor-teachers, and deacons. The gifts have ceased and the Word of God under the influence of the convicting and indwelling work of the Holy Spirit is God’s evident plan.

Independent Baptists look to scholarship such as that of Dean Alford, though not a Baptist, nonetheless a distinguished Bible scholar of the nineteenth century, who pointed out: “In those days titles sprung out of realities and were not merely hierarchical classifications.” The Independent Baptist and Bible Church congregations elect their own leaders<sup>319</sup> and although the congregation uses its leadership to carry-out its will the Bible is clear that these leaders are to act responsibly by laying all unauthorised or unclear matters before the body of the congregation for their decision. Independent Baptists are convinced that the New Testament indicates that councils or associations may be formed to advise or assist in

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<sup>318</sup> Wood, John, *The Baptists*, Christian Denomination Series, Exeter, Pergamon Press, 1977, 22.

<sup>319</sup> Acts 6:1-7; 13:1-4; 14:23.

the carrying out the will of the churches, but no individual, council or organisation may dictate to these churches modelled on the New Testament pattern.<sup>320</sup>

In summary, the autonomy of the local church is a paramount principle for Independent Baptists and for that matter, all Baptists value the principle highly. The term autonomy for Independent Baptists takes on a peculiar meaning and speaks of an ecclesiastically separated and a totally independent congregation.<sup>321</sup>

### **1.9.2 The Simplicity of the Independent Baptist Church.**

The matter of a regenerated church membership is an essential soteriological issue to Baptists. From the first Anabaptists the issue of genuine conversion was always emphasised. The individual church member should be one who has been personally regenerated i.e. born-again, by the work of the Holy Spirit re-creating in the new believer a new life in Christ Jesus as Lord. In fact Independent Baptists, and many other Bible-believing Christians, interpret Romans 8:1-6 as teaching that someone without the regenerative and indwelling work of the Holy Spirit is not a Christian at all and thus holds no rights to church membership. The Biblical doctrine<sup>322</sup> of “Church<sup>323</sup> Discipline<sup>324</sup>” further establishes, for Baptists, the basis for rejecting all who are not genuinely born-again or regenerated members of the local congregation. The rights of ordinance and office are both premised on the genuine conversion<sup>325</sup> of those who would exercise these privileges of Christian ministry and service.

<sup>320</sup> Acts 15:1-4;22,25,30; Galatians 1:2; I Corinthians 16:1, 22; Matthew 18:15-18; I Corinthians 5:1-13: 11  
Thessalonians 3:6,14.

<sup>321</sup> Runquist, F., *Baptist Distinctives*, Minneapolis, Central Press, undated, 19.

<sup>322</sup> Matthew 18 and I Corinthians 5

<sup>323</sup> Walker, W., *Harmony in the Church: Church Discipline*, Rochester, Backus Book Publishers, (1884), 1981 Reprint, 26.

<sup>324</sup> Adams, J. E., *Handbook of Church Discipline*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1986, 91

<sup>325</sup> It should be granted that some have professed conversion while coming short of the reality of conversion.



Independent Baptists have only two ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptists do not refer to "Sacraments" since they do not believe these means are in any sense "means to God's grace." The baptismal<sup>326</sup> principle in Scripture according to the Reformers and Baptists are two different matters altogether. The two ordinances are believers baptism, as a public confession of one's personal faith in the death of Christ and His Resurrection – pictured by immersion; and communion<sup>327</sup> as a simple memorial.

Infant baptism is rejected by all Baptists as an erroneous Biblical interpretation. Since Baptists are Christians who reject all forms of proxy religion they are even cautious in "dedicating" children to the Lord. Independent Baptists even reject any doctrine of Baptism that teaches or implies that grace may be conferred on a person through any form of the rite of baptism – be it by immersion or otherwise. Most Independent Baptists refuse to honour baptism performed by churches where these issues are confused or clouded.

Baptists believe the believer who has consciously and responsibly turned to Christ as Lord and Saviour through simple faith should publicly witness to their faith by picturing their belief in Christ's atoning death, and in His resurrection again to life.

The significance is in the picture of one's faith portrayed by the symbolism of

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<sup>326</sup> Ref, Acts 8:12. Calvin argues: "The fact that baptism came after faith is in accordance with Christ's institution with regard to strangers (Mark 16:16). For they ought to have been engrafted into the body of Church by faith before receiving the sign. But the Anabaptists are being quite absurd in trying to prove from these verses that infants must be kept back from baptism. Men and women could not have been baptised without making open confession of their faith; but they were admitted to baptism on this condition, that their families were consecrated to God at the same time. For the covenant is in these terms, 'I will be thy God and the God of thy seed' (Gen. 17:7)," Calvin, J., *Calvin's Commentaries, The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. 1, 232, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965, (Translators: J. W. Fraser and W.J.G. McDonald).

<sup>327</sup> The term "Holy" with communion is rejected by Independent Baptists as "sacramentarian," i.e. implying a power

immersion and is a matter of Christian growth or sanctification. The subjects are all those who have been born-again by the Spirit of God and the superintendence<sup>328</sup> of these ordinances are the responsibility of the local church.

Communion, as an ordinance, in Baptist worship is viewed as a memorial to Christ's suffering and death. Communion is a time for reflecting on the Lord Jesus Christ as the only provision for procuring the redemptive benefits of the New Covenant, and as such, it is not viewed as a means to grace as in many other Christian churches. Communion is viewed as having the most limited of spiritual-mystical applications possible. As a memorial it certainly draws the worshipping believer to a renewed appreciation of the blood and the body of Christ both of which were offered upon the cross to atone for our sin. Independent Baptists teach that the believer commemorating this memorial will only be blessed in the sense that the believer procures the promises of God's Word. Independent Baptists encourage self examination related to communion and they teach that the work of Christ on the cross continues to provide the basis for an ongoing spiritual life, including forgiveness for sins committed by the believers themselves – long after the day or point of their conversion.

Independent Baptists believe in only two officers: pastors and deacons. All Baptists believe that the New Testament congregation recognised only the Lord, Jesus Christ as the "Head" of the church. No other person or office may be considered as

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to confer grace.

<sup>328</sup> Morris, H.W., III., Baptism: How Important Is It, Denver, Accent Books, 1978, 94.

authoritative and hierarchical church leadership models are rejected.<sup>329</sup> Though Bible churches allow elders, Independent Baptists recognise only two leadership positions in their churches.<sup>330</sup> These churches believe that the ministry of pastor - teachers and deacons are taught in the New Testament<sup>331</sup> and other interpretations are “extra-biblical”. There are, of course, many Baptists churches who follow<sup>332</sup> other minor interpretations or variations, as with the Reformed Baptists.

Independent Baptists generally view the deacons as servants of the congregation. They were Christian servants, not an executive board or committee to run the church. Acts 6:1-8 is interpreted by most Independent Baptists as teaching that the first deacons (servants) were chosen to lighten the practical ministry load of those who were responsible for pastoral oversight; the deacons were to be genuine spiritual Christian men; and the church using its congregational approach to government should select them.

The emphasis on what they believe to be a basic “New Testament”<sup>333</sup> approach to leadership is at the core of Independent Baptist strategy of ministry. The Independent Baptist movement is convinced that the history of the Christian church testifies to the importance of strong but humble leadership. Most Independent Baptists view the Anabaptist leaders and the famous leaders of the Protestant

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<sup>329</sup> Colossians 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church.”

<sup>330</sup> Independent Baptists generally interpreted Acts 6, 2 Timothy 2 and Titus 2 as allowing for only two offices. Independent Baptists view the pastor, elder, bishop, overseer, undershepherd as the same office with various functions. The role of a deacon has generally been viewed as one who serves the Lord and the congregation by assisting the pastor on both the spiritual and practical level.

<sup>331</sup> The Shepherds or the pastors of the congregation I Tim 3:1-7, Hebrews 13:16-18, II Tim 2:24, 4:2; Titus 1:5-7, I Peter 5:1-5; and, the Deacons, I Tim 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-8.

<sup>332</sup> “Elders” as a type of second tier of pastors is found among Reformed Baptists and is also somewhat common in other Baptist groups outside of the United States.

<sup>333</sup> Ephesians 4:8-11 “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that

Reformation as examples of strong biblical leadership.<sup>334</sup> Modern Independent Baptist Churches are making a focused effort at providing pulpit leadership that deals with life-changing issues and answers for today. The South African Independent Baptist and Bible Churches are convinced that having a balanced Bible preaching and teaching ministry for our contemporary needs is important for our generation just as the Reformers' doctrinal emphasis was important for their generation – the South African Independent Baptist and Bible Churches are making a concerted effort at balancing the practical with the doctrinal.

### 1.9.3 The Historiography of the Independent Baptist Church.

Independent Fundamental Baptists view their historiographical theory<sup>335</sup> as a major influence in their doctrine and practice. The importance of this matter to Independent Baptists gives it its value to those who would understand the Independent Baptists doctrine and attitude. The principle theories may be summarised as follows:

1. The succession of ministry theory is similar to the "apostolic succession" concept of the Roman Catholic Church but those that believe this theory believe that the Baptist church began with John the Baptist, not Peter, and not at Pentecost. Two large American Independent Baptist associations, the World Baptist Fellowship's<sup>336</sup>

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descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers;" King James Version

<sup>334</sup> Smith, Noel, *The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches*, Second Edition, Springfield, Baptist Bible Tribune Publication, 1963, 35 . The Independent Baptists believe in the providential timing of God in calling such men to leadership. They view the Reformations leaders as examples of men who were called of God to give genuine answers for their time. Solo Scriptura, Solo Fides, Solo Gratia were cries of liberty that led to the unshackling of spiritually chained Europe and has effected centuries of men and nations since. (See The Baptist Bible Fellowship and other independent groups that promote this view. Also note: Smith, Wilbur, whose sermon on "Leadership" calls for leaders to stand for the truth and against compromise.)

<sup>335</sup> Hopewell, W., *Theories of Baptist Origins*, Cape Town, The Church Ministries Institute, 1989.

<sup>336</sup> The WBF (World Baptist Fellowship) is also known as the ABA (American Baptist Association).

churches and many of the Baptist Bible Fellowship's churches accept this interpretation or theory.

2. The chain of baptisms theory teaches that the true churches<sup>337</sup> are linked together or carried-on by a succession and series of believers who have been immersed after their conversion. This view also teaches that the Baptist church began with John the Baptist. Some American Independent Baptists, all Landmark Baptists and a number of the American Freewill Baptists tend to accept this interpretation of Baptist history.<sup>338</sup>

3. The Anabaptist kinship theory. As discussed earlier, when discussing the name Baptist<sup>339</sup>, these churches trace a spiritual relationship among Baptists along lines of various Anabaptist sects of German, Dutch, or Swiss Anabaptists, like Waldensians, and even including unlikely groups such as Novatians<sup>340</sup>, and Donatists<sup>341</sup>. For example, the Novatians, considered heretics, were considered a part of the 'kinship of Baptists' since they "confessed that their church, which was outside of the Catholic Church was nonetheless 'The Holy Church,'"<sup>342</sup> and their baptism, though outside the

<sup>337</sup> NOTE: Understanding the concept of "True Church" among a segment of Independent Baptists is to understand their belief regarding a "Baptist Bride." This American based Baptist concept is found among Independent, and some Southern Baptist or Missionary Baptist in the United States. This doctrine or ecclesiastical position maintains a view of 'purity' of doctrine and ecclesiastical form as essential for the believer to be in the 'Bride of Christ' which they view as synonymous with the local church. All other Christians and churches are seen as "guest of the bride" at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

<sup>338</sup> Orchard, G.H., *A Concise History of Baptists from the Time of Christ, their Founder, to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publishers, 1956, 164.

<sup>339</sup> Considered under 1.3 The Name, Baptist; 1.3.1 General Terms for Anabaptists and 1.3.3 The Analogous Churches.

<sup>340</sup> Armitage, Thomas, *History of the Baptists, Traced by Their Vital Principles and Practices*, New York, Bryan Taylor, & Co., 1887, 180. (Note Cyprian: "Struggled for Episcopal authority." – 182.

<sup>341</sup> Carroll, J.M., *The Trail of Blood*, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publication, 1931, 10, 26.

<sup>342</sup> Gwatkin, H. M., *Selections from Early Writers Illustrative of Church History to the Time of Constantine*, London, MacMillan and Co, Limited, 1909, 152. Cyprian wrote: "quod si aliquis illud opponit ut dicat eandem Novatianum legem tenere quam catholica ecclesia teneat, eodem symbolo quo et nos baptizare, eundem nosse deum patrem eundem filium Christum, eundem spiritum sanctum, ac propter hoc usurpare eum potestatem baptizandi posse quod videatur interrogatione baptismi a nobis non discrepare: sciat quisque hoc opponendum putat primum non esse unam nobis et schismaticis symboli legem neque eandem interrogationem. Nam cum dicunt, Credis in remissionem peccatorum et vitam aeternam per sanctam ecclesiam. Tunc deinde voce sua ipsi sanctam ecclesiam posse, quam non habentes ostendunt remitti illic peccata non posse (ID. Ep. 69)

Catholic Church was true and acceptable baptism. The fact that so-called “Schismatical Baptism” was considered worthless by the Catholic Church and that Novationists<sup>343</sup> and others like them taught that there was acceptable baptism outside of the Catholic Church, all such so-called heretics, were grouped together by some Baptists to form a theory of Anabaptist kinship. This theory is accepted by a number of Independent Baptists and is taught in numerous older Southern, Independent, Landmark<sup>344</sup> and other related Baptist history books. Amazing as it might seem to some, the theory of Anabaptist “kinship” would often accept a group as a part of this kinship although that group held only one or two similar views and may well have had many more dissimilarities. Even the fact that they suffered at the hands of the same enemy has often been sufficient to establish so-called “kinship.”

4. English Separatist Descent theory. Many Baptists, both Independent and more denominationally oriented, believe that Baptist history should date from 1644 when immersion was adopted by a few English<sup>345</sup> Separatists.<sup>346</sup> This view is certainly gaining a greater following in the last twenty-five years. Independent Baptists have less interest in the English descent theory, than most denominationally oriented Baptists, since this theory tends to encourage denominationalism itself.

5. Church Succession theory. This theory holds to the belief that throughout history there have been local churches, by various names, who bore true scriptural marks or

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<sup>343</sup> Ibid., 154. Cyprian considered ‘Heretical Baptism’ invalid: Nescio qua etenim praesumptione ducuntur quidam de colleges nostris ut putent eos qui apud haereticos tincti sunt, quando ad nos venerint, baptizari non oportere, eo quod dicant unum baptismum esse: quod unum scilicet in ecclesia catholica est, quia ecclesia una est et esse baptismum praeter ecclesiam non potest. Nam cum duo baptismata esse non possint, si haeretici vere baptizant, ipsi habent baptismum . . . nos autem dicimus eos qui inde veniunt non rebaptizari apud nos sed baptizari. Neque enim accipiunt illic aliquid ubi nihil est, sed veniunt ad nos ut hic accipiant ubi et gratia et veritas omnis est, quia et gratia et veritas una est. (ID, Ep. 71)

<sup>344</sup> Ross, B. L. *Old Landmarkism and the Baptists*, Pasadena, Pilgrim Publications, 1979, 33-39.

<sup>345</sup> Hovey, A., *The Life and Times of Isaac Backus*, Harrisonburg, Gano Books, 1991(1858), 82.

distinctives. They are convinced that true churches were intermixed within the Roman Catholic Church's confused theological and experiential framework. They believe the Reformation forced the Roman Catholic Church to define<sup>347</sup> its position and make some of its unofficial practices and beliefs official, i.e. the Council of Trent, 1545-1563.<sup>348</sup> Then, it is believed, that separatists such as the Anabaptists and other similar groups or congregations could no longer stay relatively anonymous and finally emerged as Baptists.

6. The Succession of Truth theory. This view teaches that the "New Testament's truth has survived since the apostolic church in some degree or other."<sup>349</sup> This standpoint explains that a series of reforms led to the Reformation. The American Baptist Church historian Henry C. Vedder supported this belief and explained that these "successions" of reformation led to a maturing process, and finally:

"After 1610 we have an unbroken succession of Baptist churches, established by indubitable documentary evidence." It is further believed that "from about the year 1641, at the latest, Baptist doctrine and practice have been the same in all essential features that they are today."<sup>350</sup>

The concept of "Succession of Truth" includes the idea that partial reforms of the church are found in the histories of so-called sects: 1. Montanists, 2. Novatians, 3. Donatists, 4. Paulicans,<sup>351</sup> 5. Waldensians or Albigensians, 6. the Moravians, and

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<sup>346</sup> Hulse, Erroll, *An Introduction to the Baptists*, Sussex, Carey Publications Limited, 1976, 25.

<sup>347</sup> Hurlbut, Jesse Lyman, *Hurlbut's Story of the Christian Church*, Philadelphia, The John C. Winston Company, 1918, 163.

<sup>348</sup> Cairns, Earle E., *Christianity Through the Centuries*, Revised Edition, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1979, 379-380.

<sup>349</sup> Hopewell, W., *Theories of Baptist Origins*, Cape Town, The Church Ministries Institute, 1989.

<sup>350</sup> Vedder, Henry C., *A Short History of the Baptists*, Valley Forge, The Judson Press, 1907, 201.

<sup>351</sup> Armitage illustrates the abuses related to derision: "Paulician history has come to us mainly through the persecutors of the Paulicians ... They have always been coupled with the Manichaeans, and nothing has been too base to say of them. Bossuet says of them: 'This so hidden a sect, so abominable, so full of seduction, of superstition and hypocrisy, notwithstanding imperial laws which condemned its followers to death, yet maintained and diffused itself.' Yet, Buckle's charges him with an 'audacious attempt to degrade history,' and Mosheim esteems him as lightly as Buckle as

others such as Savonarola (1452-1498), John Wycliff (1320-1384), and John Hus (1373-1415). The grouping of these broadly different historical churches and famous leaders is accepted as a part of Anabaptist and Baptist heritage by the Secessionists on the obviously forced "logic" that they were among those that had been persecuted<sup>352</sup> or that were known to have some measure of "Reformation truth" as sufficient common ground.<sup>353</sup>

It should be noted that historians like T. Armitage, J.M. Carroll and J.R. Graves were presuppositionally linked to the historical and doctrinal views of "The Association Baptist or the Landmark movement"<sup>354</sup> an ecclesiological doctrine found in the American Baptist Association and in more limited numbers among America's Southern and Independent Baptists. The contemporary Baptist historian, Bob L. Ross explains that:

Landmarkism involves the authenticity of a church as an organisation, the administration and administrator of baptism, and the ordination of ministers. It is asserted that a church is unscriptural, baptism is invalid, and ministers are not duly ordained unless there is proper church authority for them. <sup>355</sup>

Ross continues:

... the Landmark view is that Baptist churches alone have the authority of Christ to evangelise, baptize and carry out all aspects of the (great) commission. The system further involves the perpetuity, succession or continuity of Baptist churches through which authority has descended through the ages and will continue. This position, though not uniformly defined among Landmarkers is believed to have been taught by Christ in such verses as Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20. Landmarkers in general have either an inability to demonstrate this succession,

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a historian saying: 'This writer certainly did not go to the sources, and being influenced by party zeal, he was willing to make mistakes.' Armitage, T., *History of the Baptists*, Vol 1, 234-235.

<sup>352</sup> Carroll, J.M., *The Trail of Blood*, Lexington, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church Publication, 1931, 22.

<sup>353</sup> Graves, J.R., *The Work of Christ in the Covenant of Redemption developed in Seven Dispensations*, Texarkana, Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1883, 23-28.

<sup>354</sup> Landmarkism: founded by James Robinson Graves, (1820-1893).

<sup>355</sup> Ross, B. L., *Old Landmarkism and the Baptists*, Pasadena, Pilgrim Publications, 1979, 9.



or see no necessity of doing so. Their efforts to advocate their system of 'church truth' are almost invariably characterized by several quotations from secondary sources and their own respected authors, and these highly flawed sources are supposedly sufficient to establish their historical claim.<sup>356</sup>

Landmarkism is not the doctrine of Baptists in general and its history in America is not linked to the majority of Baptist, Southern or Independent, today. There are, nonetheless, a few Independent Baptist in South Africa who hold to Landmark doctrines<sup>357</sup>, such as strong local church authority, closed communion, and in a few cases a belief in a "Baptist bride." There are a number of Independent Baptists indirectly influenced by this historical point of view, but most Independent Fundamental Baptists, and certainly all the Independent Fundamental Bible churches, completely reject these teachings.

7. The Cooperative Associational History of Baptists. Yet another form of Baptist historical theory is based on following the Baptists various attempts at projecting the unity of their faith and position; and in its co-operation through various and sundry Baptist associations. William Hopewell points out that:

The local church sovereignty is a strong distinctive and has triggered the creation of the term Independent Baptist, yet, this term is unnecessary, because every true Baptist church is independent. Each believer priest has the right to discover God's will through Scripture, and prayer. Only the Holy Scriptures are sufficient to communicate what one believes, in the spirit of love, care, and respect for other believers<sup>358</sup>.

Hopewell further points out the importance of small churches to Baptist history. He begins with the negative, moves to positive aspects and then returns to inhibitors

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<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>357</sup> One would include a small number of missionaries sent out from local churches in the United States, a few from the Baptist World Mission (BWM) and some from within the Baptist Bible Fellowship International (BBFI).

<sup>358</sup> Hopewell, W., Theories of Baptist Origins, Guest Lecturer's Classroom Notes, Cape Town, The Church Ministries

within the small church nature of most Baptist congregations. The fact that Baptist churches have most generally been small groups of people adds to the belief of many Baptists that they were most likely to be found in every region and in every period of history but little record or notice was made of them due to their small congregational status. This argument is taken seriously by most of those with secessionists theories to support.

There are large Baptist churches, but most are small. Why? Answers should include that an independent spirit produces divisions. Further it should be noticed that small churches focus their evangelism on small communities as well as large. Then the indigenous nature of these churches indicates a restricted area, a church draws within immediate radius.

To critically evaluate the various historiographical theories and views of Independent Baptists one must realise that though many of these views remain popular among Baptists world-wide the Independent Baptists who are often taking the lead in any contemporary debates do so with highly emotion charged arguments. Which theory, if any of the theories could possibly be correct, is not the purpose of this contribution. This information is provided to establish the historical realities – the influences that have and are moulding Independent Baptists today.

#### **1.9.4 Denominationalism: The Independent Baptist view.**

How does Biblical teaching on congregationalism apply to modern needs and denominationalism? Many Baptist churches are small churches and the financial and administrative pressures these churches face are real. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches, though often small or young congregations still want to be effective and efficient. Hopewell explains:

Of course, home mission work encourages members to leave and start in surrounding areas, but problems do exist since small churches are not always able to fully support their own missionary efforts or causes.<sup>359</sup>

This explains why Independent Baptist and Bible churches, though guarding their autonomy, often work together in fellowships, associations – or just through informal and ad hoc committees. But voluntarily choosing to work together or by just enjoying Christian fellowship informally should not lead to a particular association of churches controlling any thing or anyone.<sup>360</sup>

An example of this informal cooperation among Independents is found in the Cape Leadership Pool currently operated by Independent Baptists in Cape Town. A descriptive article explains:

The Cape's Leadership Pool and its Learning Teams offer an important opportunity to the national leaders and missionaries of Bible-believing churches in the Cape Peninsula. Fellowship among Independent Baptists is often accomplished by forming *fellowships of churches* or *associations* that link groups of churches that see a need to periodically encourage and assist one another in specific projects. The Cape Leadership Pool is neither a fellowship nor an association, but is an informal forum *for learning together*. The Cape Leadership Pool is an informal group focusing on the cooperative development of useful ministry projects sponsored by or of interest to a few of the Cape's Independent Baptist or Bible Churches.

A Notion to Learn Together. The thought that independent churches and Christian leaders would cooperate in a learning exercise or that we would look to others to work on a project or problem on our behalf is a novel thought! We assume we can accomplish more or use our time better if we are pro-actively "in charge" of our own projects. We prefer to avoid committees – due to "practical reasons," "time constraints" or other not-so-obvious expediencies. We do not want to give-up our "say," on a matter, nor our control over our own projects ... or ideas! But some of us are convinced this is not always the best way – the Cape Leadership Pool is our effort to accomplish

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<sup>359</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>360</sup> Jackson, P. R., The Doctrine and Administration of the Church, 120.

more practical work by working together – but without yielding our individual identities or independence.

The *Learning Ministry Team notion* is a voluntary decision (*a notion*) to work cooperatively. Goals include:

- Improving my own effectiveness, or that of my church;
- Developing specific yet truly shared vision;
- Testing ideas by building Biblically based models for an idea;
- Considering the causes & effects, i.e. the systemic fundamentals, before enacting plans.
- Accomplishing projects by developing the best possible team dynamics.<sup>361</sup>

Independent Baptist interpret the messengers in Acts 15 as sent to a type of associational meeting, and though they were not “official delegates” with the representative power of a congregation, as in a synod or convention system, they did have a degree of influence and input. The obvious purposes of any associational cooperation is to further the Gospel message; encourage Christian fellowship; and to provide spiritual help preaching to one another and prayer with one another.

The first group of Baptists with a more definitive identification was the General Baptists who formed themselves into a body in 1611 under the leadership of Helwys and Smyth in England and Holland; John Clarke (1664) and Roger Williams<sup>362</sup> represented this group in Rhode Island and among the early Thirteen Colonies in America. The Particular Baptist Association (1644) was formed in England under the founding leadership of Henry Jacob. The first British Baptist association was formed in Somersetshire, Eng. (1653) and this grew to be a nationwide association in London (1689). The Seventh Day Baptist General Conference (1672) was formed in England with an emphasis on worship on Saturday. The first Baptist association in the United

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<sup>361</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., *The Learning Ministry Team Notion*, Cape Town, A.B.W.E. Cape Team Informational Monographs, 2001, 1.

States was the Philadelphia Association (1707-1714). Next came the Freewill Baptists in 1727 in the United States; then the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit<sup>363</sup> Predestinarian Baptists in 1820 in the state of Virginia. The Southern Baptist historian H. Leon McBeth verifies, that due to "... the tensions over slavery, already present among American Baptists, which led to the great schism of 1845 which brought the Southern Baptist Convention into existence."<sup>364</sup> Then, the American Baptist Association (Commonly known as Landmarkism) was organised in 1905. The "Northern Baptist Convention" was organised in 1907, renamed in 1950 "the American Baptist Convention" and in 1972 renamed again as the "American Baptist Churches in USA."

The Independent Baptist fellowships include: the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (a grouping of Independent Baptists) which was formed in 1932 as an act of separation from the liberalism of the Northern Baptist Churches; then the Conservative Baptist Association was next to form, in 1947 and more recently another group of Independent Baptists known as the Baptist Bible Fellowship organised in 1950 as a break-off of 100 pastors from the leadership of J. Frank Norris. Norris's group was also a break-off group known as the World Baptist Fellowship, having broken off from the Southern Baptist Convention.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> Backus, Isaac, *Your Baptist Heritage: 1620-1804*, Little Rock, The Challenge Press, 1976, 71.

<sup>363</sup> Extreme Calvinistic; They believed two seeds planted in Eve, one by God, one by Satan, and that every baby born has one or the other seed; they believe the pastor has a legal authority; and they practice foot washing. These distinguishing marks were, of course, true of many other denominations.

<sup>364</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 301. It is important to note the confusion in South Africa even among Baptists, i.e. that two, South African leaders, one a member of the Baptist Convention of South Africa and one a member of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa both objected to my including the sentence stating that the Southern Baptist Convention was formed due to the issue of slavery. Regrettably, I have not been able to remove this statement since this fact of history is totally verified and is certainly useful information in developing an understanding of the history and context of Baptists in America. It is equally interesting to note that the "great schism" was, according to Foss & Matthews, a result of the British Baptist Union's committee of Francis A Cox and James Hoby promoting "the sacred cause of Negro emancipation." See: Foss, A.T. and Matthews, E, *Facts for Baptist Churches*, Utica, American Baptists Free Mission Society, 1850, 18.

<sup>365</sup> Hopewell, W., *Theories of Baptist Origins*, Guest Lecturer's Classroom Notes, Cape Town, The Church Ministries Institute, 1989 1-3.

In summary: The Independent Fundamental Baptists are prepared to form fellowships or loose associations but they are unwilling to form bodies with any measure of control or influence over that which they believe to be the congregation's own rights and responsibilities. In this light, the Independent Baptists accept loose knit associations, or fellowships, but view denominationalism as providing a dangerous control that can more easily lead to theological compromise. They are convinced that denominational unions, conventions and other controlling bodies exist without a mandate from God's Word. Independent Fundamental Baptists usually view para-church organisations with reservations since they see them as potential links to ecumenical compromise, another perceived enemy of all Fundamentalists. Only the local church is truly accepted as Biblical and thus only the local church is viewed as sufficient, capable and competent to provide the Christian with the organisation and leadership taught by Christ and explained in the New Testament.

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## CHAPTER TWO:

### THE FUNDAMENTALISM OF THE INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS.

Viewing the Independent Baptist and Bible Churches as a collective grouping or movement, or as a particular classification within conservative Christianity, would not be possible without understanding its Fundamentalist mindset. In fact, the very existence of this subset within Evangelical Christianity depends on its Fundamentalist character. The Fundamentalist's identity depends on a ministry identified with maintaining truth once believed on a more popular level, but now is either being modified or abandoned altogether. Kirsopp Lake, a noted theological liberal of the previous century, concluded:

The Fundamentalist may be wrong; I think that he is. But it is we who have departed from the tradition, not he, and I am sorry for the fate of anyone who tries to argue with a Fundamentalist on the basis of authority. The Bible and the *corpus theologicum* of the church is [sic] on the Fundamentalist side.<sup>1</sup>

Though there is of necessity some overlap between the discussion of the origins of the Independent Baptist Worldwide in chapter one and this chapter's focus on the Fundamentalist nature of these churches, this chapter's presentation of their unique interpretation of Baptist life, as American styled "Historic and Biblical Fundamentalists," is vital to the overall development of this thesis. The differences between the existing Southern African Baptist associations, unions, and conventions and the more recently arrived Independent Fundamentalist Baptist and Bible churches is rarely un-

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<sup>1</sup> Lake, Kirsopp, The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1925, 61-62.

derstood, even among Baptists<sup>2</sup>, since nothing has been written on the subject until now.

Why this particular Fundamentalism believes itself to be somehow more historic, more Biblical, more Baptist, more consistent, more spiritual, more reformational, more socially relevant and more democratic is dealt with in each of the sections of this chapter. What will certainly seem to be arrogance to many readers is simply viewed as strong conviction or honest belief to these relatively radical Christians.

Relatively unnoticed, Independent Fundamental Baptists and their sister churches the Independent Bible Churches, arrived in Southern Africa in the previous century<sup>3</sup> from America and Canada. Their goal was to evangelise and carry on missionary work in the form of church planting. Their approach to ministry was simple: they publicly preached and emphasised their perception of the Fundamental truths of Christianity. Using personal evangelism, individual discipleship, leadership training and by forming local Independent congregations these missionaries advanced the Christian faith. Theologically these missionaries consider themselves conservative evangelicals or more exactly Biblical and Historical Fundamentalists<sup>4</sup>. Their understanding of the Scriptures depends on a hermeneutical approach based on a concept of revelation

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<sup>2</sup> The Baptist Union's Theological Library and computer referencing facility in Cape Town had, as of October 2002, no references to either Independent or Fundamental Baptist history or literature.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix I. A chronology of the Independent missionaries, and Appendix II. A general chronology of the congregations are both provided to assist the reader in understanding the extent of this movement's influence on Southern African religious life.

<sup>4</sup> Biblical and Historical Fundamentalism is primarily an American-styled movement developing over the last one hundred years. The Independent Baptist churches and the Independent Bible churches that have been established in Southern Africa have no *official links* to the American churches and organisation that would be considered Biblical and Historical Fundamentalists, but the similarities and relationships are obvious. South African religious life has different culture, issues and approaches and these facts have had increasing influence on the character of this movement since it arrived in the 1970s and some cultural modifications are to be expected.



that views all current revelation from God as limited to Holy Scripture and its interpretation as dependent on a literal and dispensational analysis.

Pentecostals and Charismatics also refer to themselves as “Fundamentalists” and “literalists” but their view of revelation and Scripture, in the opinion of Independent Fundamentalists disqualifies them from using these terms. Hugh Wetmore explains the Pentecostal position and thus highlights the differences with others view current revelation from God as limited to the Holy Scriptures alone:

Although God always reveals himself in accordance with Scripture, he does not always choose to use Scripture. There are revelations of God that do not always take place in context of Bible study or a sermon. Revelation is truly revelation whenever it is God revealing himself. This may take the form of tongues, prophecy, dreams, visions, a word of knowledge, healing, etc. (1 Corinthians 12).<sup>5</sup>

Their principal contribution to the religious life of Southern Africa is promoting a revival of their exceptionally literal Fundamentalist interpretation of God’s Word and their serious commitment to personal evangelism.

### **2.1 The “Biblical Fundamentalists”**

By nature of claiming to be extremely Bible-centred, this group of Christians known in the United States as “Biblical Fundamentalism” promotes a strong significance to exhaustive Bible teaching. There is a strategic focus within their ministry methodology on the individual Christian’s ability to study the Scriptures and his or her ability

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<sup>5</sup> Wetmore, Hugh, *Why Christians Disagree When They Interpret The Bible*, Cape Town, Struik Christian Books Ltd., The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA), 2001, 154

to develop a capability to interpret it personally and accurately. Bible study, whether through the church or home, focuses on equipping the believer to be pro-active in evangelistic outreach. Since Fundamentalists view the Bible as their sole source and final authority in personal and ecclesiastical issues, serious textual study and in-depth expository preaching is commonplace. Speaking from an Independent Baptist standpoint, Anderson and Gower summarise the rejection of church councils, synods or even charismatic leaders by these Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches:

In all matters of faith and practice, the Bible is our final authority – a position given by some Christian groups to the writings of their human founder, to decrees of church officials or to long-standing traditions. <sup>6</sup>

Descriptive adjectives such as “Independent” and “Fundamental” are regularly misunderstood in the religious world. To establishing a good understanding of this particular facet of the historic Fundamentalist movement, one needs to understand this interpretation of Biblical Fundamentalism from the perspective of the Independent Baptists and the Independent Bible Churches of South Africa.

The South African Independent Baptists subscribe to a set of identifiable Fundamental principles and these principles, or *Fundamentals*, establish (in their opinion) a unambiguous basis for independence and *ecclesiastical separation* from others not holding to their own conservative Biblical interpretations and convictions. This form of “Biblical Fundamentalism” is just over one hundred years old, thus the additional de-

scriptive title "Historic."<sup>7</sup> Independent Baptists were both influenced by and served as major contributors<sup>8</sup> to the rise of the American Fundamentalist movement at the end of the nineteenth century. Although it originally developed as a British and American stand against liberal<sup>9</sup> Christianity,<sup>10</sup> it became predominantly American by the 1930s. Since the middle of the twentieth century, Biblical and Historic Fundamentalism has divided repeatedly into various, so-called, "militant" and "non-militant" groupings. It continues in its present much weakened form under the banner of "Biblical Fundamentalism."<sup>11</sup>

Fundamentalism emphasizes or holds militantly to the, so-called, "Six Fundamentals of the Christian Faith:" 1. The inspiration and authority of the Bible; and the Lord Jesus Christ's 2. Virgin birth, 3. Eternal deity, 4. Substitutionary death, 5. Bodily resurrection, and 6. Literal return. Fundamentalist churches of all varieties hold to these primary beliefs as essential truths.<sup>12</sup>

The primary mission of the Independent Fundamental Baptist movement is personal evangelism,<sup>13</sup> i.e. bringing men and women into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord. The issue at hand is simply explained by recognising that the Fundamentalists consider anyone claiming to be Christian but denying the six Fundamentals to

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<sup>6</sup> Anderson, K.A., Gower, D.A., The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1992, 9-10.

<sup>7</sup> Dollar, George W. A., History of Fundamentalism in America, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973, xv.

<sup>8</sup> Beale, D.O., In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850, Greenville, Unusual Publications, 1986, Part III. "Baptist Fundamentalism to 1930," 173-237.

<sup>9</sup> Schaeffer, Francis A., How Should We Then Live?, Old Tappan, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1976, 175. Lindsell, Harold, The New Paganism, San Francisco, Harper & Row Publishers, 1987, 115. Liberals, according to Francis Schaeffer, are those who tried to "synthesize the rationalism of the Enlightenment and Christianity," and, according to Harold Lindsell, "are those who appear to be identified with Christianity, indeed those who may call themselves Christians, but who are really not Christian. And whoever is not Christian is pagan."

<sup>10</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, The Baptist Heritage, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987, 302-303. The Down Grade Controversy, London 1887-1892 - "Some have found the seed of the controversy as early as 1873, when the Baptist Union modified its constitution away from a doctrinal to a more functional base."

<sup>11</sup> Marsden, G. M., Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.(1987) 1995, 4

<sup>12</sup> The General Association of Baptist Churches, Statement of Faith, Schaumburg, GARBC Press, 1949.

be *ipso facto* "Pagans."<sup>14</sup> This personal "outreach" is accomplished by witnessing to one's neighbours and acquaintances, by teaching the doctrines of salvation to their children in the home, and by public preaching. A most literal and conservative style of Bible exposition of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ is commonly used by the Independent Baptists. This Gospel, as preached by Independent Baptists, like many other evangelical churches, focuses on the sinful and lost condition of all humanity, the atoning death of Jesus Christ, and the literal resurrection and return of Christ. Salvation, they believe, is available to all<sup>15</sup> who believe and repent, i.e. obey the grace teachings of the Word of God. To trust in Jesus Christ for salvation is to accept Him as one's personal Lord and Saviour. Independent Baptists believe that one's personal salvation is not accomplished through any personal good works<sup>16</sup>.

The Fundamentalist is convinced, and at the same time also somewhat radicalised by the somewhat pessimistic view, that the world is really not interested in any one's religious interpretation of ethics and certainly not an ethical viewpoint premised on an inerrant Bible and a radically changed inner life. James Barr summarises the issue well:

Since all Christianity is absurd, from the secular viewpoint it is all more or less Fundamentalistic in character. Somewhat on the principle that one might as well be hanged for a sheep as

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<sup>13</sup> Stowel, J. M., *Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century*, Wheaton, Victor Books / Scripture Press Publications, 1994, 37.

<sup>14</sup> Feinberg, Charles L., ed., *The Fundamentals for Today*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1958, Volume Two, 451, Robert E. Speer, writing in Chapter 46, "Foreign Missions or World-Wide Evangelism" summarises the Fundamentalist's mindset on evangelism, "Men are not free to hold contradictory conceptions of the same God."

<sup>15</sup> There are some strong Calvinists among the Independent Baptist and Bible churches and these would teach a "limited atonement." The development of Calvinism among Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches, may be seen by some as inconsistency, especially with their beliefs in dispensationalism, premillennialism, etc.. To the Independent Baptists, themselves, this only establishes two facts regarding freedom of expression within this movement: First, that their independence is thorough in practice and Second, that their Fundamentalism is unorthodox or radical in nature.

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 2:8-10

for a lamb, this circumstance seems to reduce the difficulty of living in the modern world for the Fundamentalist.<sup>17</sup>

Regarding ethics, Independent Fundamental Baptists will seem to many to be apathetic or not truly engaged in the world around them. The reason for this is related to their belief that genuine and lasting good works are limited to, or are only a result of, conversion. Only those accepting Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour are believed to be able to make any lasting changes in their lives, behaviour or social responsibilities. Concerning social and political ethics, it is generally assumed that the conservatism of the Fundamentalist's religion will correspond with the tendency to be "right wing" politically<sup>18</sup>. Although this is generally true, it is not true in every cultural situation. In South Africa, it is not unusual to find Fundamentalists rejecting the South African version of conservatism, or those referred to as "right-wing," but at the same time agreeing with the conservative interpretation of western social values i.e. British or American conservatism. Fundamentalists often openly support capitalist society and business ideology as a response to socialism or communism.<sup>19</sup> The issue from a Fundamentalist's vantage point is simple: they do not recognise an advantage in compromising to please the world. The world, as already pointed out, is seen as uninterested in the various versions of Christianity and Christian ethics.

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<sup>17</sup> Barr, J., Fundamentalism, Philadelphia, the Westminster Press, 1978, 102.

<sup>18</sup> "Right wing" is used here in the sense of the term as used within American religious circles, i.e. as a grouping that is politically opposed to abortion, homosexuality, gambling, many forms of central or "big" government based social welfare programmes, etc., due to their western social values i.e. British or American conservatism and historic religious values.

<sup>19</sup> Barr, J., Fundamentalism, 110.

Independent Fundamental Baptists believe, then, that once individuals have initially encountered God by becoming a genuine believer and follower of Christ, they will, through personal dedication to God's Word, become spiritually involved in industry, business, social causes and politics, thereby making a change through their higher ethical values.<sup>20</sup> Fundamentalists believe spiritual growth is a progressive matter linked to obedience and practical application of the Bible. As we will consider in more detail later, the Bible is accepted by this group of Fundamentalists as the sole source of divine revelation and its content is accepted as inerrant truth. They believe the Bible's truths are to be applied propositionally<sup>21</sup> as life changing principles. The abuse of these ideas has often led Fundamentalists to a legalistic interpretation. Their emphasis on teaching and preaching the Bible as the centre of worship itself clearly distinguishes them from other churches with a liturgical or more emotional focus of worship. Independent Baptists, even more than their sister Bible churches, look to their pastors<sup>22</sup> to prepare their church members for personal Christian service.<sup>23</sup> This pastoral process focuses on teaching people to interpret and apply God's Word correctly for themselves.

Christian ministry (or service) is considered a matter based on the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Believer<sup>24</sup>, at least from the Independent Baptist position. The Independent Baptists belief is that only after Christians are enabled to interpret the Scriptures for themselves, with understanding, can they be expected to carry on an

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<sup>20</sup> Barr, J, Fundamentalism, 113.

<sup>21</sup> Schaeffer, F. A., The Church Before the Watching World, London, Inter-Varsity Press, 1972, 70, 89.

<sup>22</sup> Ephesians 4:12-13.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Peter 5:1-5.

<sup>24</sup> Berkhoz, H., Christian Faith, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979, 403.

active or growing spiritual relationship<sup>25</sup> with God and in society, i.e. with others in need. Church history records a time when the attitude of the uneducated Christian was clearly dependent on the church for the interpretation of Scriptures.<sup>26</sup> For centuries Baptists have joined the voices of the Free Church movement in proclaiming that the church must recognise that Christianity is dependent on individual Christians knowing and using God's Word.<sup>27</sup>

Robert G. Torbet, in his *History of the Baptists*, explains the contributions of Baptists concerning the importance of the Scriptures. This is especially important in light of the Independent Baptists' claiming a degree of heritage with the Anabaptists, a heritage, one should point out, that only limited numbers of modern Independent Fundamental Baptists are still inclined to claim:

It was Balthasar Hubmaier, that stalwart Anabaptist, who dared to challenge Zwingli ...insisting...in a conference with the Swiss reformer, that "in all disputes concerning faith and religion, the Scripture alone, proceeding from the mouth of God, ought to be our level and rule. Baptists have maintained this consistent stand through all the centuries that have followed Hubmaier's day, even at the expense of their personal safety."<sup>28</sup>

The Independent Baptists' view toward ecumenicity is also linked to their interpretation of Scriptures. Baptists believe that the reason that there are so many different

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<sup>25</sup> "Their spiritual life left much to be desired and most of them were not spiritually capable of full participation in ecclesiastical activities. In their private lives they were prone to fear and superstition. Although they formally subscribed to all the doctrines of the church they never internalised or had a desire to participate in the cultic activities of the church." Pillay, G.J and Hofmeyr, J.W., Ed., *Perspectives on Church History*, Pretoria, De Jager-HAUM Publishers, 1991, 130.

<sup>26</sup> Bancroft, E.H., *Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1976, 266-267.

<sup>27</sup> Bush, L. R. and Nettles, T. J., *Baptist and the Bible*, The Baptist doctrines of Biblical inspiration and religious authority in historical perspective, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980, 15.

<sup>28</sup> Torbet, R. G., *A History of Baptists* (Third Edition), Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1963, 483.

churches is quite obviously a result of the many different viewpoints on how to interpret the Bible. As long as there are different standards<sup>29</sup> of hermeneutics there will be different groups or denominations within Christianity. There are other reasons, of course, but the method of interpretation is, to them, the primary cause behind the major theological differences. Independent Baptists are openly opposed to almost any form of ecumenicity since they view it as compromising God's Word. They recognise the value of unity but only if the Fundamental issues of faith are accepted first.<sup>30</sup>

The Independent Baptists generally consider the local congregation to be one of the central role players in successful Christian living, families and social life.<sup>31</sup> They believe the Bible teaches that this influential role will remain a primary feature throughout the New Testament Dispensation of Grace<sup>32</sup>. This emphasis on a spiritual growth that is accomplished through the corporate dynamics of congregational life lead to an interpretation of "church discipline" that focuses on Christian counselling and problem solving<sup>33</sup>. In this light, personal counselling and congregational support<sup>34</sup> handle the personal problems and needs of members. Independent Baptists are convinced that people attending Christian churches today should attend their

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<sup>29</sup> Berkouwer, G.C., *General Revelation*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955, 12, 30, 152, 155, 313.

<sup>30</sup> Beale, D. O., *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism since 1850*, Greenville, Unusual Publications, 1986, 378. (The Fundamentals of the Faith as expressed in the "Articles of Belief of the Niagara Bible Conference," Chicago, Great Commission Prayer League, 1878.)

<sup>31</sup> Radmacher, E. D. *The Nature of the Church*, Portland, Western Baptist Press, 1972, 354-355.

<sup>32</sup> Ironside, Harry A., *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, New York, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1955, 33-78. The Dispensation of Grace, The "Church Age" or the period from Pentecost to the "Rapture of the Saints," is a period outlined in seven periods in Revelation chapters two and three.

<sup>33</sup> McDonald, Cleveland & Philip, *Creating a Successful Christian Marriage*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994, 301, 305-308.

<sup>34</sup> Sell, C. M., *Family Ministry: The Enrichment of Family Life through the Church*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1981, 200-215, 245.



church with the expectation and real hope of true Biblical Christian fellowship working toward resolving the modern pressures of life, growing individualism and increased materialism.

The goal of this concept of close Christian fellowship is one of focusing on practical family-life needs grounded in Independent Baptist hermeneutical literalism. Though recognising the differences between modern and Biblical cultures, Independent Baptists still consider the moral lessons and examples of the Old Testament as literally true and applicable in developing their moral and ethical family principles. The New Testament principles on marriage and family life have precedence over modern philosophy or culture. By encouraging Christians to make a serious lifelong study of God's Word the Independent Baptists are attempting to focus their whole congregational ministry around the goal of cooperative or mutual life-changing<sup>35</sup> involvement based on "biblical answers" i.e. adherence to God's Word. An example of this type of church mission statement follows:

Faith Baptist Church seeks to love people and provide lasting solutions. We do this through our local, Christian, church family which ministers very practically to the needs of one another and uses biblical answers God has provided in His Word.<sup>36</sup>

Faith Baptist Church has also historically provided biblical answers through our biblical counselling ministry. This biblical counselling ministry has provided help to thousands of individuals across Lafayette, Indiana, the USA and the world.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> 2 Timothy 1:7 and Philippians 4:7-10.

<sup>36</sup> Faith Baptist Church, Lafayette, IN., U.S.A.

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.fbclafayette.org/> - The Faith Baptist Church, Lafayette, Indiana, U.S.A. is one example of this type of Independent Fundamental Baptist Church.

Linked to these statements on counselling and with the idea of change based on “biblical answers,” the Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches generally encourage what they consider a balance<sup>38</sup> in congregational ministry strategy. “Balance,” to them, is pursuing lifestyle changes that are dependent on God’s Word and on the inner work of sanctification by the Holy Spirit.<sup>39</sup> They believe the Holy Spirit primarily accomplishes change in the believers life through a process where the believer’s obedience to the Word of God, i.e. the Scriptures. Prayer is also viewed as a central component to change, but prayer must also be conscientious of the truth as found in the Word of God. The process of change<sup>40</sup> is in practical terms<sup>41</sup> a commitment to selfless living, i.e. personal self-discipline: preventative self-control and corrective church discipline.<sup>42</sup> The goal of this interpretation of the change process is a soundness of mind or peace that leads to a greater focus on personal responsibility to right living. Many evangelical churches or denominations have similar beliefs and teaching, but Independent Baptists are relatively exclusive in their total rejection of eclectic or secular psychology theory.<sup>43</sup> Few other Christians are as vocal in rejecting secular psychology as a potential approach to solving problems, or of playing a useful role in

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<sup>38</sup> Peters, G.W., *A Theology of Church Growth*, Grand Rapids, Academic Books, 1981, 188-191.

<sup>39</sup> Compare, Colossians 3:14-18 with Ephesians 5:18-21.

<sup>40</sup> Metts, W. C., *How to think as a Christian*, Oklahoma City, Hearthstone Publishing Ltd, 1997, 103.

<sup>41</sup> Mack, W. A., *Your Family God’s Way*, Philipsburg, P& R Publishing, 1991, 12, 13, 215 .

<sup>42</sup> Adams, J. E., *Handbook of Church Discipline*, Grand Rapids, Ministry Resources Library, 1986, p. 21, 27. It is worth noting that Adams and the “Nouthetic Counselling Movement,” though having a much broader support base than just Independent Baptist and Bible churches is applied in its most literalistic form among these Fundamentalists. On the other hand, there are some Independents who reject all emphasis on “Counselling Ministries” believing, instead, that the Scriptures and the pulpit ministry of a pastor are sufficient for providing the counselling needs of God’s flock.

<sup>43</sup> Bobgan, M and D, *Prophets of Psychoheresy*, L, Santa Barbara, East Gate Publishers, 1989, 5, 6, 106-107, 141, 156-157.

ethical or moral change. In this, the Independent Baptist ministry is further radicalised and exceptionally fundamentalist.<sup>44</sup>

Though rejecting secular and eclectic psychology, Independent Fundamental Baptists are generally committed to a directive form of pastoral and Biblical counselling.

While rejecting secular psychology, Fundamentalism's literal interpretation of Scripture leads to their use of methods that are quite similar to the therapies<sup>45</sup> of secular psychiatrists William Glasser<sup>46</sup>, or O. Hobart Mowrer.<sup>47</sup>

The literal Biblical approach is, by nature, more confrontational and is thus oriented toward Christians taking more personal responsibility for their behaviour – something also taught by Glasser, Mower and others. The Nouthetic Counselling of Jay Adams and others<sup>48</sup> has become a major influence leading many of the Independent Baptists to look for answers to personal, interpersonal, and family problems in God's Word. Depression, anger, fear, stress and worry are all believed to be life choices and

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<sup>44</sup> Burgess, S.M. and McGee, G.B., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, 377-388. The type of hermeneutics used and the form of literalism adhered to by the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches is often mistakenly identified as being the same, or similar to, the hermeneutic of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. Their teaching that "an opportunity has been afforded every believer to partake of a special spiritual experience subsequent to regeneration" (378) place them and their hermeneutic in a totally different category of evangelicalism.

<sup>45</sup> Glasser, W., *Reality Therapy. A New Approach to Psychiatry*, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, 1965, xxi, 10, 13, 18, 44, 109-111.

<sup>46</sup> Glasser, William, Psychiatrist (in private practice), author, consultant in correction, juvenile delinquency hospitals and facilities in the United States and Canada.

<sup>47</sup> Mowrer, O. Hobart, Research Professor of Psychology, University of Illinois, U.S.A.

<sup>48</sup> The Faith Baptist Christian Counselling Centre, Lafayette, Indiana is a good example of one Independent Baptist Church-based ministry that has trained many of the Independent Baptist missionaries and pastors in South Africa. Christian leaders such as Drs. Adams, Mack, MacArthur and hundreds of other counsellors and pastors have formed the N.A.N.C. - National Association of Nouthetic Counsellors to provide a unified voice to this movement and ministry in the United States.

habit patterns that can be reversed in obedience to Scriptural truth<sup>49</sup>. The majority of Independent Fundamental Baptists teach that the Scriptures are totally *sufficient*<sup>50</sup> to meet the Christians emotional needs as well as spiritual needs and they believe and teach that Freudianism, Behaviourism, and Third Force psychology are humanistic and flawed.<sup>51</sup>

Independent Baptists respond to post-modernism with a typically Fundamentalist response, i.e. by calling society back to an unswerving confidence in God's *Holy Word*.<sup>52</sup> The methodology of Fundamentalism is quite simple. It calls the post-modernist<sup>53</sup> of our day to listen to the practical aspects<sup>54</sup> of Biblical teaching and to renew strong ties of Christian fellowship by submitting<sup>55</sup> to the authority of others submitting to God's Word.

The idea that a Christian can successfully live the Christian life without the fellowship and teaching of the local church is not an acceptable attitude to Independent Bap-

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<sup>49</sup> MacArthur, Jr., J. F. and Mack, W. A., eds., *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, Dallas, Word Publishing, 1994, 204, 284-297.

<sup>50</sup> Sufficiency, as defined within the *Nouthetic Counselling Movement*, describes total rejection of eclectic mixture of Christian – Biblical principles with secular theory.

<sup>51</sup> Adams, J. E., *The Christian Counsellor's Manual*, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1973, 82-91 and *Competent to Counsel*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1970, Chapter One.

<sup>52</sup> Stowell, J. M., *Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century*, Wheaton, Victor Books / Scripture Press Publications, 1994, 39.

<sup>53</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., *Character amidst Chaos - Dialogue Motivators*, Cape Town, The Church Ministries Institute, 1999. The central tenets of Post-modernism state that (1.) Nothing is absolutely sure. (2.) Nothing is absolutely wrong or evil. (3.) Every individual's lifestyle deserves acceptance. (4.) One's lifestyle choices are personal and should be interpreted on the basis of the individual's own subjective standards. (5.) The ethical and moral aspects of our lives are simply fatalistically controlled or a matter of pure chance, thus no one must be understood as personally "guilty" or responsible by others. (6.) Our various individual, family and national cultures are ethically and morally neutral. In fact, culture needs to be understood as "free" from any real liability or accountability.

<sup>54</sup> Adams, J. E., *More than Redemption*, A Theology of Christian Counselling, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979, 6-8, 34-35, 326.

<sup>55</sup> Ephesians 5:21, 6:17

tists<sup>56</sup>. The role of government, family and church are all recognised, but the Old Testament emphasis on Israel, on patriarchal tribe, or even the extended family are not viewed as higher in hierarchal position than is the church as the family of God. The Independent Baptists teach that a Christian should come under or willingly submit to one another<sup>57</sup>, and to the oversight and watchful care of a pastor. The fellowship, care and discipline<sup>58</sup> of a local congregation are central issues to the general worldview of Independent Baptists. In these days of emphasis on individual rights, this position moves the Independent Baptists out of step with popular current thinking of post-modernism and a more open society.

## 2.2 The Only Rule of Faith and Practice.

Baptists in general and certainly Fundamental Independent Baptists in particular have used the word “only” to emphasise their view of their relationship to the Bible as the sole basis for faith and practice. Independent Baptists, along with a number of other Baptists, have<sup>59</sup> clearly defended their belief that the Bible, as the Inspired Word of God, should be their “only rule for Faith and Practice.”<sup>60</sup> Many non-Independent Baptists such as those in the South African Baptist Union<sup>61</sup> or the American-based

<sup>56</sup>Spurgeon, C.H., *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume I: The Early Years (1834-1859)*, Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, ( Revised Edition Originally compiled by Mrs Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harrald ), See “The Declaration Of The Faith And Practice Of The Church Of Christ, Dr. John Gill, 553.

<sup>57</sup> Independent Baptists do not accept a hierarchical approach to their church government, and their congregational approach is based on the belief that every member democratically has a contribution or vote in matters common to all. On the other hand they do teach Hebrews 13:17 teaches that those who do not cooperate with the leadership and care of a pastor – who hinder his ministry will not be blessed by God.

<sup>58</sup> Walker, W., *Harmony in the Church: Church Discipline*, Rochester, Bakus Book Publishers, 1981 Reprint of 1844 publication, 22.

<sup>59</sup> Anderson, D. K., *The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1984, 20.

<sup>60</sup> Jackson, M., *Ready, Set, Grow! A Faith and Practice Primer for Regular Baptists*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1989, 23.

<sup>61</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., ed., *Together for a Century*, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1977, 36.

Southern Baptist Convention<sup>62</sup> have also taken similar doctrinal positions. Almost all Baptists would give at least some level of acceptance to the concept of the rule of Scripture, but not all would agree that the reason this must be so is because of a conservative or Fundamentalist logic focused on the inerrancy, infallibility, and verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture. Baptists use this word "only" to distinguish themselves from other churches and Christians especially those who would include other sources or means to knowing God's will regarding one's life and religious practice. Of course, many evangelicals and other Christians would take exception to the Baptist's claim to uniqueness on these matters. Nonetheless, though aggravating to many as this attitude is, the Independent Fundamentalists persist in their claims of uniqueness on the matter. They, like the sixteenth century Anabaptists, believe and teach that their doctrine is more consistently developed around the Scriptures than in any of the other religious groups.

The whole idea of the recovery of New Testament Christianity was tied up with the thought that at some point in Christian history the pattern was lost.<sup>63</sup>

Fundamental Independent Baptist and Bible Churches do not believe this ecclesiological exclusivity implies that others are any less God's children, but they do believe their strong doctrinal basis is comprehensive and to a great degree a restoration of the New Testament pattern due to their focus on the Scriptures.

The worldview<sup>64</sup> held by these Fundamentalist Independent Baptists rejects all suggestions that truth or revelation could develop through Israel, the church or world

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<sup>62</sup> Hobbs, H. H., *The Baptist Faith and Message*, Nashville, Convention Press, 1971, 18.

history.<sup>63</sup> Fundamentalist Independent Baptist and Bible churches completely disagree with Barthian theology<sup>64</sup>, Neoorthodoxy<sup>65</sup> and others accepting "general revelation."<sup>66</sup> *Higher Criticism* is rejected and the Independent Fundamentalist churches reject most aspects of *Literary Criticism*. Herbert Wolf refers to this issue as he opens his chapter on "Authorship:"

Few subjects have generated more discussion and more disagreement than the question of who wrote the Pentateuch. Opinions range widely, with some arguing that Moses wrote every word. Others insist that they can prove that Moses had nothing whatever to do with the writing of the Pentateuch. Instead, certain sources labelled J.E.D. and P. are proposed. The writers of these alleged documents, the "Yahwist," "Elohist," and so on, are regarded as the true authors of the Pentateuch. Archaeological discoveries and advances in literary critics have added fuel to the debate in the twentieth century. The battle still rages and no end is in sight.<sup>69</sup>

Fundamentalists generally reject the revelatory progressiveness<sup>70</sup> of most schools of Biblical Theology, and they reject progressiveness<sup>71</sup> in church dogma. Documents such as congregational statements of faith, brief confessions and abbreviated doctrinal statements or creeds, though often available in Independent Baptist and Bible

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<sup>63</sup> Radmacher, E. D. *The Nature of the Church*, Portland, Western Baptist Press, 1972, 56.

<sup>64</sup> Van Til, C., *In Defence of the Faith*, Volume II, A Survey of Christian Epistemology, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1932, 13, 224-228.

<sup>65</sup> Polman, A.D.R., *Barth*, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979, Chapter II, Barth's View of Scripture, 16.

<sup>66</sup> Barth, K., *Church Dogmatics*, Volume I, Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1936, 124-125, 127.

<sup>67</sup> Erickson, M. J., *Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1983, "The second position on the relationship between revelation and history could be characterized as revelation through history. Here we find the view known popularly as Neoorthodoxy." 183.

<sup>68</sup> Berkouwer, G.C., *General Revelation*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955, 327. "This question must be answered negatively, because the function of faith is never creative, but only receptive; related to this there is a perceptive, discerning function which see reality, subjectively it is true, but always as the work of God"

<sup>69</sup> Wolf, H., *An Introduction to the Old Testament Pentateuch*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1991, 50. [Further referenced to: John H. Tullock, *The Old Testament Story*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1987), pp.10-11.]

<sup>70</sup> This is especially true when "lower" or *Literary Criticism* is the basis for this "progressiveness."

<sup>71</sup> This view teaches that truth can develop or evolve through history itself.

congregations, have little real influence. In most cases, these churches use these various doctrinal statements or other similar documents more to define their differences with other churches or denominations than as documents with authoritative<sup>72</sup> value. The writings of the Church Fathers, the historic catholic creeds and the pronouncements of religious bodies and synods play no role in the theological base of Fundamental Independent Baptists. Instead, these Fundamentalists adamantly maintain that the Scriptures, as the verbal, plenary and inspired Word of God, must stand alone as their rule for faith and practice.

In 1890, the Richmond, Virginia Baptist pastor, J. B. Jeters, wrote an article on "The Inspiration of Scriptures"<sup>73</sup> that accurately represented a great degree of Baptist thought in the past. The Fundamentalist Independent Baptists are concerned that the number of Baptists that still agree with Jeters' statement today seems to be decreasing at a rapid rate.<sup>74</sup> As Fundamentalists, they are prepared to speak out against any perceived compromises. The following excerpt from that article summarises this historic viewpoint and especially represents the current emphasis of the Fundamentalist Independent Baptist ministries in South Africa:

That God not only communicated truth to the minds of his servants, but exercised over them an influence by which they were enabled to reveal it, by speech or writing, without any mistake, and in the manner best suited to secure the end of the

<sup>72</sup> Jeremiah, J. T., *The Importance of Inspiration*, Des Plaines, Regular Baptist Press, 1972.

<sup>73</sup> Jenkins, C. A., ed., *Baptist Doctrines, Being an Exposition, in a Series of essays by Representative Baptist Ministers of the Distinctive Points of Baptist Faith and Practice*, Watertown, Baptist Heritage Press, 1890 (Reprint 1989), 50.

<sup>74</sup> Custer, S., Neal, M., eds., *Biblical Viewpoint*, Vol. V, No. 2, Greenville, Bob Jones University, 1971, 114. Note: The Broadman Bible Commentary, a Critique. The Broadman Press, the official publications house of the Southern Baptist Convention, published this popular Southern Baptist Commentary. Fundamentalists commented on this commentary and referred to it as "a mediocre liberal commentary," "no conservative has any excuse for using the commentary at all."



revelation...That God can inspire men to reveal his truth infallibly to the world, it is atheistic to deny. That plenary inspiration seems necessary to secure the end of the avowed purpose of the Scriptures - that men may believe in Christ, and by believing secure everlasting life - can hardly be questioned.

Among the Christian community, Independent Baptists would consider themselves to be among the most conservative<sup>75</sup> and literal<sup>76</sup> interpreters of the Scripture, i.e. true Biblical Fundamentalists. All Christians, in whatever form - liberal<sup>77</sup> or conservative and in one or another sense, have some genuine relationship to the Bible. In fact, the majority of Christians may well consider themselves to have as much connection with these truths as do Fundamentalists and Independent Baptist or Bible churches. Yet, the Independent Baptists believe their relationship to the Holy Scriptures is unique by nature of their paramount level of commitment to the absolute importance of Scripture at the expense of all other sources for truth.

Since Independent Baptists accept the Bible as the verbal plenary<sup>78</sup> inspired<sup>79</sup> Word of God and they view both the Old and New Testaments as God's complete and final revelation, they reject the modern Charismatic movement. The specific view among

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<sup>75</sup> The Independent Baptist churches often refer to themselves as "Bible-believing" churches as opposed to other churches viewed from an Independent Baptist perspective as being more creedal in their orientation. There is an increasing degree of moderation being shown between creedal orientated and the Independents in those cases where the churches are perceived to be holding to a view of inspiration that includes inerrancy.

<sup>76</sup> The Independent Baptists are usually dispensationalists in their interpretation of Scripture and this is based on a strong commitment to "literalism."

<sup>77</sup> Schaeffer, F. A., *How Should We Then Live?* Old Tappan, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1976, 175-177. Ever since theology accepted the presupposition of rationalism it has followed, always a few years later, the shifting forms of humanistic thought (first optimistic and then pessimistic). After the older theological liberalism had failed, Barth stepped into the vacuum with his Kierkegaardian theology. In other words, the existential methodology was applied to theology. This meant that theology had now been added to all the other things that had been put into the area of non-reason. For these theologians, it is not faith in something; it is faith in faith."

<sup>78</sup> Dods, M., *The Bible, Its Origin and Nature*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908, 106

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 107. Note: The mechanical or diction theory is the theory of complete possession, in which the Divine factor is at its maximum, the human at its minimum. The Independent Baptist concept of verbal plenary inspiration is not to be mistaken for the "mechanical or dictation theory."

Charismatics<sup>80</sup> that the Spirit of God continues to reveal truth is totally rejected by Independent Baptists and they believe it is in itself heretical and leads to further doctrinal heresies. Many denominations, evangelical Baptists<sup>81</sup> and certainly Independent Baptists, believe the Bible is wholly and fully infallible. This infallibility, they believe, is a direct result of God's personal involvement, or inspiration.<sup>82</sup> Fundamentalists are convinced that the Old and New Testaments alone are able to lead one to knowing the true God at all.<sup>83</sup>

Though seeming repetitive or being considered excessive, it cannot be over accentuated, that any uniqueness of theological influence that Independent Baptists might have had or yet may have on Southern Africa is credited, by Independent Baptists themselves, to their intense emphasis on the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Many mistakenly view other radical forms of Fundamentalism, such as the Charismatic movement as being somehow similar. The similarities of literalisms may exist but the differences between Charismatic "literalness," built on a simplicity of interpretation and intermingled with the direct involvement of the Holy Spirit, must not be mistaken with the highly involved Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church's "Biblical literalism" and its interpretive methods. James Barr explains this

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<sup>80</sup> Burgess, S.M. and McGee, G.B., Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, 381. Note: "While Charismatics insist that they share this same appreciation for biblical authority and that they embrace the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura*, the perception of some Charismatics of the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit (particularly in Christian prophecy and glossolalia interpretation) tends to undermine this insistence."

<sup>81</sup> Evangelical: "of a Protestant group which believes that the soul can be saved only by faith in Christ." Hornby, A.S., ed., Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, Fourth Edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989.

<sup>82</sup> Gromacki, R. G., New Testament Survey, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1974, 49. "The Greek word 'theopneustos,' found only once in the Bible and translated as 'given by inspiration of God (II Tim. 3:16). It literally means, 'God breathed.' Note: Dr. Gromacki taught at a number of America's leading Independent Baptist Bible Colleges and Seminaries.

<sup>83</sup> Chafer, L. S., Systematic Theology, Dallas, Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, 22-23.

“Biblical literalism,” at the core of the Independent Baptist’s style of Fundamentalism, and he clarifies the important distinctions:

What is the point at which the Fundamentalists use of the Bible conflicts with the use of it by other people? The ‘plain man,’ asked this question, will commonly say that a Fundamentalist is a person who takes the Bible literally. This, however, is far from being a correct or exact description. The point of conflict between Fundamentalists and others is not over literality but over inerrancy.<sup>84</sup>

The Independent Fundamental Baptists’ efforts toward evangelism and church planting are all centred on the revival of the centrality of an inerrant Scripture: The Word of God. With this somewhat radical commitment to the centrality of the Scriptures, critics <sup>85</sup> often accuse Fundamentalists and Independent Baptists of being *Biblicists*, selectively Orthodox, or even of being guilty of worshipping the Bible in much the same way as the Roman Catholics might be accused of worshipping Mary.<sup>86</sup> These critics would make the point that *Biblicists*, then, are people with their own private interpretation and imbalanced devotion<sup>87</sup> to the Bible. Independent Baptists deny the validity of this criticism and point out that their historical Anabaptist-styled Protestant position regarding the Scriptures has simply, over time, remained unchanged<sup>88</sup>.

To be fair to historic Protestantism, the attitudes of Independent Fundamental Baptists regarding the role of the Bible in their spiritual and daily lives leads one to conclude that this is not historic Reformation ecclesiology. Fundamentalist Independent

<sup>84</sup> Barr, J., *Fundamentalism*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1978, 40.

<sup>85</sup> Barr, J., *Beyond Fundamentalism*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1984, 1-6, 154.

<sup>86</sup> Barr, J., *Fundamentalism*, 102.

<sup>87</sup> James, R. B., and Dockery, D. S., eds., *Beyond the Impasse?*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992, 265.

<sup>88</sup> Barr, J., *Beyond Fundamentalism*, 1-6, 150-151, 158.

Baptist or Bible Church's ecclesiology has built on Radical Reformation style thinking and traditional Protestantism has only a secondary influence. The further evolution of their ecclesiology has led to an intertwining of contemporary evangelical thought with conservative Bible interpretation.

In spite of the common beliefs of most Baptists, that the Scriptures were supernaturally inspired, there were nonetheless many variations and even defections from conservative Christianity in Baptist history. First in Germany and England, then in America, during the middle part of the nineteenth century, records show that liberalism made inroads into Baptist seminaries and thus eventually into Baptist pulpits and pews. The battle over the inspiration of the Scriptures was at the core of all liberal debates at that time and for many decades to come. The reasons for these changes in thinking and the Fundamentalists response will be dealt with in the coming sections, but for now it is important to note that the Independent Baptists gained much of their early momentum from their stand against those they believed had compromised the traditional view of Solo Scriptura and other issues relating to the Bible's accuracy.

In 1925 the Baptist theologian and professor at the Practical Bible Training School, E. H. Bancroft, emphasised for his young theological students and Christians at large, how important this doctrine and distinctive really is, at least for Independent Baptists:

The Bible, the inspired Word of God, is the fulcrum of the Christian faith. It is the medium of God's addressing man and

the means of man's knowing of the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is not too much to say that while the Bible holds its place firmly in the minds and hearts of men as the Word of God, as God's own Book, as inbreathed of the Holy Spirit, and to be believed and trusted in every part as a divine guide to doctrine and duty ... but if the Bible loses or loosens its hold upon us as an infallible standard of truth and action, everything else, as we are beginning to realise, goes down with it into the same abyss of doubt.<sup>89</sup>

Since the seventeenth century's humanist thinkers,<sup>90</sup> and especially the philosophies,<sup>91</sup> that believed in superseding God with man<sup>92</sup> it was only a matter of time before theologians such as Richard Simon would deny that Moses was the human author of the Pentateuch. Then following the rise of the Age of Reason, teachers such as Jean Astruc would divide the book of Genesis into parts based on the divine names used in the different sections of the book. Later scholars such as Johann Gottfried Eichhorn and Hermann Samuel Reimarus would develop the documentary hypothesis that would become the foundation for liberalism's higher critical approach over the coming three centuries. Of course, other influences such as the French Revolution, together with such philosophers as David Hume and Immanuel Kant,<sup>93</sup> would place authority on man's inner sense of moral obligation; this shift in authority from God to man would dilute the view of the Scriptures as God's authoritative and divine

<sup>89</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology, Systematic and Biblical*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1925, 21.

<sup>90</sup> McGrath, A. E., ed., *The Christian Theological Reader*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1995, 251, 331.

<sup>91</sup> Lee, F. N., *A Christian Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, Craig Press, Nutley, NJ, 1978, 148, Descartes, René, (1596-1650), La Haye, France. "I think (actually doubt cogito - dubito - ergo sum) therefore I am" - presuppositionally that nothing, the Scriptures included, could have absolute authority over mankind.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 150. "In René Descartes, on the one hand the area of grace is separated from and placed in radical contradistinction to and over against the absolutized area of nature. And Grace or authority is itself humanized and developed into personality (or) freedom motive, whereas nature is progressively centralized and developed into the science (or mechanical) motive. Descartes deliberately adopted a sceptical methodology in order to arrive at certainty. Everything could be doubted except the fact that he could doubt, and in his opinion his very ability to doubt established his own existence, for one must exist in order to be able to doubt."

<sup>93</sup> Lee, F. N., *A Christian Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, 153-161. Simon, Richard (1638-1712); Astruc, Jean (1684-1788); Eichhorn, Johann Gottfried (1752-1827), Reimarus, Hermann Samuel (1694-1768); Hume, David, Scotland (1711-1776); Kant, Immanuel, Germany (1724-1804).

word. In such a new philosophical and theological climate, the church of Jesus Christ would experience a storm of unprecedented attacks against its basic theological foundation. Because of these attacks, the Christian church would reel <sup>94</sup> during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Fundamentalists refused to accept the assumptions of *Formgeschichte*, i.e. form history, as speculative and a downgrading of the Christian faith. The British "Downgrade Controversy" <sup>95</sup> rose as C.H. Spurgeon battled against liberalism in England. The efforts of the Niagara Bible Conferences added to these developments, <sup>96</sup> and the Fundamentalist debates spread within the denominations and many essays, sermons, and papers were published<sup>97</sup> eventually leading to the formation of various movements of Fundamentalists. By the late 1930s Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches gave further momentum to the modern expression of Fundamentalism.

The Independent Baptist's view of the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration does not include anything as simplistic as the so-called dictation theory, on the one hand; and yet, it totally rejects "higher criticism" or historical criticism as a liberal and a fallacious<sup>98</sup> documentary hypothesis,<sup>99</sup> on the other hand. Any value in textual criticism

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<sup>94</sup> Dollar, G. W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973. Ref: "The Attack on the Bible," pages 8-26. "Most, but not all Baptists, subscribe to the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scripture." "According to Charles H. Spurgeon modernism or liberalism had at least been present in Baptist circles from the late nineteenth century." "The Down-grade Controversy was occasioned by articles in *The Sword and the Trowel*, in 1887, which gave warning of the general defection from Biblical truth which was proceeding in the Nonconformist churches." Also see, Spurgeon, C.H., *Autobiography: The Full Harvest*, volume two, London, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1897, 469.

<sup>95</sup> Murray, I., *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, 163-165.

<sup>96</sup> West, N., ed., *Premillennial Essays of the Prophetic Conference, 1878*, Chicago, F.H. Revell, 1879, Three Addresses and Thirteen Essays.

<sup>97</sup> Torrey, R.A. and Dixon, A.C., *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1917, Reprinted, 1980, Four Volumes.

<sup>98</sup> Morris, H. M. Annotator, *The Defender's Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, World Publishing, 1995, Appendix 1., Authenticity of Biblical Text; Authenticity of the Old Testament Text, 1490. Note: Dr. Morris is a Christian scientist with a background in physics and thermodynamics. Morris is the President of the Institute for Crea-

by Fundamentalists is seriously questioned, since the need to restore or recover<sup>100</sup> a text to a supposed "original" form is seen as unnecessary.<sup>101</sup> In the opinion of Independent Baptists, and many other conservatives and Fundamentalist Christians, source criticism must be rejected<sup>102</sup> since these hypothetical sources and theological stages of development are considered, by them, to do little other than fragment the text. Both redaction and rhetorical criticism are perceived by these conservatives as offering relatively inconsequential knowledge to the evangelical theological scheme. Even the study of canonicity, structural analysis, and linguistics finds only a minor degree of interest from most Independent Fundamental Baptists. Fundamentalists consider most of the effort of theological institutions to study the formation of the Scriptures simply trivial.<sup>103</sup>

In summary, the study of passages or portions of passages by either higher or lower critical methodologies are commonly considered to be little more than a lack of faith and wisdom on the part of these textual critics.<sup>104</sup> Fundamental Independent Baptists do not consider these attitudes to be anti-intellectual or anti-academic in spirit but as simple honest and straightforward confidence in God and His Word.

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tion Research and ministered in the Scott Memorial Baptist Church, an Independent Baptist Church in San Diego, California.

<sup>99</sup> (J.E.D. and P.) The Four-document theory is a rejection of the Mosaic authorship of Genesis.

<sup>100</sup> Comfort, P. W., *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1992, 10, 19, 41-42.

<sup>101</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (N.A.S.V.) 2 Peter 1:20-21 "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (NASV)

<sup>102</sup> Torrey, R.A. and Dixon, A.C., *The Fundamentals, A Testimony to the Truth*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1917, Reprinted, 1980, Volume I, Chapter 1. "The History of Higher Criticism," 9; Chapter 2. "The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch," 43; Chapter 3. "Fallacies of Higher Criticism," 55; Chapter 4. "The Bible and Modern Criticism," 76; Chapter 6. "Christ and Criticism," 111.

Independent Baptists accept the Bible in the words of Christian philosopher, Francis Schaeffer, as “true truth,”<sup>105</sup> and they believe the Bible to be incapable of containing any untruth<sup>106</sup>, of misleading ideas, or of having any intrinsic capability of misdirecting those interpreting those things it affirms or denies.<sup>107</sup> The Bible from the Fundamentalists’ viewpoint is considered truly inerrant and as God’s revelation, it fully and faithfully reflects His holy character. They are convinced that the Bible’s own authority demands that it be viewed as truly infallible<sup>108</sup>. All Baptists consider the Bible their ‘rule for faith and practice,’ but many Independent Baptists and other Christians go so far as to claim that the Scriptures should also be accepted as *sufficient*<sup>109</sup> for resolving every personal and interpersonal life problem or counselling need.

In relation to the Independent Baptists’ acceptance of the infallibility of Scripture, a highly divisive argument regarding the extent and preservation<sup>110</sup> of the Scriptures has grown over the past seventy-five years. The majority of Independent Baptists maintain that the Bible is inspired as far as it applies to the original Greek and Hebrew

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<sup>103</sup> Thiessen, H. C., Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, 50-61.

<sup>104</sup> Morris, H.M., The Defender’s Study Bible, Appendix 8. Science and the Scriptures, 1523, 1525.

<sup>105</sup> Schaeffer, F. A., The God Who is There, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1968, 126, 168.

<sup>106</sup> Gromacki, R. G., New Testament Survey, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 57. “Do conservatives have an adequate explanation for the synoptic problem? Are they able to account for the striking similarities of the first three Gospels and the unique distinctiveness of John’s Gospel? A concept of strict, verbal dictation by God to human stenographers is incapable of explaining the synoptic phenomena. However, the methods of human expertise that were superintended by the divine Spirit in the production of Holy Writ can be perceived and outlined.”

<sup>107</sup> McLachlan, D. R., Reclaiming Authentic Fundamentalism, Independence, American Association of Christian Schools, 1993, 100-103.

<sup>108</sup> Bush, L.R. and Nettles, T. J., Baptists and the Bible, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980, 292.

<sup>109</sup> Adams, J. T., Competent to Counsel, Grand Rapids, Baker Publishing House, 1965.

<sup>110</sup> Central Baptist Theological Seminary Faculty, eds., The Bible Version Debate: The Perspective of the Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, CBTS Publications, 1997, 71-98.



manuscripts.<sup>111</sup> This majority believe that God protects His Word by providentially overshadowing the truth content of the Bible. Morris an Independent Baptist minister and Biblical exegete writes:

Although none of the original manuscripts written by Moses or Paul or the other Biblical writers have been preserved (no doubt providentially; otherwise they might have become objects of worship), we can have full confidence in the integrity and canonicity of the text as transmitted to us. ... The Biblical text as we have it, is authentic, confirmed wherever it can be tested. Completely separate from the question of divine inspiration, the text has been accurately transmitted from the original writings.<sup>112</sup>

A fast growing minority of Independent Fundamentalists in the United States argue that even the translations, when based on the Textus Receptus<sup>113</sup> manuscript line, are provided with the same level of inspiration as is offered the original manuscripts. In other words, they are claiming a secondary inspiration for Textus Receptus sourced translations. Ongoing questions surrounding this issue have proven quite divisive within Independent Baptist and Bible Church circles. South African Independent Baptist and Bible Churches are increasingly divided over these issues of translation.

A "Battle for the Bible,"<sup>114</sup> or the debate regarding how or if the Scriptures were truly inerrantly inspired by God, has been a source of major arguments that now span the centuries. The issues of verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures nonetheless

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<sup>111</sup> Grisanti, M. A., ed., The Bible Version Debate: The Perspective of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Minneapolis., Central Baptist Theological Seminary Press, 1997, 130.

<sup>112</sup> Morris, H. M. Annotator, The Defender's Study Bible, Grand Rapids, World Publishing, 1995, Appendix 1., Authenticity of Biblical Text, 1489-1490.

<sup>113</sup> White, J. R., The King James Only Controversy, Minneapolis, Bethany House Publishers, 1995, 32. Also see, Sturz, H. A., The Byzantine Text-Type & New Testament Textual Criticism, Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984. Also noted, Bush, L. Russ, and Nettles, Tom J., Baptists and the Bible, The Baptist doctrines of biblical inspiration and religious authority in historical perspective, Chicago, Moody Press, 1980.

remain important, especially for Independent Baptists. Because Independent Baptists adamantly declare that the Bible must be accepted as their only absolute "Rule of Faith and Practice," issues such as inspiration, infallibility, inerrancy of the Scriptures; and, more recently, the added issue of translation reliability are all serious issues<sup>115</sup> that affect the every day lives of Independent Baptists.

Baptist leaders such as Graves<sup>116</sup> and Gausson summarised the issue for Baptists by reasoning that

All Scripture is inspired, that is, it was written through the agency of that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of Holy Scripture, in order to provide their guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission and we know that verbal inspiration does not destroy the style of the writer or speaker...In this way spoke all whom God ever inspired to speak to us. <sup>117</sup>

Seeing that the Baptists, in general, and the Independent Baptist and Bible churches, in particular and possibly even to the extreme, hold to a concept of church authority, i.e. their "Rule for Faith and Practice," that is dependent on a literal teaching and authority of God's Word, the Scriptures, the issue of form and freedom must also be addressed. These Christians believe that whenever, or wherever, the Bible is silent on

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<sup>114</sup> Lindsell, H., *The Battle for the Bible*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing, 1976, 19, 65.

<sup>115</sup> Murray, I. *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 143.

<sup>116</sup> Graves, J.R., *The Work of Christ in the Covenant of Redemption developed in Seven Dispensations*, Texarkana, Baptist Sunday School Committee Publication, 1883 (reprinted 1928), 27. (Graves was a well-known preacher, theologian and writer and was the President of the Southern Baptist Convention's, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

<sup>117</sup> Thiessen, H. C., *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, 107 - Reference: L. Gausson, Prof. of Systematic Theology, Oratoire, Geneva.

a subject, i.e. an absence of form, they are given freedom to make personal choices.<sup>118</sup> Nonetheless, they believe their freedom must be influenced and even guided by the principles (i.e. form) that is revealed through the truths of Scripture. They believe the truth (i.e. form) of the Bible can be expressly stated, presented as concrete or abstract principles or even drawn from the lives and history provided in the Scriptures, i.e. the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles or other historical or biographical truth, for their "admonition."<sup>119</sup>

Of course, it goes without saying that Independent Baptists are certainly not the only Christians seeking to submit to the Scriptures. Nor are Independent Baptists the only Christians involved in the polemical battles<sup>120</sup> over the infallibility of the Scripture or the reliability of the various versions. Yet, it is clear, that Independent Baptists are atypical in the degree of their determination to voice these issues in the public arena. Further, their commitment to such intense literal hermeneutical approach is certainly not common among Baptists at large.

### 2.3 The Boundaries of Biblical Separation.

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches often choose not to cooperate with pastors and/or churches that they perceive to be compromising<sup>121</sup> on doctrinal matters. This doctrine of separation<sup>122</sup> is rarely understood, or agreed with,

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<sup>118</sup> Schaeffer, F.A., *Back to Freedom and Dignity*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1973, 36.

<sup>119</sup> I Corinthians 10,11, KJV

<sup>120</sup> Manschreck, C. L., *A History of Christianity in the World*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1974, 339, 342-351.

<sup>121</sup> "Compromise," as used in Fundamentalist circles is a term that refers to a slow yielding of values, and principles and is considered to be a sign of uncharactered or self-serving pragmatism.

<sup>122</sup> Pickering, E. D., *Baptist Principles vs. Interdenominationalism*, Clarks Summit, Baptist Bible College & School of Theology Publications, 1976, 4.

by those who are not Independent Baptists<sup>123</sup> themselves. They generally believe that most inter-church or cooperative associations will lead to compromise. Independent Baptists are also quick to remind other non-Independent Baptists that much heresy has made its way into Baptist circles<sup>124</sup> through these cooperative colleges, seminaries and universities. The belief that cyclical patterns of compromise of Fundamental truth has been a serious problem for denominational organisations<sup>125</sup> and has led Independent Baptists to organise publishing houses, theological and other academic institutions, missionary societies and para-church organisations as Independent institutions.<sup>126</sup>

Independent Baptists consider most regional associations; denominational bodies or unions of sliding toward a downward compromising position in any number of doctrinal areas. Richard Clearwaters quotes C. H. Spurgeon as evidence:

I make no personal references, but I see the spirit of compromise concerning holiness and sin, truth and error, far too prevalent. The spirit of compromise comes not of the spirit of God, but of the spirit of the world. It is always wisest and best to exhibit clear decision upon Fundamental points; we must draw the line distinctly and then stand to it firmly. Do not alter your course because of winds and currents. Do not try to make pleasant all around.<sup>127</sup>

The fear of yielding to the "spirit of compromise" has discouraged even superficial involvement by many Independent Baptist and Bible Church pastors and churches with anything that looks like denominationalism, interdenominationalism or modern ecumenicalism.

<sup>123</sup> Schaeffer, F. A., The Church Before the Watching World, London, Inter-Varsity Press, 1972, 62

<sup>124</sup> Smith, N., The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches, Second Edition, Springfield, Baptist Bible Tribune Publication, 1963, 36, 47.

<sup>125</sup> Murray, L., The Forgotten Spurgeon, Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 160-162

<sup>126</sup> Dallimore, A. A., Spurgeon, Chicago, Moody Press, 1984, 204. Examples include: Seminaries, Bible Institutes, colleges missionary agencies, children's homes, elementary and secondary, Christian schools along with youth outreach ministries, camps, etc.

<sup>127</sup> Clearwaters, R. V., The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise, Minneapolis, Central Seminary Press, 1963, 109.

For some time now, Independent Baptist and Bible church leaders, and others,<sup>128</sup> have referred to sociologists such as Harvey Cox,<sup>129</sup> Richard Niebuhr<sup>130</sup> and David Moberg<sup>131</sup> in support of their view that subtle compromises lead to major impact on their spiritual communities.

Independent Baptists have been generally accepting of the idea of a sociological and cyclical pattern of the community. Such patterns illustrates their viewpoint that churches go through stages of development and require different attention for different challenges. These popular sociological interpretations follow:

1. Harvey Cox, (a.) Tribe (b.) Town (c.) Metropolis (d.) Megalopolis;
2. David Moberg, (a.) Sect (b.) Institution (c.) Denomination (d.) Deterioration;
3. Richard Niebuhr, (a.) Marriage (b.) Family (c.) Training (d.) 2<sup>nd</sup>. Generation;

As these churches evolve through the various stages these particular strengths and weakness seem to be quite evident. Independent Baptist and Bible churches have generally accepted that any development within these new organisations and denominational groups also leads to a strengthening of the organisation – over the local church or unit and the local churches will relinquish<sup>132</sup> various degrees of their practical autonomy.

Application of these patters follow:

- (a) Formation through vision: Local community churches planted - vision, idealism and enthusiasm;
- (b) Growth resulting from vision: Regional associations formed - fellowship and growth oriented;

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<sup>128</sup> Montgomery, J. W., The Suicide of Christian Theology, Minneapolis, Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1975, 18, 100.

<sup>129</sup> Cox, H., The Secular City, New York, Doubleday, 1965, 1-13.

<sup>130</sup> Niebuhr, R. H., The Social Sources of Denominationalism, Chicago, Meridian Books, Inc. (1929) 1962, 6, 17-21, 38

<sup>131</sup> Moberg, D. D., The Church or a Social Institution? New York, The Macmillan Company, 1962, 100-105.

<sup>132</sup> Cooper, J. C., Radical Christianity and Its Sources, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1968, 54-58.

(c.) Defence of vision: National denominations - conventions, and unions defending ideals;

(d.) Loss of (memory of) vision: International & interdenominational bodies – at expense of vision.

Independent Baptists are generally convinced that churches, associations, denominations or other religious bodies that call for their members to yield their basic independence will eventually be infected with the theological diseases and problems that come down from the hierarchical styled association with ecumenical or international bodies.<sup>133</sup> Any amount of good cannot be, in their opinion, outweighed by this loss of autonomy and identity. Many individual Baptist churches, once members of associations and denominational unions, decided they were facing theological compromise and withdrew to become Independent Baptist or Bible churches.<sup>134</sup> Along with the thousands of other congregations<sup>135</sup> before them, these disenchanted congregations broke away and returned to autonomy and independence<sup>136</sup>.

Separation as a matter of theological and/or ecclesiastical<sup>137</sup> distinction, and as a personal<sup>138</sup> issue, varies from region to region, historical period to historical period and church to church, but has usually remained more of an issue among the Independ-

<sup>133</sup> Smith, N., The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches, Second Edition, Springfield, Baptist Bible Tribune Publication, 1963, 66.

<sup>134</sup> Pickering, E. D., Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979, 128.

<sup>135</sup> Cook, H., What Baptists Stand for, London, Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, (undated document), 60-65.

<sup>136</sup> Murray, I., The Forgotten Spurgeon, Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 160

<sup>137</sup> Pickering, E., Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1983, p 43-56, 93-112. Note: The "Ban" or Church Discipline of the Anabaptists, 48.

<sup>138</sup> McLachlan, D. R., Reclaiming Authentic Fundamentalism, Independence, American Association of Christian Schools, 1993, 122.

ent<sup>139</sup> Baptist and Bible churches than in most other Baptist circles or in the various Protestant<sup>140</sup> communions.<sup>141</sup>

#### **A. Biblical separation: declared doctrinal boundaries.**

When considering the Fundamental Independent Baptist and Bible Church's doctrine of Biblical Separation, the issue is primarily an issue of faithfulness to doctrinal truth. Baptists, from time to time, have published declarations of faith, setting forth clearly, what they believe, but these declarations of faith are not equal to the creeds of many other churches since they are not viewed as having any final authority. The boundaries of separation have always been difficult for Fundamentalists to agree upon, but they all have agreed that there is a need for boundaries and they have been outspoken in their presentation of this viewpoint. Francis Schaeffer, a conservative Presbyterian and Evangelical, in his later years moved much closer to the Fundamentalist position or mindset when he admitted:

Truth carries with it confrontation. Truth demands confrontation, loving confrontation but confrontation nevertheless. If our reflex action is always accommodation regardless of the centrality of the truth involved, there is something wrong.<sup>142</sup>

Independent Baptists have defended the issue of independence out of a desire to be faithful to Biblical truth, as they understood it. *Testes Veritatis*, i.e. the "Witness of the Truth" has been an Independent Baptist watchword!

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<sup>139</sup> Marsden, G., *Reforming Fundamentalism*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987, 4, 38

<sup>140</sup> Cohen, G. G., *Biblical Separation Defended*, A Biblical Critique of Ten New Evangelical Arguments, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1966.

<sup>141</sup> Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 19. (Note: The Independent, interdenominational Fundamentalist Bible Institutes should also be included.)

<sup>142</sup> Schaeffer, F., *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, Wheaton, Crossway Books, 1979, 64.

## B. Biblical Separation: Personal Boundaries.

Independent Baptists are known for their strict moral standards, especially as regards personal compromises<sup>143</sup> with the worldliness of the day. The fact that this reputation is not always viewed as a positive trait is illustrated by Stefan Ulstein:

Fundamentalists have to have something to put on the other side of the fence. It might be going to movies, gambling, dancing, abortion or whatever. The fence is the thing. It separates ... us from them.

Anthropological studies of Fundamentalist movements in other cultures show a similar pattern. We do not get into a Fundamentalist mindset just because we're Christians. We get it out of fear and a need for sure answers.<sup>144</sup>

When discussing the differences churches have regarding the doctrine of personal separation Ulstein compared his present (non-Fundamentalist) church with his previous (Fundamentalist) church:

They weren't in the fortress mentality. If it's fun and not a sin—do it! We were out in the world, but not of the world. We could have a beer, go to a movie and listen to music. The faith wasn't about doing things. It was about action.<sup>145</sup>

Fundamentalists teach that separation begins with the believer's personal walk with God. The individual Christian must be prepared to separate from the immoral or doctrinal defector. C.H. Spurgeon said: "It is never right to do a little wrong to obtain the greatest possible good ... Your duty is to do right; consequences are with

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<sup>143</sup> Jude 20, 21.

<sup>144</sup> Ulstein, S., *Growing up Fundamentalists, Journeys in Legalism & Grace*, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1995, 42.



God.”<sup>146</sup> Personal spiritual integrity is for the Independent Baptists a matter of no minor consequences. Popular culture illustrates this well:

Christian concern about popular culture should be as much about the sensibilities it encourages as about its content. The forms of our popular culture may well have a more significant effect on our perceptions than the content. This would not mean escaping from the world. It would require refusing to conform to its ways, not only when they are evil, but when they are not beneficial or constructive (see 1 Corinthians 10:23ff.) But since we are all tempted to some form of idolatry, it is helpful to know where we need to erect some defences. If the rock myth does involve the tacit endorsement of pantheistic, primitivistic celebration of the self and the sense, there must be something in the music that somehow corresponds to the myth.<sup>147</sup>

Baptists believe that salvation has nothing to do with our good works or personal merits, but is based on faith in Jesus Christ alone, but Independent Baptists place a strong emphasis on the genuine believer's change (repentance) from the old self or flesh to a new spiritual walk with Christ. Independent Baptist churches preach publicly and teach privately against worldliness, i.e. the habits and styles of the world. Examples of worldliness would include habits such as drinking alcoholic drinks, smoking tobacco, taking illegal drugs, dancing, immodesty and even to listening habitually to secular (or in many cases - even Christian) rock or jazz music. Robert Patison suggests that rock's threat to religion is that it forces

...Churches to compete [with rock-dominated culture] on the basis of their ability to titillate the instincts of their worshippers, [thereby making religious leaders] ... entrepreneurs of emotional stimulation. Once God becomes a commodity for self-gratification, his fortunes depend on the vagaries of the emotional marketplace, and his claim to command allegiance on the

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>146</sup> Spurgeon, C.H. *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Pasadena, Pilgrim Publications, 1868, (1970), 601.

<sup>147</sup> Meyers, K. A., *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christian & Popular Culture*, Wheaton, Crossway Books, 1989, xiii, xvi.

basis of omnipotent or omniscience vanishes in a blaze of solipsism as his priests and shamans pander to the feeling, not the faith, of their customers.<sup>148</sup>

In a modern twenty-first century society such as ours, most Christians as a matter of personal lifestyle choice generally consider these habits minor issues, but for the Independent Baptists these habits remain as matters of sinfulness and genuine obstructions to spiritual growth. Though membership in an Independent Baptist Church may not be contingent on abstaining from all of these (or similar) vices, such habits are viewed as "un-Christlike" and are often referred to as "backsliderness." One American Independent Baptist<sup>149</sup> theologian explains that personal separation is: "radical non-conformity to the cosmos, and resolute conformity to Jesus Christ." He further explains that ...

The Christian in terms of his value system and behavioural patterns, is not to conform to the world, but instead he is to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Christians are obliged to obey the moral imperatives of Scripture, which are stated in categorical and unmistakable terms. However there are situations that arise in life which are not specifically addressed in God's Word. In such cases what are Christians to do? What are the regulatory principles revealed in Scripture that will help modern Christians to fulfil their calling as radical, but godly, non-conformists?

He then lists: Expediency (1 Cor. 6:12a); Enslavement (1 Cor. 6:12b); Enrichment (1 Cor 6:12c); Exaltation (1 Cor. 10:31); Endangerment (1 Cor. 8:9-13); Entanglement (1 Thess. 5:21-22; 2 Tim. 2:4); and Equivocation (Rom. 14:23). All these principles, and

<sup>148</sup> Pattison, R., *The Triumph of Vulgarly: Rock Music in the Mirror of Romanticism*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1987, 186.

<sup>149</sup> McLachlan, D. R., *Reclaiming Authentic Fundamentalism*, Independence, American Association of Christian Schools, 1993, 122-125.

more, are used by Independent Baptists when determining how to consistently and carefully apply God's Word to their daily lives and life situations.

### **C. Biblical Separation: Ecclesiastical Boundaries.**

A popular definition of a Baptist Church and one that is fully accepted by most Independent Baptists is:

Baptist churches must be cut by the pattern of New Testament churches, as set forth in the Scriptures, in principles and polity, in doctrinal character and life. The Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20 is the programme and purpose—the task and the creed of Baptist churches. A Baptist church is: a company of regenerate persons, immersed on profession of faith in Christ; united in covenant for worship, instruction, the observance of Christian ordinances, and such service as the gospel requires; recognizing and accepting Christ as their supreme Lord and lawgiver, and taking His Word as their only and sufficient rule of faith and practice in all matters of conscience and religion. Since they are saved by faith in Christ and baptized in His name, they are governed by His law, observing His ordinances and walking in fellowship with Him:<sup>150</sup>

Independent Baptists view all of these distinctive ideas or principles as working together to accomplish, in one or another way, the purposes of “Biblical separation.”

However, this separation process takes place on various levels one must not overlook or minimise their overall effect. These doctrinal principles are vital in understanding the make-up of Baptists in general and Independent Baptists in particular. As a Christian adds these beliefs to their overall worldview, they increasingly become a Baptist in attitude. One example of this process is baptism itself. Baptism is, in the opinion of most Independent Baptists, one of the most obvious levels of separation.

If one refuses to be baptised most Baptist churches, and certainly all Independent Baptist Churches, will refuse formal membership rights. However, the unbaptised individuals are considered and treated as Christians, assuming they willingly witness to having a personal conversion relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Nonetheless, Baptism remains a separating confession of faith in Christ. For Baptists it expresses a personal belief in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and a subsequent resurrection of all believers through the eternal Spirit. As such Baptism is a matter of separation, then, since only believers are to be baptized, and that upon a sincere public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

The church, according to Baptist belief, is to be only composed of believers or in other words, persons separated<sup>151</sup> by their public confession of faith - Baptism. Believers were called in the New Testament "beloved of God, called to be saints," "sanctified (separated) in Christ Jesus"; "faithful in Christ." The conditions of membership were matters of personal separation such as repentance, faith, righteousness and baptism, which were symbolic of the changed life.<sup>152</sup> In this connection, it is interesting to note that all the pedobaptist<sup>153</sup> creeds include only believers in the definition of the proper members of a church. The following definition of a church is taken from the Augsburg Confession of Faith of the Lutheran Church. It fairly represents all the rest. It says:

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<sup>150</sup> Jordan, L.G., *The Busy Pastor's Guide*, National Baptist Convention, USA, 1929.

<sup>151</sup> Mullins, E.Y., *The Axioms of Religion*, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1908, 64.

<sup>152</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:1; Acts 2:41-43; Philemon 1:2-7; 1 Corinthians 11:2.

<sup>153</sup> Pedo (U.S.), paedo (UK), i.e. child; pedobaptist, those that baptise children.

To speak properly, the church of Christ is a congregation of the members of Christ; that is, of the saints, which do truly believe and rightly obey Christ.

Professor Kostlin, professor of theology at Halle, once stated:

The Reformed Confessions describe the Church as the communion of believers or saints, and condition its existence on the pure preaching of the Word.<sup>154</sup>

This definition, consistently applied, excludes infant baptism, since infants are incapable of faith, which always, in the New Testament, is a prerequisite to baptism. Independent Baptists, if not all Baptists, believe The New Testament teaching is quite clear on this point. In the preaching of the apostles repentance antedates baptism<sup>155</sup>; and only men and women were baptized.<sup>156</sup> There is no account or inference implying the baptism of an infant by the apostles. The thought that an infant was included in the term "household"<sup>157</sup> is disallowed by both Baptist<sup>158</sup> and non-Baptist<sup>159</sup> theologians who point out it referred to the adult members and their servants who both heard and believed<sup>160</sup>.

For centuries, Baptists have pointed to exegetes and theologians of other faiths as evidence of their position. Some popular examples of some of the non-Baptist quotations often used by Baptists include scholars such as: (1.) Dollinger, a Catholic

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<sup>154</sup> Kostlin, *Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopaedia*, I. 474.

<sup>155</sup> Acts 2: 38

<sup>156</sup> Acts 8:5, 8, 12

<sup>157</sup> Acts 11:14; 16:15, 31; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16

<sup>158</sup> Carroll, B.H., *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1948, The Acts, Volume Four, 305.

<sup>159</sup> Kistemaker, S. J., *New Testament Commentary*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1990, 413, 490.

scholar, once professor of Church History in the University of Munich, who wrote: "There is no proof or hint in the New Testament that the apostles baptized infants or ordered them to be baptized"<sup>161</sup> (2.) Edmund de Pressense, a French Senator and Protestant, wrote: "No positive fact sanctioning the practice (of infant baptism) can be adduced from the New Testament; the historical proofs alleged are in no way conclusive."<sup>162</sup> Baptists have often pointed out that many authors of books treating directly on infant baptism have affirmed that infant baptism is not mentioned in the Scriptures. One of these often quoted authors include: W. F. Hofling, once a Lutheran Professor of Theology at Erlangen. He wrote: "The sacred Scriptures furnish no historical proof that children were baptized by the apostles"<sup>163</sup> Another example is the famous University of Leyden professors James Hastings and Kirsopp Lake.<sup>164</sup> Baptists are quick to point out that they simply reported: "There is no indication of the baptism of children" in the New Testament. A further example is found in the *Real Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*:

The practice <sup>165</sup>of infant-baptism in the apostolic and post-apostolic age cannot be proved. We hear indeed frequently of the baptism of entire households, as in Acts 15: 32f; 18: 8; 1 Cor. 1: 16. But the last passage taken, 1 Cor. 7:14, is not favourable to the supposition that infant baptism was customary at that time. For then Paul would not have written 'else were your children unclean.

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<sup>160</sup> Morris, H.W. III., *Baptism: How Important Is It?* Denver, Accent Books, 1978, 114.

<sup>161</sup> Dollinger, J. J. I., *The First Age of the Church*, Philadelphia, Wattles, 1892, 184.

<sup>162</sup> Pressense, E., *The Early Years of Christianity*, London, MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1870, 376.

<sup>163</sup> Hofling, W.F., *Das Sakrament der Taufe*, Erlangen, 1846. 2 vols. 99.

<sup>164</sup> Hastings, J., and Lake, K., eds., *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939 (Reprint).

<sup>165</sup> *The Real Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, XIX. 3rd (translated) edition, 403.

Another testimony from the past, popularly quoted by Baptists, is that of Robert Rainy, once principle of the New College, Edinburgh. Although a Presbyterian, he stated that:

Baptism presupposed some Christian instruction, and was preceded by fasting. It signified the forgiveness of past sins, and was the visible point of departure of the new life under Christian Influence' and with the Inspiration of Christian purposes and aims. Here it was the seal which concerned a man to keep. The form of baptism was dipping, or an immersion in water. John baptized in the river Jordan (Mark 1:5); and he baptized in Aenon near to Salim "because there was much water there" (John 3 :23). Jesus was baptized in the Jordan (Mark 1:9), and he "went into the water" and he "came up out of the water" (Matthew 3 :16).<sup>166</sup>

Independent Baptists are convinced that the symbolical passages (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2 :12), which describe baptism as burial and resurrection make it certain that immersion was the New Testament act of baptism. Greek authorities are also quoted in defence of this all-important issue. Prof. R. C. Jebb, University of Cambridge, is quoted as saying:

I do not know whether there is any authoritative Greek-English lexicon which makes the word to mean 'sprinkle' or to 'pour.' I can only say that such a meaning never belongs to the word in Classical Greek.

University of Berlin's Harnack, is quoted by Schaff saying:

Baptism undoubtedly signifies immersion. No proof can be found that it signifies anything else in the New Testament, and in the most ancient Christian literature.<sup>167</sup> " One more favourite quotation from the past is that of Dr. Dosker, the once professor of Church History at Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. " Every candid historian will admit that the Baptists have, both philologically and historically, the better of the argument, as to the prevailing mode of baptism. The

<sup>166</sup> Rainy, R. Ancient Catholic Church, 75

<sup>167</sup> Schaff, P., The Teaching of the Twelve, (Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1869), Logos, CD, 1998, 50.

word baptizo means immersion, both in classical and Biblical Greek, except where it is manifestly used in a tropical sense.”<sup>168</sup>

A further example of the doctrinal separation practiced by most Independent Baptists is found in their teaching on the Lord’s Supper. First, they believe that the New Testament churches uniformly practiced immersion before taking the Lord’s Supper. Most Baptists and certainly most Independent Baptists teach that the Scriptural order is that the Lord’s Supper is for all believers openly declaring their faith through the act of baptism. They often point out that scholars agree that in the New Testament period baptism preceded the Lord’s Supper. William Wall is one of those so quoted:

For no church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. . . Since among all of the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized<sup>169</sup>

The Baptists<sup>170</sup> have always insisted that the ordinances were symbols and not sacraments. Indeed this is the heart of their contention. Mullins has concisely stated the historical contention of Baptists in the following words:

Forms and ceremonies are like ladders. On them we may climb up or down. If we keep them in their places as symbols, the soul feeds on the truth symbolized. If we convert them into sacraments, the soul misses the central vitality itself, spiritual communion with God.

If it is set in the context of a sacramental system, it may and does become a means for obscuring the truth and enslaving the soul. It is this perception of the value of ceremonies as symbols and of their perils as sacraments which animates Baptists in

<sup>168</sup> Dosker, *The Dutch Anabaptists*, Philadelphia, 1921, 176.

<sup>169</sup> Wall, *The History of Infant Baptism*, I., Oxford, 1862, 632, 638.

<sup>170</sup> Wood, J., *The Baptists*, Christian Denomination Series, Exeter, The Religious Education Press, A Division of Pergamon Press, 1977, 17



their strenuous advocacy of a spiritual interpretation of the ordinances of Christianity.<sup>171</sup>

In gaining an understanding of the Baptist's<sup>172</sup> view of a Free Church<sup>173</sup> and especially Independent Baptists, the issue of the autonomy<sup>174</sup> of the local church cannot be overlooked. The Biblical sphere of sovereignty of the local church and the question of fellowship, i.e. fellowships, or associations, will also need to be addressed. Baptists see the need for Christian fellowship and cooperation but all Baptists agree that a level of congregational autonomy or local church sovereignty needs to be maintained in relation to organisational and denominational relationships. Baptists believe hierarchical denominational control is both unbiblical and unnecessary. In 1908 Mullins, boldly asserted,

Be it said at once then that Baptists have no creed-making or legislative power.<sup>175</sup>

Baptists believe that if unity is to be Biblical and lasting it must be voluntarily<sup>176</sup> accomplished within the framework of free-will. Independent Baptists, in particular, believe that ecclesiastical history has taught, or should have taught, Christianity the pitfalls and dangers of central ecclesiastical control, i.e. that central control robs the congregation of its own responsibilities. The question is then argued as to which of the two views is an upward development of Christianity: one toward greater organisational unification or one toward greater spiritual unity.

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<sup>171</sup> Mullins, E.Y., The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression, Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1917 (1959), Also reference: McGlothlin, Infant Baptism Historically Considered 7.

<sup>172</sup> Parnell, C. W., Being a Baptist, Roodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1980, 24-31.

<sup>174</sup> Anderson, D.K., and Gower, D.M., The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1992, 26.

<sup>175</sup> Mullins, E.Y., The Axioms of Religion, Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1908, 146

The story of Historic Fundamentalism is the account of faithful men and women amidst the potential of compromise. The spirit within a man that causes him to cry out to the Lord in sincere prayer over the compromise, the double-tongued and two-faced within the Christian world is the spirit of faithfulness that was exhibited in the Historic Fundamentalism of the 1880s to the 1960s. The use of the word Fundamentalism today is quite confusing, since the term has come to stand for any type of fanaticism. Today many think of the extremes of the Charismatics when they use the word Fundamentalism, magazines will often use the term to describe the radical Muslim sects. In South Africa, in recent years, the term has even been used by conservative and on some occasion's liberal churches alike, when describing their own degree of belief in certain Fundamental truths such as the Trinity, Heaven or the Scriptures. I use the term Historic Fundamentalism to separate this use of the term from all others. I think we must recognise that as a vital religious movement it no longer exists, though like a veld fire it leaves behind some embers still burning, some possibly red-hot.<sup>179</sup>

As separatists, Independent Baptist and Bible churches are individual Christians, churches and organisations that are committed to interpret the Scriptures using the Literal Grammatical-Historical Interpretation<sup>180</sup> of Holy Scripture and thus refuse to allegorise or use abstract figurative methods of interpretation. Independent Baptists, as Fundamentalists, along with their sister churches, the American Bible church movement, and a good number<sup>181</sup> of other evangelical groups, have taught the absolute necessity of the blood atonement and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ.

Further, Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches militantly reject all attempts to explain away or deny the miracles; they reject Darwinism, and teach the

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<sup>179</sup> Seger, P., *Contending for the Faith*, Tygerpark, Cape of Good Hope Publishers, 1993, 7.

<sup>180</sup> Ramm, B., *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, Boston, W.A. Wilde Company, 1956 (Complete Revised Edition.), 89.

<sup>181</sup> Cohen, G., *Biblical Separation Defended: A Biblical Critique of Ten New Evangelical Arguments*, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1966.

literal creation of the world, in six literal 24-hour days. These churches have openly opposed, as heretics, anyone denying the virgin birth of Christ, or the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. These churches are all pre-millennialists, teaching a literal<sup>182</sup> return of Christ to “rapture” (i.e. catch-up into heaven) believers before the great tribulation. Independent Baptists teach the Millennial<sup>183</sup> Kingdom as a literal one thousand year period of peace and that this kingdom is established only at the return of Christ to earth to rule and reign! As literalists, they teach the reality of the eternal lake of fire (or hell) prepared for Satan, his angels, and for all that do not accept Christ personally as their Lord and Saviour. Independent Baptists teach that ultimately heaven is a literal “New Heaven and New Earth” as taught by Peter<sup>184</sup>. These doctrinal issues are viewed as essential matters of the faith and as such, the Independent Baptists interpretation of Fundamentalism includes a number of issues not even included by the Bible Churches, or Baptists in general. For the Independent Baptists these all are matters worthy of separating over. Thus the Independent Baptist churches will separate from formal, and often even informal, organisational alliances with other associations, fellowships or individual congregations if they show a willingness to compromise on one or more of these doctrinal truths. Baptist Church Historian, J.M. Carroll while discussing the Ecumenical Councils wrote:

Let Baptist Churches beware of even disciplinary and other varieties of resolutions, which they sometimes pass in their conferences, which resolutions might be construed as laws or rules of Church Government. The New Testament has all necessary laws and rules<sup>185</sup>.

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<sup>182</sup> Ryrie, C. C. The Basis of the Premillennial Faith, Neptune, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1953 (1989), 38

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>184</sup> 2 Peter.

<sup>185</sup> Carroll, J.M. The Trail of Blood, 27.

## 2.4 The Breath of Baptist Distinctives.

The word "God-breathed" (*theopneustos*) is used in 1 Timothy 3:16 to describe God's direct involvement in the "inspiration" process of providing His Word, the Bible.<sup>186</sup> This breathing is an exhaling or breathing-out of God's direct and divine influence, or the inspiration, of Holy Scripture as truth<sup>187</sup>. In using the word "breath" I seek to draw attention to the Independent Baptist's doctrine that teaches the Word of God<sup>188</sup> and the Spirit of God<sup>189</sup> operate interchangeably in this dispensation in a most unique way. In regards to modern revelation from God, the Independent Baptists, though certainly not exclusively, have viewed the Bible as the final direct revelation from God and believe that they contain the only<sup>190</sup> revelation of His will to man. The Scriptures are viewed as the only written and / or propositional forms of revelation from God. They believe all other forms of revealing His divine will have ceased, for now, i.e. during this dispensation.

Ryrie, a Bible church seminary teacher, points out that the Holy Spirit was the only agent for inspiring the communication God wants to share with man.

Referring to the Old Testament writers, Peter said that 'men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.'<sup>191</sup> In addition, the New Testament directly attributes many Old Testament Scripture verses to the Spirit (Mt 22:43; Ac 1:16; 4:25). In the New Testament, the Lord promised that the Spirit would recall to the apostles' minds the things which He had taught

<sup>186</sup> Wuest, K. S., Wuest's Word Studies: The Pastoral Epistles in the Greek New Testament, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952, 150.

<sup>187</sup> Smith, W. M., Therefore Stand, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1945, 172

<sup>188</sup> Colossians 3:16

<sup>189</sup> Ephesians 5:18-19

<sup>190</sup> Jackson, M., Ready, Set, Grow! - A Faith and Practice Primer, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1989 125.

<sup>191</sup> 2 Peter 1:21

them (John 14:26). Thus the Spirit was the single Author guiding and guarding the revelation; the instruments or agents were men, and the ultimate source was God.<sup>192</sup>

The Holy Spirit's ministry through the local New Testament church is held to be one where the Spirit works through the collective ministry of believers. Yet, Independent Baptists teach that the temporary gifts<sup>193</sup> of the first century were given to early century believers as a temporary supplement<sup>194</sup> to under gird the founding of the church during a time period when the New Testament Scriptures were still being written and provided to the church at large through the Apostles. The vast majority of Independent Baptists teach that the temporary spiritual gifts ceased<sup>195</sup> with the coming of the mature<sup>196</sup> revelation, i.e. the completed New Testament canon, also brought an end<sup>197</sup> to all forms of direct revelation, prophecy, visions, voices, etc.<sup>198</sup>.

The doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit of God together with the doctrine of the Spirit-controlled life is essential in the teaching of Baptists pulpits, and though many thematic variations do exist the basic teaching is consistent. This consistency and emphasis may not be considered a doctrinal distinctive to Baptists in general, but among Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches it stands out as a clear doctrinal distinctive.

<sup>192</sup> Rylie, C. C., *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1972.

<sup>193</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:7-13, i.e. the "temporary gifts" are those of healing, of tongues, and of prophecy.

<sup>194</sup> Saxe, R. H., *The Battle for Your Bible: A Study of Experience versus Scriptural Tongues*, Ann Arbor, Grace Bible Publications, 1975, 95.

<sup>195</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; 14:21-25

<sup>196</sup> Dockery, D. S., *Biblical Interpretation Then and Now: Contemporary Hermeneutics in the Light of the Early Church*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1992, 38.

<sup>197</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology: Systematic and Biblical*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1976, 50.

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are dispensational<sup>199</sup> in their interpretation of the role of the Holy Spirit during the period between Pentecost and the rapture. The non-Charismatic and non-Pentecostal nature of their teaching adds to this interpretation being classified as a distinctive emphasis among Independent Baptists<sup>200</sup> today. In recent centuries, the Biblical hermeneutics of dispensationalism, pre-tribulationism and pre-millennialism together with Biblical literalism have increasingly inter-twined themselves and gained special acceptance among Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches.

## 2.5 The “Radical” Reformation.

The Independent Fundamental Baptists are rooted in the heritage and thinking of the Radical Reformation<sup>201</sup>. This historic link clarifies the relatively conservative role that they play within the Christian community. Since the Bible Church movement worldwide takes a more moderate view of the Anabaptist issues regarding baptism and government they could almost be considered an exception, i.e. as the less radical member of the partnership. Yet, in Southern Africa the relationship between these two groups is so intertwined that drawing a division remains most difficult.

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<sup>198</sup> George, T. and D., eds., *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, 134.

<sup>199</sup> The dispensational emphasis among Independent Baptists has roots in the hermeneutics of Biblical literalism. The influences of the teaching of the Brethren movement, John Darby, and late nineteenth century Fundamentalism (James Gray, A.T. Pierson, C.I. Scofield, Amos C. Gaebelstein, C.G. Trumbull, and many others all play important roles in this development.)

<sup>200</sup> Bancroft, *Christian Theology: Systematic and Biblical*, 171.

<sup>201</sup> Compare, the Magisterial Reformation.

Biblical literalism and the resultant dispensationalism inevitably linked to it,<sup>202</sup> being the basis for the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church's method of Biblical interpretation, draws a clear line between traditional Reformers and these churches. Radical Biblical literalism such as this continues to raise arguments around the same issues as in the days of the early Radical Reformers.

Biblical literalism is linked with personal and individual salvation, personal, ecclesiastical and state separatism, in providing the foundational arguments for those churches, both Independent Baptist and otherwise,<sup>203</sup> that continue to point out that the Reformation was always - at its best - only a partial Reformation.

The element of a dispensational hermeneutic<sup>204</sup> with its related teachings of pre-tribulational rapture, and pre-millennialism form a grouping of tenants that have increasingly taken root among Fundamentalists and especially among Independent Baptists over the last one hundred years<sup>205</sup>. The Independent Baptists' literalist interpretation<sup>206</sup> of the Scriptures is at the very heart of their message and should never be mistakenly attributed to a secondary or nonessential part of their doctrinal scheme!<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Ryrie, C. C., *Dispensationalism Today*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1969, 21.

<sup>203</sup> MacArthur, John, Jr., ed., *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995, 55.

<sup>204</sup> Chafer, L. S., *Dispensationalism*, Dallas, Dallas Seminary Press, 1936, (Revised Edition 1951), 58.

<sup>205</sup> Beale, D. O., *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism since 1850*, 144-191.

<sup>206</sup> Campbell, D. K and Townsend, J. L., eds, *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1992, 263.

<sup>207</sup> Smith, N., *The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches*, 65.

The “Radical” Reformers<sup>208</sup> of the sixteenth century opened the arguments against those they believed limited the Reformation.

Eventually the (old) Radical Reformation came about through the efforts of utopian fanatics like Thomas Munzer, and the work of spiritualistic pietists like Menno Simmons. The work of the Anabaptists or rebaptisers, as they were called, soon found refuge -- and flowered -- among the tolerant Dutch. From Holland the ideas of the Radical reformers crossed the channel to England.<sup>209</sup>

Few modern Christians understand the extent that those arguments continue and how much they continue to influence the Christian faith today. This “continuing Reformation”<sup>210</sup> among some Baptists, other Free Church<sup>211</sup> congregations, and to yet another degree among American Mennonites is rarely understood.<sup>212</sup> Some historians have often overlooked or minimised this branch of non-conformity religion. In South Africa, a very few people have any opportunity to encounter Independent Baptists or enter into a dialogue on these issues.

The thinking of Independent Baptists follows an argument that criticises Luther, Calvin and other similar Reformers for stopping their work of reformation, while others<sup>213</sup> carried on with additional reformation in areas of theology and church pol-

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<sup>208</sup> Verduin, L., *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, 14.

<sup>209</sup> Cooper, J. C., *Radical Christianity and Its Sources*, 8.

<sup>210</sup> Calvin, J., *Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines*, 29.

<sup>211</sup> Estep, W. R., *The Anabaptist Story*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975, 228.

<sup>212</sup> MacArthur, John, Jr., ed., *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995, 49-57.

<sup>213</sup> Verheyden, A.L.E., *Anabaptism In Flanders 1530-1650*, Scottsdale, Mennonite Publishing House, 1961, 30.



ity. Many Mennonites, Free Churches and Baptists have simply continued<sup>214</sup> on in the spirit of reformation over the centuries.<sup>215</sup>

These churches have particularly refused to accept the idea that the Reformation was a completed<sup>216</sup> or finalised historical event that could be limited to the sixteenth century. There is no doubt in their minds that the Reformation began with Luther and others, but there is a sufficient and continuing doubt about the Reformation being completed or finalised.

The growing interest in understanding or continuing that process – is especially evident in recently published books by Independent Fundamental Baptist, Ernest Pickering<sup>217</sup> and Bible Church pastor and author, John MacArthur<sup>218</sup> - and others, who are opening the issues for renewed discussion and debate. This debate is also being used to further fuel an attack against, what John Calvin long ago called the Roman Catholic Church, the Anti-Christ<sup>219</sup> something the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches consider the ecumenical movement to be in their own day.

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<sup>214</sup> Estep, W. R., *Revolution within the Revolution*, Grand Rapids, Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990, 71.

<sup>215</sup> Estep, *The Anabaptist Story*, 232.

<sup>216</sup> Cairns, Earle E., *God and Man in Time: A Christian Approach to Historiography*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1979, 155

<sup>217</sup> Pickering, Ernest D., *Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979, 11-55.

<sup>218</sup> MacArthur, John, Jr., Editor, *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, Dallas, Word Publishing, 1995, 34-63.

<sup>219</sup> Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (Written: 1559 and Translated by Henry Beveridge, 1845), Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962, Vol. II, p. 313.

## 2. 6 The Social Axiom: Family and Society.

The family and the larger social perspective in Christian life is paramount in the practical teaching of the Independent Baptist churches. For many Christians today the matter of being highly visible or responsive to social, community or societal needs is a requirement of our day. This acceptance of a greater social responsibility is especially obvious to Christians living in Africa in light of the great increase in poverty, HIV/AIDS victims, drought and starvation and literally a host of other crisis level social problems! Nonetheless, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches view evangelism, Biblical teaching and practical Biblically-based Christian living to be at the core of any war being waged against the destruction of the social fabric of our society. A Biblical approach or concept of family, marriage, justice, human rights, racial equality and care for orphans, those physically challenged and those facing dire poverty are issues and responses that are generally viewed from a different perspective than is common in a humanistic and secular world. Accepting these differences in outlook does not mean that the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches fail to find a common cause, somehow fail to have genuine concern or are unwilling to provide needed care.<sup>220</sup>

The doctrine of the Christian family was always a central emphasis in Baptist teaching<sup>221</sup>. The literal interpretation of the Scriptures by Baptists has encouraged their more traditional view of the family. The husband is seen as the spiritual head of the

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<sup>220</sup> The Evangelical Baptist Mission, an Independent Fundamental Baptist missionary outreach is deeply involved in an expanding ministry, the Bethesda's Temba Children's Village.

<sup>221</sup> McBeth, H. Leon, The Baptist Heritage, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1987, 197, 198.

family unit<sup>222</sup>, the wife is to be in submission to her husband and the children are expected to be obedient to their parents with corporal punishment (spankings) one of their accepted norms for dealing with disobedient children. The goal of having a loving, well ordered and happy homelife is taken seriously and is a matter of regular teaching from the Scriptures.

#### **A. Independent Baptists believe in Biblically grounded home-life.**

Immorality, abortion, homosexuality and other acts of worldliness are unacceptable in most Baptist churches, and especially in Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. The place of women is considered from a more traditional perspective. Women are respected as individuals with every spiritual right and privilege available to men equally afforded to women. Women are not offered offices of leadership such as pastors or deacons and are generally not accepted as spiritual leaders in the public church services, but their active role in Christian service of every kind is an unchallenged right of living under the New Covenant dispensation.

In the last few centuries the Social Axiom, focusing on societies' needs has found increasing importance among many Baptists. Baptists were traditionally involved in social needs through various missionary endeavours that have included building up humankind's spiritual and general betterment.<sup>223</sup> Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches have given missionary ministry priority especially in relation to

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<sup>222</sup> Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3:

<sup>223</sup> Doller, G. W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973, 207.

medical<sup>224</sup> and educational needs and they have shown concern for the serious humanitarian needs of society as well. Yet, in the case of the Independent Baptists this social awareness is viewed as a vehicle for giving a testimony of the love of God, while taking the strengthened relationship as an opportunity for witnessing of God's saving Grace. Social ministries are seen as indirect church planting ministries.<sup>225</sup> As such the emphasis is on the goal not the process.

The care process allows for active social ministries but these are also viewed as evangelistic opportunities: educational evangelism, service-oriented (needy peoples),<sup>226</sup> literature and literacy evangelism, Bible translation ministries, and medical evangelism<sup>227</sup> Without doubt some Independent Baptist and Bible churches do not fully appreciate the importance of all types of social involvement, but others do show a more open understanding and do accept the need for greater social action as a vital part of their Christian experience. Social concern continues to be discussed and reviewed and is an issue receiving more attention by Baptists, world-wide, and increasingly by Independent Baptists, as well.

## B. Social Activism.

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<sup>224</sup> The Ruth Kempton Hospital in Togo and the Clinics in the Gambia serve as a few obvious examples.

<sup>225</sup> Amstutz, H. E., *The Church Planter's Manual*, Cherry Hill, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1985, 36-37.

<sup>226</sup> Interest in Community Based Projects as Tools for Evangelism include HIV/AIDS concern such as the Bethesda HIV/AIDS orphanages; drug and alcohol rehabilitation, other special substance abuse programmes, interpersonal and marriage counselling programs for the public, etc.

<sup>227</sup> Amstutz, H. E., *The Church Planter's Manual*, 39. Note: The policy of the Independent Baptists is "that spiritual healing is of infinitely greater value than physical healing and should receive the major emphasis" ... even in hospitals and clinics. Church planting missionaries are always assigned hospitals and clinics to advance this approach.

The ecumenical movement's concepts of social activism<sup>228</sup>, in the opinion of Independent Baptists, is an unbiblical concept and a term that has been misused and abused by politically oriented people using various religious groups as fronts for their activities<sup>229</sup>. It is important to Independent Baptists, on the other hand, that they do not minimise their social and community involvement. Just because social involvement is viewed by the Independent Baptist and Bible churches as primarily spiritually oriented and not political they see no reason to minimise its' importance.

The Independent's commitment to justice, human rights, racial equality and care for the needy is a growing commitment but remains influenced by the need to effectively deliver the Gospel message within any and every context.

### **C. Evolution - versus "Creationism" is a major issue.**

The effect of evolutionary teaching on the broad conflicts between nations, between races, and between social orders is taken quite seriously by Independent Baptist and Bible churches. These Independent Baptists believe that evolutionary<sup>230</sup> teaching has had a profound negative influence on society and has been the cause of great suffering throughout history<sup>231</sup>.

Furthermore, the Independent Fundamentalists recognise that these widespread po-

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<sup>228</sup> Nash, M., *Ecumenical Movement in the 1960's*, Johannesburg, Raven Press, 1975, 264

<sup>229</sup> Beale, D. O., *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, 304-306.

<sup>230</sup> Gish, Duane T., *Evolution: The Fossil Say No!*, San Diego, Creation-Life Publishers, 1973, 45.

<sup>231</sup> The German Nazi doctrines of a "pure" or a "Master race" were evolutionary and non-Christian concepts.

litical and historical effects - conflicts and general confusion -- have naturally affected the church and family as well. These Independent Baptist and Bible churches teach that the root problem of society and social evil is mankind's sin.<sup>232</sup> The fact that both people and nations have been fighting one another all through human history supplies further support to their belief that mankind's sin - not his faulty genetic makeup is his problem.<sup>233</sup> The evolutionary "recapitulation theory"<sup>234</sup> - that reoccurring traits, like intellectual faculties, were only matters of the nature of life.<sup>235</sup> According to the Independent Baptist and creationist scientist, Henry Morris,<sup>236</sup> evolutionary doctrine is to blame for Freudian psychoanalysis, the modern plague of abortion (with the right to choose philosophy), the sexual revolution, homosexuality and the growing drug culture.

There have always been local wars, but now there are global wars, in addition to scores of local conflicts. There have always been robbers and murderers, but now in modern times there is organised crime, there is politically sanctioned racism, and nationalism on a vast scale that even controls whole societies. In the case of wars and racism and class struggle Social Darwinism is directly involved. It may not be so easy to document in individual instances, because people commit sin for all kinds of personal reasons, but the background cause is surely lack of fear of God, as well as either ignorance or rejection of God's standards. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."<sup>237</sup>

Independent Baptists believe that racism and the evolutionary "struggle for life" concepts of evolution are totally anti-Biblical. For this reason Independent Baptists

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<sup>232</sup> James 4:1-2

<sup>233</sup> Morris, H. M., *Scientific Creationism*, San Diego, Creation-Life Publishers, 1974, 36.

<sup>234</sup> That "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny"

<sup>235</sup> Criminal anthropology has even branded wrong doers as genetically retarded.

<sup>236</sup> Morris, H.M., *The Modern Creation Trilogy*, Volume II, The Scientific Case, San Diego, Creation Research Society, 1986, 9-14.

openly reject and oppose social Darwinism believing it undermines both the idea that man is made in the image of God and the idea that man is a uniquely rational being.

## **2.7 The Separation of Church and State.**

Baptist history and religious liberty has focused on their belief that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society but is never to attempt control of the church. Independent Baptists reject the erroneous interpretation or concept of “separation of God and state” confused by many modern churches, Christians and citizens.

The early Baptist message of separation of church and state has flowered anew in the creative and vigorous work of Independent Baptist churches and their evangelistic outreaches. As these congregations have grown, multiplied and flourished their evangelism emphasizing personal salvation and individual rights or soul liberty has contributed to a ‘grass roots’ level introduction or education under-girding free speech, human rights, and the political right to vote in a free democratic system. In this way, Independent Baptists have joined other Baptists in making some of modern societies most important moral and social statements.

One example of an important social statement or contribution of Baptists in general and of a theme emphasised and taught at the grass roots level by Independent Bap-

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<sup>237</sup> Romans 1:18-30

tists in particular is the teaching on the separation of church and state. Isaac Backus outlined this historic position centuries ago:

As religion must always be a matter between God and individuals, no man can be made a member of a truly religious society by force or without his own consent, neither can any corporation that is not a religious society have a just right to govern in religious affairs.<sup>238</sup>

This, now popular<sup>239</sup> Anabaptist and Baptist doctrinal position of the “separation of church and state” was once the sole domain of Baptist thought. In 1912 Mullins pointed out the recent nature of this idea, “The Free Church in a free state is a New Testament principle which has found full expression only in modern times...<sup>240</sup>

Baptist history points out that this doctrine was a source of much of the earlier persecution<sup>241</sup> received from both the state and from other Christian churches.<sup>242</sup> American Baptist historian, Torbet summarises how the doctrine of the “separation of church and state” had such a strong influence on modern democratic thought that

The Protestant Reformation was essentially an attack upon the worldliness and authoritarianism of the papal court at Rome. Luther and Zwingli both taught the priesthood of the believers in opposition to the Roman Church’s priesthood of an ordained hierarchy. In this, the reformers were right, but in the application of their principle, they fell short; for they did not give to the congregations, particularly in Germany, the right to interpret the Scriptures and to control their churches.

...Baptists consistently have opposed the making of any distinction between clergy and laity that savors of sacerdotalism. Moreover, the emphasis upon local autonomy has been an important factor in preserving the precious spirit of democracy.

<sup>238</sup> Isaac Backus (1781), “The Baptists: A People Who Gathered To Walk in All His Ways.” Carol Stream, *Christian History*, Issue 6, IL, Christianity Today, Inc., 1997, 3.

<sup>239</sup> Mullins, E.Y., *Baptist Beliefs*, Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1912, 72.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>241</sup> Mullins, E.Y., *The Axioms of Religion*, 48.

<sup>242</sup> Armitage, T., *History of the Baptists*, 333, 394, 414, 685.



...The Baptist emphasis upon the worth of the individual has given recognition to the truth that the foundation of democracy is spiritual rather than material.

Baptists have made a special contribution to Protestantism, for which the world is their debtor, in their consistent witness to the principles of religious liberty. Belief in this principle has been founded upon the Scriptural truth that the individual is responsible solely to God for his eternal destiny.

While the germ of this tenet lay dormant in Luther's teaching concerning the right of private interpretation of the Bible, Luther lacked the courage to permit such freedom lest it destroy his state-church connection. It was left, therefore, to Anabaptists and Baptists to maintain consistently, and at times to defend with their lives, the right of individuals and groups to worship God in their own way and to believe or disbelieve.<sup>243</sup>

The Independent Baptist churches believe their special contribution to this principle is their separation from denominational controls, and their general rejection of ecumenical alliances which they believe weaken this doctrinal truth by compromise with association with other bodies less committed to maintaining this principle as a vital doctrinal teaching.

Looking at the literal interpretation of Romans 13,<sup>244</sup> and other passages, Independent Baptists have gone beyond the sixteenth century negativism of Anabaptists and have taught that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured, and obeyed, excepting only in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ clearly taught in Scripture. Independent Baptists believe that religious or soul liberty includes the right of every man to worship God as he chooses to do. Baptists have always taught that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Lord of the conscience, and as

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<sup>243</sup> Torbet, R. G., *A History of Baptists*, 517-518.

<sup>244</sup> Romans 13:1-7.

the Prince of the kings of the earth holds final authority. The Bible is also clear that Christians should obey God and not man.<sup>245</sup> Yet, Independent Baptists believe, as do other Christians, that the powers that be are ordained of God. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil."<sup>246</sup> Thus the Independent Baptists have determined to serve in national military armies and are not pacifist as are the Mennonites.

Independent Baptists oppose denominationalism, for among other reasons, reasoning that it tends to lead Christians into the trap of a state - church styled power group or lobby. Such influence peddling is viewed as a threat to Biblical teaching on the separation of church and state. Another core issue to Independent Baptist thought, and related to the doctrine of soul liberty or soul competency, is the emphasis of the Independent Baptist's approach to solving interpersonal and social problems through one taking responsibility for their actions. Individualism and individual ethical responsibility are viewed as essential truths of the Scripture.

Since God alone is viewed as Lord of the conscience, Independent Baptists believe that matters of the Church and the State should be separate. In providing for such freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favoured by the state more than others should. The state owes to every church nothing more or less than basic protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends.

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<sup>245</sup> Hobbs, H. H., The Baptist Faith and Message, Nashville, Convention Press, 1981, 141.

Concluding a chapter that has outlined the Fundamentalism of Independent Baptist and Bible churches in Southern Africa leads one to emphasise that their beliefs or convictions regarding Biblical Fundamentalism form an important aspect of their character and has a direct bearing on their ministry styles, and methodologies. That they are truly Baptist was established in the first chapter, and now that they are truly Fundamentalist, at least of the Historic and Biblical type, cannot be doubted. Their version of Fundamentalism is certainly limited by their Independent Baptist and Bible church styled convictions and as a more recent religious movement its development or changes within the African culture yet remain to be observed and analysed.

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<sup>246</sup> Also: Deuteronomy 16:18; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-23; Jeremiah 30:21.

**CHAPTER THREE:**  
**THE LEADERS OF**  
**SOUTH AFRICA'S INDEPENDENT FUNDAMENTAL**  
**BAPTIST AND BIBLE CHURCHES.**

To understand the development of a religious movement one must consider its background, beliefs, leadership and direction. In the previous chapters, the historical and doctrinal origins of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches have been assessed along with the influence of American Historic Biblical Fundamentalism. These backgrounds and beliefs are a prologue to the present chapter's scrutiny of the performance and the mind-set of their leadership. The final chapter will explore the goals and methodologies of this cluster of churches within the greater family of Baptists.

### **3.1 A Leadership Gripped by Convictions.**

The South African Independent Baptist and Bible churches consider themselves and their leaders as upholding the convictions of historic European Anabaptism<sup>1</sup>, some early South African Baptists<sup>2</sup> and the American Fundamentalist movement.<sup>3</sup> Their mission individually, as leaders is generally one of leadership driven by strong convictions regarding their responsibility to be faithful to God's Word. Charles

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<sup>1</sup> Lindsell, Harold, *The New Paganism*, San Francisco, Harper & Row Publishers, 1987, "The Anabaptists may be said to have followed to their logical conclusions the principles laid down by Lutheranism and Zwinglianism. Both had repudiated church tradition and all human authority and insisted that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice."

<sup>2</sup> Baker, Ernest, *What Does the Second Advent Mean?*, Worcester: Worcester Standard Electric Press, Ltd., 1926.

<sup>3</sup> Bush, L. Rush and Nettles, Tom J., *Baptist and the Bible*, The Baptist doctrines of biblical inspiration and religious authority in historical perspective, Chicago: Moody Press, 1980, 21, 286, 354.

Feinberg summarises the mind-set<sup>4</sup> and self-estimation of Fundamentalist leaders such as is commonly found among South African Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church circles:

The primary characteristic of the religious picture of our day is flux and change. Heartening, indeed, it is to know that in an age of confusion and instability, there are certain inalienable and inviolable truths upon which believers can stand. Small men hold opinions; big men are gripped by convictions.<sup>5</sup>

“Big men ...gripped by convictions” or “small men” holding irrationally to outdated opinions? – Which are they? Although the significance of their parent churches<sup>6</sup> and missionary sending agencies<sup>7</sup> has often been celebrated, the history of the Southern African Independent Fundamental church has not been chronicled. The history of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa<sup>8</sup> and the many smaller Baptist conventions, associations and missionary agencies have been recounted numerous times,<sup>9</sup> over the past one hundred and fifty years, but due to their small size and influence the Independent Baptists have naturally been given little or no attention.

The Independent Baptist and Bible churches are convinced that their fervent stance as fundamentalists, with its emphasis on literalism, dispensationalism and pre-millennialism, is making a valuable contribution to South African religious life. They believe they are “calling” South African Christians to return to their heritage.<sup>10</sup> They believe their message was once preached by men like, Arnot, Baker, Kunz, Russell,

<sup>4</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., *C.H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume II, The Full Harvest (1860-1892)*, Edinburgh, Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, 456. Spurgeon even objected to “Providing an endowment to secure the future of his College, on the grounds that such a provision would be no safeguard to preserving a succession in soundness of doctrine.”

<sup>5</sup> Feinberg, C. L., ed., *The Fundamentals for Today*, Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications, 1958, 7.

<sup>6</sup> Beale, D. O., *In Pursuit of Purity. American Fundamentalism since 1850*, Greenville, Unusual Publications, 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Walsh, J., *Great Things He Hath Done*, Harrisburg, ABWE Publishing, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> New name adopted at the 1980 denominational Assembly.

<sup>9</sup> Batts, Cross, Evans, Haus, Hendricks, Hudson Reed, Kretzschmar, Latourette, McBeth, Philpott, Roy, and Wardin.

<sup>10</sup> Lindsell, Harold, *The New Paganism*, San Francisco, Harper & Row Publishers, 1987, 39.

Grove, J.D. Odendaal, Garratt, Skinner and others.<sup>11</sup> The Baptist Union's own historians Robert Philpott,<sup>12</sup> Sydney Hudson-Reed and others may have overlooked the reasons Ernest Baker<sup>13</sup> and John Russell were sent out by C.H. Spurgeon, since their histories were focused on the work of the men once they had arrived in South Africa, and since their histories were not focused primarily on Spurgeon<sup>14</sup> but the Independent Fundamental Baptists, due to their interest in these issues, have not overlooked this aspect of history. The timing and urgency of this period was related to Spurgeon, his Metropolitan Tabernacle, and his Pastor's College<sup>15</sup> all publicly separating from the British Baptist Union due to the Baptist Union's modernism.<sup>16</sup>

Other matters that have often been disregarded or overlooked by many of the Baptist Union historians include the reasons behind Baker's passion for missionary outreach, i.e. that he was only a moderate Calvinist in a day of very strong Calvinism and anti-missionary sentiment; and that he was an outspoken pre-millennialist<sup>17</sup>, a fundamentalist<sup>18</sup> and hermeneutically a literalist.<sup>19</sup> People have forgotten that Baker's Bible college, the Baptist Bible School,<sup>20</sup> like that of his co-tutor, Charles Garratt and his school's graduates, were all premillennialists<sup>21</sup> and dispensationalists.<sup>22</sup> Their

<sup>11</sup> Following the Boer War & World War I a number of Cape Dutch Reformed pastors left post-millennial to pre-

<sup>12</sup> Philpott, R. H., *Ernest Baker*, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1970.

<sup>13</sup> The fact that Baker was sent having only completed two years of study at the Pastor's College was unprecedented.

<sup>14</sup> *Sword and the Trowel*, Spurgeon, C.H., ed., London, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 1891, 540.

<sup>15</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume II, The Full Harvest (1860-1892)*, Edinburgh, Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, 475.

<sup>16</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., ed., *The Sword and the Trowel*, London, Published by the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Issues, 1875 to 1888. Modernism – with emphasis on the "Social Gospel" and Liberalism – with a 'Colenso styled' Higher Criticism, and universalism were linked by Spurgeon to the 'down-grade' of the fundamental truths of Scripture. (Also see Church of England in South Africa, *Why Two Churches, The Story of the Church of England in S.A.*, Cape Town, Information Office Press, 1965, 3.)

<sup>17</sup> Hendricks, J. A., *Baptists in Southern Africa*, King William's Town, Progress Press Co., 1959, 34, 93-94.

<sup>18</sup> Baker, E., *The Proof of Christ*, London, The Kingsgate Press, 1921, 27-28.

<sup>19</sup> Baker, E., *What Does the Second Advent Mean?*, Worcester, Worcester Standard Electric Press, Ltd., 1926

<sup>20</sup> Baker, E., and Odendaal, J.D., *The Baptist Bible School of South Africa - Second Annual Report*, Cape Town, Townshend, Taylor & Snashall, Publishers, 1927.

<sup>21</sup> Garratt, C., ed., *Fifty Years of Life and Service in the Wale Street Baptist Church*, Worcester, Webster Standard Electric Press, Ltd., Printers, 1927, 18, 19.

<sup>22</sup> Baker, E., *What Does the Second Advent Mean?* 1926, 7.

promotion of the Scofield Reference Bible and Clarence Larkin's Dispensational Truth<sup>23</sup> as the Bible College's text-books is forgotten.

The fact that Baker and Russell were the last two students that Spurgeon sent out himself, and that Spurgeon's successors at the Metropolitan Tabernacle would also be Independent Fundamental Baptist (with a clear emphasis on literalism and dispensationalism) is overlooked by most, but not forgotten – not, at least, by the Independent Fundamental Baptist missionaries who arrived in South Africa thirty-five years after Baker to teach and emphasise the same doctrines.

The following presentation of these church planters, their local churches, the pastor-leaders and student-pastors will also introduce some of the contributions of these Independent Fundamentalists. The unveiling of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church's vision for revisiting that century old message of a literal and dispensational interpretation of the Bible and of a Fundamentalist church for a changing and "new" Southern Africa may be one of their greatest contributions.

These personal accounts may also resolve some potential confusion regarding the missiological motivation of this movement. The Independent Fundamental churches' missiological motivation is in their own opinion focused on an old-fashioned message of the Gospel. Professor Louise Kretzschmar explains that this older view, from her perspective is too limited but summarises this view, for my purposes, quite succinctly when she stated that: "... the mission of the church is understood - purely

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<sup>23</sup> Baker, E. and Odendaal, J.D., The Baptist Bible School of South Africa - Second Annual Report, Note, Page 4 is a list of "The Text-books used" include Gray, J.M., Synthetic Bible Studies; Larkin, Clarence, Dispensational Truth, 1918, and five other authors who wrote articles for the original four volume set, The Fundamentals.

understood – in terms of evangelism and church planting.”<sup>24</sup> Many Baptist in Southern Africa would want to move past this limited view,<sup>25</sup> but the Independent Fundamental Baptist and their sister Bible churches are making every effort to revive this mission statement in its most simple form.

The nature of Independent Fundamental churches, as autonomous units, makes writing and interpreting a historical chronicle of their overall development and growth a challenging and complicated matter. Few records are available and no central archives or records are kept and, as a relatively contemporary ministry, this movement offers little in the way of public information regarding its contribution to the social fabric or even the spiritual life of the land.

With an understanding of both the variations and the unifying aspects of their doctrinal positions one can better understand how this Christian missionary effort might supply some of the spiritual requirements of at least a portion of Southern African society. This prospect is especially promising if one considers ministering to those people who are looking for a literalist interpretation of the Bible, and who are convinced that they should separate from cooperative associations and councils of religion.

One Independent Baptist pastor shed light on the question regarding the independent local churches ability to cooperate and be involved in such things as world evangelisation, and yet, still hold firmly to the belief in separation from theological

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<sup>24</sup> Kretschmar, L., Msiza, P., and Nthane, J., eds., *Being a Baptist in South Africa Today*, Braamfontein, Baptist Convention College, 1997, 43.

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compromise and non-membership in ecclesiastical organisations. His "open letter" to concerned Christians explained:

Before Baptist Churches began to organize into conventions and associations to accomplish a united purpose Independent Baptists cooperated effectively for many common causes such as world evangelism. This cooperation was accomplished through informal relationships (fellowships) between local congregations. We feel involvement determined by 'membership' in a 'Convention' (or Union) often creates a situation in which the programme of that official body becomes more important than the local church that created it, causing the lustre and importance of the local church ministry to be obscured.

We do not choose to become involved with organised conventions and associations because, all too often, we have discovered that many colleges and seminaries sponsored by organized Conventions, while being supported by local churches, have hired or invited guest professors who do not believe or teach doctrines that we feel are Biblical, true and vital to the Christian Faith.

Examples of Liberal's denial of truth should include doctrines such as the Verbal Inspiration of Scriptures and the Deity and Virgin Birth of our Lord. We find that the local churches make these colleges and seminaries existence a reality by their financial support yet their voice and convictions do not carry enough influence to correct the errors that arise in these institutions.<sup>26</sup>

### 3.2 The Portrait of a Missionary Church Planter.<sup>27</sup>

A representative portrait of the Independent Baptist and Bible Churches missionary church planters will make their contributions, motivations and vision more apparent. The nature of Independent Baptist ecclesiology,<sup>28</sup> has dictated an informal macro development with relatively little, if any, formal inter-agency missionary cooperation.

<sup>26</sup> Ramsey, D.L., "What is an Independent Baptist Church?" Pamphlet, 1970.

<sup>27</sup> An annotated and abbreviated biographical chronology of the Independent Baptist and Bible church's "Church Planting Missionaries" between 1974 and 2000 is provided in Appendix I.

<sup>28</sup> Its ecclesiological commitment to total congregational independence is a primary influence.

Since the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Independent Bible Church missionaries came to Southern Africa on an individual basis and not through a master strategy or “denominational missionary plan,” those arriving in the early half of the twentieth century primarily came under the sponsorship of interdenominational missionary boards. In the 1970’s the first Independent Baptist and Bible church missionary agencies responded when they came to the conviction that the interdenominational missionary boards were increasingly compromising on issues fundamental to the Gospel message.

The new Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries focused their total efforts on evangelisation and a ministry of planting<sup>29</sup> new churches<sup>30</sup>, primarily in newly developing suburbs. Though hospital, camps, schools and orphanages are included in the Independent Baptist concept of missionary ministry, these ministries are usually left to a later stage of development when the national churches are able to develop such ministries themselves. In some cases, these “secondary” ministries are established along with the new church planting efforts but this is only because their use in outreach is clearly established as genuinely needed or especially useful for advancing church planting.

All the Independent Baptists, are agreed that it is a Biblical mandate that the missionary focus should remain one of “church planting” – especially in the early stages.

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<sup>29</sup> This “church planting” ministry focus is explained further in chapter four, 4.2.

<sup>30</sup> An annotated and abbreviated biographical chronology of the Independent Baptist and Bible church’s planted by Independent Baptist and Bible church Missionaries between 1974 and 2000 is provided in Appendix II.

### 3.2.1. Separatism: the maintenance of truth or a retreat?

Although a lack of formal cooperation clearly exists, the Independent Baptists reject the idea that their doctrine of separation, i.e. independence, is a retreat into isolation, or in any sense an obstacle to God's providential working and grace. Earnest Pickering, one of the Independent Baptist movement's respected theologians, charts the separatist way:

The grand difficulty is to combine a spirit of intense separation with a spirit of grace, gentleness and forbearance; or as another has said, 'to maintain a narrow circle with a wide heart.' This is really a difficulty. As the strict and uncompromising maintenance of truth tends to narrow the circle around us, we shall need the expansive power of grace to keep the heart wide and the affections warm. If we contend for truth otherwise than in grace, we shall only yield a one-sided and most unattractive testimony. And, on the other hand, if we try to exhibit grace at the expense of truth, it will prove, in the end, to be only the manifestation of a popular liberality at God's expense – a most worthless thing! <sup>31</sup>

Independent Baptists believe that God works just as freely through what appears to be a truncated form of ecclesiology, and just as easily as He works through the seemingly confused historical, political and sociological events of the world we live in.<sup>32</sup> They further believe God is able to superintend His church without highly evolved human systems such as synods, councils or denominations. They, in fact, believe that all human additions to Biblical ecclesiology actually hinder Christendom in its efforts at obeying the Word of God. Thus, they often credit such providential superintendence specifically as an explanation for their missiological and ecclesiastical growth and success over these last one hundred years. Another example of their belief in their informal methodology is the recent increase within Independent Baptist

<sup>31</sup> Pickering, E. D., *Biblical Separation, The Struggle for a Pure Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979, 235.

<sup>32</sup> Nettles, T. J., *By His Grace and For His Glory, A Historical, Theological and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1986, 209. (Also note the writings on the Baptist doctrine of providence by E.C. Dargan.)

and Bible church missionary activity over the last twenty-five years in both Southern Africa and worldwide. It is also important to note that in keeping with the accepted Independent Baptist philosophy of maintaining minimal inter-agency cooperation, there has been no discernable strategic planning or coordinated effort between the American Independent Baptist churches, their various missionary agencies<sup>33</sup> and their missionaries out in the field of service.<sup>34</sup>

The Independent Baptists rarely look to any of the more formal means of cooperation that are common to religious groupings in pursuit of developing their denominations. They simply reject as Biblically unacceptable and practically inefficient, inner-church relationships as means to accomplishing or coordinating their ministries. Independent Baptists consider ecumenicity<sup>35</sup> a totally unacceptable and unbiblical<sup>36</sup> response to cooperative Christian ministry. Further, Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches consider ecumenicity<sup>37</sup> as an example of a heretical response<sup>38</sup> to the need for genuine Biblical and spiritual Christian love and cooperation.

One independent Baptist missionary agency explains the doctrine of ecclesiastical separation, as practiced by independent Baptists, as follows:

<sup>33</sup> The Independent Baptist agencies receive attention in chapter three, 3.3.

<sup>34</sup> The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, *Evangelical Baptist Mission and Biblical Ministries Worldwide* would have the highest degree of cooperation found among the independent Baptist in South Africa.

<sup>35</sup> Kung, Hans, *Infallible?*, London, Collins, 1971. See discussions regarding the specific impact of the Roman doctrine of Papal infallibility as formulated in the Twenty-first Ecumenical Council of Bishops in communion with the See of Rome and the Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965.

<sup>36</sup> 2 Corinthians 6,14-18 Separatists point out phrases such as, "not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," - "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" - "what concord?" - "What agreement?"

<sup>37</sup> Nash, Margaret, *Ecumenical Movement in the 1960's*, Johannesburg, Raven Press, 1975, 411,412.

<sup>38</sup> Unity is believed to be a matter of spiritual oneness, not organisational oneness.

We believe the Scriptures teach the believer should be separated from apostasy as exemplified in ecclesiastic organizations which include radicals, liberals and those who sanction theological compromise. This doctrine is based upon God's eternal principle of division between truth and error and His specific command to be separate from unbelievers and disobedient brethren. This truth is to be practiced with an attitude of devotion to God, humility and compassion, yet with conviction, to create the proper condition and atmosphere for the main objective, i.e., the salvation of the lost through the Gospel of God. We believe ecumenical evangelism involves apostates and violates the principles taught in God's Word. Matthew 10:34-39; 18:15; Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 5:7-13; II Corinthians 6:14; 11:4; Galatians 1:8-9; I Timothy 6:3-6; II Timothy 2:16-18; Titus 3:10; II John 9-11.<sup>39</sup>

It would be a major mistake to assume that the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches do not cooperate or fellowship on an informal basis. The value of communication, on an informal and "non-controlling" or "centralised"<sup>40</sup> basis, is appreciated by most independent Baptists, though there are a few who will have nothing to do with – other Independent Baptists. Most independent Baptists recognise a tendency for organisations, Baptist Churches often included, to voluntarily yield much of their authority, by simply transferring congregational empowerment via delegation to boards, smaller groups or committees. The God-given right<sup>41</sup> to Christian and congregational autonomy is a serious matter to the separatist and independent movement. Yet, there is usually an open and loving informal interdependence and truly compassionate care available for one another. The love taught in the Bible is encouraged in every way – except organisationally or hierarchically. As Christian leaders, it is evident to the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches that genuine Christian communication in and among their

<sup>39</sup> ABWE - Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, *Principles and Practices* Harrisburg, Sixth Ed., 2000, 12.

<sup>40</sup> Ahlstrom, S. E., *Religious History of the American People*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1972, 720. "...the Southern Baptist Convention was organised... with a constitution that provided for a degree of centralization without precedent among Baptists."

<sup>41</sup> Radmacher, E. D., *The Nature of the Church*, Portland, Western Baptist Press, 1972, 149,150.

congregations should not be ignored. In the care they give each other in matters relating to their own personal and family needs Christian fellowship is a priority.

### 3.2.2 Providential advance: the missionary call.

The good degree of growth<sup>42</sup> among the independent Baptists in Southern Africa may be logically explained by the increased amount of political interest and humanitarian and social understanding in America. This relatively recent heightened interest may better be explained through God's own Providence. Independent fundamentalists believe that God's providential working in the "last days" may well be missionary in nature – since they usually interpret the Laodicean church of Revelation 3: 14-21 as prophetic of the end times, the times before Christ raptures His church. In the Scotfield Reference Bible, the editors note for chapter three and verse 20 is:

**Place and attitude of Christ at  
the end of the church-age.**

*20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.<sup>43</sup>*

The numerous converging influences that improved America's<sup>44</sup> Independent Baptists general awareness of the need and potential of Southern Africa may be the simple and direct providential acts of God. It is certainly an acceptable viewpoint for anyone accepting a historic missionary mandate together with an "end times" scenario:

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<sup>42</sup> In 1980, there were two Independent Baptist congregations and two missionary agencies; at this writing, there are well over 100 churches and over nine missionary agencies, plus a number of totally independent missionaries serving under the auspices of local churches in the United States.

<sup>43</sup> Scofield, C.I., ed., The Scofield Reference Bible, The Holy Bible, New York, Oxford University Press, (1909) 1945, 1334.

<sup>44</sup> Sales, J. M., The Planting of the Churches in South Africa, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971, 147.

Here lies the believing interpretation of history. It is not a task of observing the extraordinary events in which God's immediate activity supposedly substitutes momentarily for natural law. It is the illuminating of Christ's approach through providential events. These events must then direct our attention not to themselves, but by their character and nature, to the coming salvation.

The central religious aspect of history is here touched upon, as it is apparent from one of the signs: the preaching of the Gospel to all the world (Matthew 24:14) The portents of the end find in this their centrum. The consummation of history is approached in the light of this preaching.<sup>45</sup>

The potential providential influences which may have contributed to a heightened general awareness of American Independent Fundamental Baptist and the Southern Africa region could be summarised as a growth in geo-political understanding. With an increased exposure to the African political problems, and social needs these churches, already highly committed to missionary outreach, grew in spiritually awareness of the new or greater potential opportunities for missionary service. A more detailed listing of these influences should include:

- a. The worldwide media attention given to the many African social upheavals.
- b. The increasing shift toward humanism and liberal Christianity in Africa.
- c. The history making political empowerment of democratic governments and the resulting "opened doors" (ref. Revelation 3:8-13) for preaching the Gospel.
- d. The increased attention given to the encouraging news of gains for democracy, or majority rule over dictatorships. Such media attention may singly explain the heightened awareness of Africa among the Independent and Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in America.

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<sup>45</sup> Berkouwer, G.C., Studies in Dogmatics. The Providence of God, Providence and History, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974, 184-185.

A number of particularly providential changes in Africa have assuredly made a serious impression on Independent Baptists. Some examples of these providential changes in history include:

- (1.) The positive and negative effects of the political "Winds of Change"<sup>46</sup> doctrine on such countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire), Nigeria, Mozambique and many other African countries played a genuine part in producing a re-assessment of Africa and its needs. The direct affect for Southern Africa was an influx of independent Baptist missionaries ministering in these countries and even causing many to relocate<sup>47</sup> their mission interests further south into the Southern African states.
- (2.) New missionary volunteers<sup>48</sup> were influenced by the perceived opportunities and potential of the sub-continent's current and developing socio-political changes.<sup>49</sup>
- (3.) Political unrest in South Africa, and overall African instability and regional conflicts brought an increased media coverage to the region.<sup>50</sup> Then increased awareness by independent Baptist churches led to concern, prayer and manpower commitment in the form of dozens of missionary families targeting their ministries in Southern Africa.

<sup>46</sup> Williams G. M., *African for the Africans*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969, 198. References to the political changes sweeping across Africa as country after country became independent of their earlier colonial powers.

<sup>47</sup> Grings, Hesthote, Hoblitz, McCrum, Moonman and others.

<sup>48</sup> Blackwell, Sr., Gelina, Marshfield, McClure, Morris, Pherson and many others recognised the changing socio-political scene as an "open door" for evangelism and Christian ministry. (See, for example, "The 1980 Strategy Statement of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism," M. Blackwell, Sr. and D. Marshfield.)

<sup>49</sup> Cairns, E. E., *Christianity Through the Centuries*, Revised Edition, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1979, 495. "Africa for the Africans."



- (4.) The new focus given to the region by political causes, especially when they were radical, played an important role. The conservative arm of Christianity is outspoken in its opposition to atheistic communism. Conservatives were increasingly interested and mobilised<sup>51</sup> by the volatile political realities and rhetoric flowing within Southern Africa.
- (5.) The Independent Baptist movement in the United States grew at a good rate and this growth made additional overseas ministry worldwide and for the sub-continent of Africa possible. Once the doors were perceived as “open,” Southern Africa<sup>52</sup> would begin receiving approximately ten couples a year. The long-term effect of these ministries of missionary-evangelism, church-planting, education and youth ministry will take generations to fully assess.
- (6.) The growing needs of the Southern African region, in economics, education and health, and the increase in economical strength experienced in the United States opened new levels<sup>53</sup> of social investment and involvement between the two regions. Increased media coverage also developed better understanding of the region by Americans, and thus played an important role in increased awareness among American Independent Baptist churches;

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<sup>50</sup> Hildebrandt, J., *History of the Church in Africa*, Achimota, Ghana, African Christian Press, 1996, 242-243.

<sup>51</sup> Politically active Independent Baptist leaders, such as Randy Pike, and organisations such as Christian Mission International and their *Voice of the Martyrs* led a “right-wing” attack on their particular, interpretation, understanding or perception of an “immanent atheistic-communist danger.” The independent Baptists of the Seventies and early Eighties were certainly more politically conservative than were those who arrived in the next wave of missionaries. This “next wave” was made-up of a younger generation of politically cautious – if not somewhat politically disillusioned Christians.

<sup>52</sup> Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique (1960s, and 90s), Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa’s so-called (70s and 80s) “Homelands.” (Angola, 1960-70).

<sup>53</sup> Christian owned businesses, businessmen and politicians openly assisted in the financial support of numerous Christian projects (spiritual, educational and social) now developing in the region.

(7.) During the 1950-1990 period of apartheid<sup>54</sup> and unrest the general conservative evangelical witness weakened, missionary recruitment slowed to a trickle. Some missionary agencies showed genuine concern, even cutting back staff within the Southern African region.<sup>55</sup> These periods of slowed missionary activity were especially apparent during the time period of the South African National Party's development of apartheid, its "Homelands Policy" and Rhodesia's "Unilateral Declaration of Independence." With the missionary impetus suffering, there was a fresh call<sup>56</sup> for more missionaries. This missionary call was a confusing matter for many since they<sup>57</sup> accepted the region as a bastion of the Christian religion. How could Southern Africa ever be perceived as an emerging, even prime, target for renewed missionary efforts? Eventually, the Independent Baptist,<sup>58</sup> and Bible Churches gave this call to re-evangelise the region a whole-hearted response.

Change became a type of "fuel" to power a new and growing interest in individualism versus tribalism and tradition. This shift was especially evident in the sub-continent of Africa. The changes that filtered down from these political shifts affected the religious and ecclesiastical scenery. Many Southern Africans

<sup>54</sup> Williams, G.M., *African for the Africans*, 135.

<sup>55</sup> International Office, *AEF Fellowship Organisation and Administration*, Northants, Stanley L. Hunt Printers, 1982, 25. In 1985 there were 320 missionaries in the, then, ten African countries in which they operated. They expected 59 more to be appointed in the next few years and were praying for 35 additional missionaries per year (twenty-five to replace retirements and ten to advance further.) The Africa Evangelical Fellowship along with The Evangelical Alliance Mission, and the Southern Baptist Church's Foreign Missionary Board experienced increases overall, but they also experienced a reduction in new volunteers for Southern Africa during the 1960s to 1980's period of political violence and social unrest.

<sup>56</sup> Hopewell, W., *The Message*, Harrisburg, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1980; and other groups such as Baptist International Missions Inc. promoted new works.

<sup>57</sup> Wagner, C. P., ed., *Church & Missions Tension Today*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1972, 32. Note, Also referenced through a personal interview with leader of Scripture Union, Salisbury, 1976. Various articles in religious periodicals, journals, and missionary strategy have questioned the need for "foreign missionary" involvement in Africa, and other fields - especially in light of the centuries of work and infrastructure that had been developed.

<sup>58</sup> Both American fundamental and evangelical missionary agencies are openly promoting their perception of the needs and are communicating the opportunities for Christian service throughout the Southern African region in

were opening their minds to other possibilities. Baptists and other independent churches and small denominations were given a new opportunity. Interest in non-denominationalism grew in Southern Africa, as throughout the world<sup>50</sup>.

### 3.3 A Profile and Cross-section of its Leaders.

The contemporary Independent Baptist missionary's degree of commitment to building sensitive cross-cultural relationships is improving with each generation of missionary. A greater personal identification with their host culture still fluctuates from missionary to missionary. Cultural sensitivity often varies depending on the geographic region of their home base: the geographic / cultural region of their "home church," university, seminary or possibly even depending on the region where they may have previously ministered. For example, social awareness, cross-cultural experience, language influences, racialism, political conservatism or even American patriotism, i.e. nationalism, is often noticeably stronger in smaller rural cities or in Southern "Bible-belt" regions than in Northern industrial regions of the United States.

In the earlier periods of missionary outreach the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible "sending churches," and the missionaries themselves, have often been under such a strong cultural influence that they can do very little to overcome their mindset or tendencies to mirror the culture of their own specific region.<sup>60</sup> Some

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churches, colleges and seminaries. See internet websites for ABWE, AEF, BBF, BMM, BIMl, BMW, EBM, TEAM, SBC, and others.

<sup>50</sup> Latourette, K.S., *A History of The Expansion of Christianity*, Seven Volumes, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1970, Appendix, "The Twenty-five Unbelievable Years, 1945-1969 by Ralph D. Winter, 507-533.

<sup>60</sup> Crawley, W., *Global Mission, A Story to Tell*. (An Interpretation of Southern Baptist Foreign Missions), Nashville, Broadman Press, 1985, 219-236.

missionaries even experience difficulties making the transition into their new host country. A few missionaries have given-up their ministries and returned to the United States due to regional biases and preferences that were so strong that they interfered with the missionary or the missionary's family members adjusting to the different cultural realities they faced overseas.

The change from cultural blindness to cultural sensitivity is evident today. Most contemporary Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries, on the other hand, are almost fanatical about their commitment not to carry over their American culture or cultural influences into their missionary efforts.<sup>61</sup> Many younger missionaries are extremely aware and concerned about meeting the worldwide social changes and the related demands facing the church.<sup>62</sup> Most modern missionaries understand the dangers of "cultural baggage" – especially in the last twenty-five years.

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries are increasingly better educated and more culturally sensitive. Using orientation programmes, team ministry, and through increased ministry partnerships with South African leaders and congregations, the overall quality of these American-based ministries has improved.

### **3.3.1 The profile of modern independent and fundamental leadership:**

Independent Baptist and Bible Church missionaries generally arrive while in their late twenties or early thirties, they usually come as married couples that have both received Bible training and given their lives to a spiritual career of Christian missionary

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<sup>61</sup> Carson, D. A., *The Gagging of God*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, chapters two and three.

<sup>62</sup> Celek, T. & Zander, D., *Inside the Soul of a New Generation*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing, 1996, 111.

service.<sup>63</sup> In most cases their calling to missionary service was a personal spiritual decision linked to their belief that it is God's will that Christians carry the Gospel to every part (Matthew 28:19-20) of the world. Independent Baptists consider the whole world to be lost in sin and do not refer to the older language or traditional category of "ministering to heathen" people or lands. They would consider America as much a "heathen land" as any other land they might minister in. In fact, the independent Baptist view of the separation of church and state affords no nationality or cultural group a right to call itself Christian. The Independent Fundamental Baptists' dispensationalist<sup>64</sup> approach to the interpretation of Scripture leads them to the conclusion that the only kingdom to be truly and totally Christian will be the Millennial Kingdom<sup>65</sup> established and ruled directly by Christ Himself!

Independent Baptist missionaries are usually educated in Bible Colleges or Seminaries where the focus is clearly placed on: personal and relational evangelism,<sup>66</sup> Biblical preaching, exegesis of the Scriptures and local church pastoral care and counselling. They generally are not specialists in missiology, though a good number have a high level of practical missiological training and associated evangelistic training.

The Independent Baptist missionaries vary broadly as regards non-essential<sup>67</sup> theological views. These missionaries usually reflected their sending church's degree of Calvinistic influence. They often emphasise one or more of the particular

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<sup>63</sup> *The Message*, Harrisburg, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 2001, Volume 50, Number 7. A quarterly official informational magazine of ABWE. Note, the age of arriving missionaries was generally younger twenty years ago, and the modern changes in missions should include recruiting more "early" retirees and short-term student recruits.

<sup>64</sup> Ahlstrom, S. E., *Religious History of the American People*, London, Yale University Press, 1972, 810. "The Millennium when Christ shall restore the Davidic Monarchy of Israel and rule for a thousand years."

<sup>65</sup> Zuck, R. B., *Basic Bible Interpretation*, Wheaton, Victor Books, 1991, 227-249.

<sup>66</sup> McDonald, B. W., *Bridge Evangelism*, Harrisburg, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1984, 39.

<sup>67</sup> Non-essential, is not acceptable as a fundamental position when referring doctrinally to the salvation of a soul.

applications of the Baptist Distinctives. They may hold strongly to Fundamentalist thinking on an issue at hand. Depending on their regional<sup>68</sup> background, these missionaries often vary in their inclination toward transferring American regional and cultural matters to their field of service. To provide an example, one might say, that the Southern American independent Baptists are stronger in numbers, often better organised, operating in a more cohesive traditional American cultural region, and thus more influenced by that region than those in the Western American multi-cultural regions. Thus, the stronger influence of one or another regional style may be "exported" overseas, even transferred into their new ministries and mixed with their host region's culture.

There are, of course, some advantages to bringing the positive features of the American Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church movement into the Southern African setting.<sup>69</sup> Many of the social issues the American missionaries are encountering today in South Africa have been addressed, at least to some degree, in a similar period of American social change in the 1970s to 1990's. Some of these issues are stalled, some of the bigger social problems are, however, in phases of transition, or are being actively dealt with and remain in the learning stage - even today; but the benefits of cross-pollinating, i.e. sharing and learning from experienced, qualified and focused leadership, should still be obvious. The American missionaries are usually well equipped to offer a most vibrant and effective Christian ministry and example. Strengths that may be transferable on an intercultural and even international basis could include:

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<sup>68</sup> Southern, i.e. more conservative region of the United States, Northern, i.e. more cooperative region of the United States, Canada or Western more conciliatory region of the United States, etc.

- The American churches, especially those in the Northern states, are ministering as multi-racial and more socially aware congregations.<sup>70</sup>
- The attention the Independent congregations give to building strong family lifestyles within the constantly changing post-modern society.<sup>71</sup>
- The emphasis on directive styled Biblical counselling with particular focus on family, marriage and inter-personal<sup>72</sup> problem solving.<sup>73</sup>
- The goal oriented congregational ministries seeking to communicate practical answers for the unsettled lifestyles and the instable work situations of ever changing stressful century of technology.<sup>74</sup>
- HIV<sup>75</sup>/AIDS, <sup>76</sup>abortion, homosexuality<sup>77</sup> are receiving increased focus through the teaching which helps ministries within congregations.<sup>78</sup>
- Pulpit ministries link God's Word, with personable and communicative worship styles.<sup>79</sup> Local church leadership training offers practical adult education, <sup>80</sup> mentoring of a high standard.<sup>81</sup>
- Exciting and meaningful local church-based ministries for children, youth, singles along with Christian camping focused and concerned for special needs and issues such as poverty, equality, ecology, etc. <sup>82</sup>

A good cross-pollination of these contemporary strategies<sup>83</sup> of flexibility, responsiveness and focused-ministries can be of real advantage to an emerging society such as South Africa and is not always the case in many of South Africa's smaller congregations. On the other hand, any domination of the foreign culture<sup>84</sup> can equally prove to be a great disadvantage.

<sup>69</sup> Any defence of these explanations may easily be mistaken for "marketing publicity" or even worse a biased and sectarian promotion of one's own church. On the other hand, these are the reasons given and logic used by Independent Baptists.

<sup>70</sup> Ham, K.; Wieland, C.; Batten, D., *One Blood, The Biblical Answer to Racism*, Green Forest, Master Books, 2000, 99-118, 165-167.

<sup>71</sup> Getz, G. A., *The Measure of a Family*, Glendale, Gospel Light-Regal, 1996, 184-185.

<sup>72</sup> Sande, K., *The Peacemaker, A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2000, 36, 226.

<sup>73</sup> Adams, J. E., *More than Redemption, A Theology of Christian Counselling*, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979 15, 95, 210.

<sup>74</sup> LeTourneau, R.H., *Success without Compromise*, Wheaton, Victor SP Books, 1978, 34-38.

<sup>75</sup> Thacker, J., *When Aids Comes Home!*, Morgantown, Scepter Publications, 1994, 105.

<sup>76</sup> Payne, F. E., Jr., *What Every Christian Should Know About the AIDS Epidemic*, Augusta, Covenant Books, 1991, 78-88.

<sup>77</sup> MacAquina, J., and Zimbal, T., eds., *Homosexuality, A Biblical Perspective*, (Three CD Set), Plymouth, Central Baptist Seminary, 2000.

<sup>78</sup> Schaeffer, F. A. and Koop, C. E., *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, New Jersey, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1979, 121-158.

<sup>79</sup> Perry, L.M. and Sell, C., *Speaking to Life's Problems*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1983.

<sup>80</sup> Brewer, M., *The Training Connection, Non-formal Education*, Sun Valley, Project Missionlink, 1990, 29, 163.

<sup>81</sup> Gangel, K. O. & Wilhoit, J. C., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1997, 278-320.

<sup>82</sup> Sell, C., M., *Family Ministry, The Enrichment of Family Life Through the Church*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1981, 74-95.

<sup>83</sup> Biehl, B., *Master Planning*, Lake Mary, The Master Planning Group, 1997.

<sup>84</sup> Hesselgrave, D. J., *Communicating Christ Cross-culturally*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1978, 257.

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church has a whole new strategy of teamwork that is designed to bridge the generation shifts facing our modern society.

The Independent Fundamental Baptists and Bible Churches were planted by a generation of missionaries, the “Gen-Xers” – as they are known in America. They have shown an awareness of and concern for cultural and contextual issues in society and ministry, and they made every effort to provide relevant ministry to individual and families wherever they can. They, like the South African Baptist Union, have made their mistakes, but there is little doubt that their solutions will be somewhat different.<sup>85</sup>

South Africa needs every offer of help to handle the newest generation, now known as the “Millennials.” This generation is without much effective memory of the now retired generation of so-called: “Builders,” with their convictions and commitment, and they are unlike the “Baby Boomers” who held a respect for authority and extended existing social structures. As already mentioned, the “Baby Boomers” were the key missionary group that founded the Independent Baptist and Bible Churches in Southern Africa. Now church planters, evangelists and pastors face a new generation that is going even beyond the “Gen-Xers” who, though ignoring authority, arrived as a truly organised wave of missionaries, but will have their best organisational skills challenged by this latest generation, the “Millennials” who are expected to demand a special effort to be made if they are to be reached for Christ.

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<sup>85</sup> Roy, Kevin, *Zion City RSA*, Cape Town, The South African Baptist Historical Society, 2000, 187. Speaking at the University of Stellenbosch in 1990 but “in his personal capacity” Ellis Andre’ of the Baptist Union stated: “We [Baptists] have certainly felt the impoverishment of our self-imposed exile, and are much poorer for our foolish action of actually withdrawing even observer status from the SACC. Our resolutions have been impressive, but I have to confess that our actions have not measured up...” (Quoted by Roy from Alberts, L. & Chikane, F. *The Road to Rustenburg*, Cape Town, Struik, 1991, 21.)



The two remaining generations attempting to minister in the new post-1974 political dispensation, or the post - "Truth and Reconciliation" South Africa,<sup>86</sup> will need to minister together as teams if they hope to offer a relevant response to the next generation of Western influenced youth, i.e. those born since 1983. Bishop Desmond Tutu was on target when he explained that: "True forgiveness deals with the past, all of the past, to make the future possible." In South Africa, with or without Western influences and help, the *Millennials* will choose their own authority based on their opinions and perceptions of the church leadership's efforts at "earning" their respect. The opportunity to minister exists but this new generation wants to look forward, not to the past. The independent and fundamentalist, by nature of their inherent conservatism, will need to carefully address this new generation's paradigms.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Tutu, D. M., *No Future without Forgiveness*, Johannesburg, Rider, 1999, 226-227.

<sup>87</sup> Toole, J. Collegiate Week at Glorieta Christian Retreat, 2001. [A Summary.] Generation "Y" - Today's Generation. Demographers only began targeting the Millennials in 1997. Characteristics of Millennials, 1. They see themselves as special, yet need guidance and discipline. They are 2. the same type of generation as the Builders, the next *great* generation. 3. Confident and 4. Team-oriented, 5. Feel the pressure to achieve 6. Are more conventional. As loved and nurtured as this generation has been, however, 7. they still are hurting. Eight cries of Millennials & suggested responses, 1. Relationships required. Be accessible, consistent and transparent 2. Responsibility. Build/earn trust, have some rules. 3. Reassurance. Show acceptance and give approval 4. Rescue needed. From themselves and from their parents. 5. Romance. Need affection, connection and companionship. 6. Recreation/re-creation. Provide adventure, activity and competition. 7. Reconciliation. They want everyone to get along and feel good at the end of the day. 8. Reverence. They want to be in awe of God; to celebrate their worship; to experience transcendence, i.e. something outside of themselves. See also "Millennials Rising and the Fourth Turning."

### **3. 3. 2 A cross-section of independent and fundamental leaders and ministries:**

The Independent Baptists and Bible church missionaries are ministering in every province within South Africa and in five Southern African countries. This presentation of a "cross-section," though limited will give the reader insight into the ministry style and work ethic of these missionary church planters.

#### **3. 3. 2. 1 Gauteng:**

The Central Transvaal / Gauteng region had a number of congregations planted in the early church planting period of 1974-1984. Among these early church-planting efforts was the Hillbrow Independent Baptist Church<sup>88</sup>, planted by Charles Hoblits with Joel and Teresa Baines, in 1978, Two black ministries were begun in this period by Ken Ubank and Bob Johnson in Mafeking. Other active Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries of this period were evangelists: Lou Finney (Bible Church), Randy Pike (Baptist), and lay preachers: Billy Burnett, Robin and Basel Carmichael (Kibler Park), Russell Hunkin, Mike Nelson, Leonard Schmidt, Tracy and Ernie Watts and others. Additional missionaries, South African pastors and lay preacher will be introduced in the following sections.<sup>89</sup>

#### **3. 3. 2. 2 Boksburg,**

##### **Freeway Park Baptist Church with Alastair and Pam Butterworth.**

Freeway Park Baptist Church, and its Pastor, Alastair Butterworth, serve as fine examples of the Independent Baptist churches born in the early church planting period and of the many faithful South African couples who made major sacrifices to

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<sup>88</sup> Hillbrow Independent Baptist Church is pastored by Reuben and Myrtle May.

assist in the birthing process of this independent Baptist church. Freeway Park Baptist was the first independent Baptist "branch" church, i.e. planted by another congregation. This "second-generation" effort was constituted as an autonomous congregation in 1981. Pastor Gerhard Van Den Burg founded the congregation as an "out-reach" planned by Jack Moorman, an American missionary sent out the Baptist International Missions Inc. (BIMI). Moorman was himself pastoring a relatively new<sup>89</sup> church planting effort, the Brackenhurst Baptist Church.

The new congregation was started in the meeting room of the local rugby club. The congregation grew slowly and struggled in a number of areas, one being financial resources. When Gerhard and Lindsay Van Den Burg returned to Walvis Bay in May 1984, the young congregation was left without a pastor for fifteen months. Alastair Butterworth accepted the invitation to pastor, or in reality to continue planting the new ministry with eight members, in September 1985. The infant congregation was suffering from a long period without a pastor, and experienced difficulties accepting a pastor from within their own ranks, i.e. a fellow church member. The small group would also learn, just two weeks before their new minister's ordination, that their sponsoring church would no longer be able to support them. Brackenhurst Baptist had made the decision to found yet another new congregation, the New South Baptist Church, and would need to focus its finances on this new ministry to be led by a businessperson and lay-preacher, John Doyle. Church planting is a difficult undertaking, at the best of times, and is usually further complicated by the need for the early "charter member" families to make genuine sacrifices. The sacrificial service

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<sup>89</sup>See Appendix I. The Church Planters. A chronological listing of each Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church missionary.

of the new pastor's wife, Pam Butterworth, shows how the difficulties were overcome. Mrs. Butterworth committed her nursing career and its income to be used to the Lord's glory and for stabilising the Butterworths income. She worked full time as a nursing sister in a local private hospital using her salary as the sole income for the family and often as a source for administrative funds to establish their new ministry at Boksburg.

To understand the independent Fundamental Baptist pastor one can look more closely at the life and ministry of one of the foundational leaders. Pastor Butterworth was converted, or "saved,"<sup>91</sup> on the ninth of July, 1977 during a worship service at Brackenhurst Baptist Church. Over the coming years, Pastor Butterworth would see many others saved, leading many people to the same saving knowledge of and relationship with Christ. Through his personal efforts in personal evangelism, the church would grow and develop an effective ministry in the community. There was a regrettable turnover of members in the first seven years and this slowed progress in

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<sup>90</sup> Van Meter, Doug, *A Brief History of our Church*, Gauteng, Brackenhurst Baptist Church, 1999, 1. Brackenhurst Baptist Church was planted in 1974 from a Sunday school that had been started in 1972 by Marlene and Jason van den Heuvel.

<sup>91</sup> Thiessen, Henry C., *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, 255. Note, Using religious language in a thesis may be problematic, but in the case it is quite necessary. Terms such as "conversion," "believed" "turned to God" "repented" "born again" etc. used in the general Christian world simply do not reflect, for many within Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches, their concept of entering into "salvation" through Christ. Being "saved" is a term popularised within their own circles that is used to describe the belief that the individual must (1.) recognize and (2.) confess his or her sinfulness to God in a specific moment and time of prayer. This confession of sin must be a confession of one's overall and general sinfulness, not just a confession of specific sins committed. In connection with this prayer of confessing one's need for personal salvation, i.e. ones total sinful state, the individual must also include in that prayer a confession that he or she (3.) believes that salvation as a gift and provision of God is only possible through the atoning work of Christ, i.e. the death, burial and literal physical resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of all who believe. One is thus, "saved" when God (A.) forgives them of their state of Adamic sinfulness and (B.) regenerates [Titus 3,5] them by the Spirit of God. The believer is, then, also (C.) indwelt by the Spirit [Romans 8,9] and is (D.) placed in (baptized in the Spirit) the body or family of God [1 Corinthians 12,13] and is (E.) sealed with the Spirit [Ephesians 1,13f; 4,30, 2 Corinthians 1,22] guaranteeing the "eternal security" of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This and nothing less than this is "being saved" in the common parlance of most Independent and Fundamental Baptists. In the February 25, 1977 issue of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*, a lead article warned Independent Baptist of the "popularisation" and "deterioration" of traditional Christian terms by experienced oriented Christianity. Of course, there are those with more Calvinistic leanings and some of younger generations who would be more accommodating to the more common usages of evangelicals as regards the language used and the interpretation of their soteriology. (Zimmerman, Wendell, ed. *Baptist Bible Tribune*, Springfield, BBFI, No. 34, February 25, 1977)

the early years. Since 1992, the year of Pastor Butterworth's series of heart attacks and operations, a more efficient ministry has resulted and a stable membership emerged. The 1999 membership was 27 adult members. The average service attendance in 1999 was between 45-50 at the morning services and some 25-30 attending the evening Church Ministries Institute courses. The church has experienced recent growth now that it focuses much of its ministry and outreach around four weekly Bible studies. Their son, Craig Butterworth, also played an important role developing and leading a young adults Bible study. In fact every member of the Butterworth family was committed to assist in church planting.

The church planting and growth methodology used has changed and evolved over the years. Pastor Butterworth points out<sup>2</sup> that due to his wife, Pam having to carry on in secular work, "the church's growth was a lot slower than otherwise would have been the case." In the early 1990s, annual Bible schools, called "Holiday Fun Time," averaged 150 children daily with 300 plus children attending. Due to the pastor's heart problems, his wife having to do secular work and due to a shortage of volunteers to help lead the ministry and programmes the congregation's outreach efforts often struggled. Efforts made to hand out annually over twenty thousand Gospel tracts produced little fruit and the methodology of door to door surveys and home visits used in the late 1980s and early 1990s yielded little success. Pastor Butterworth, like so many pastors trying to adjust to the sociological and cultural changes of the times, revised his philosophy of ministry to a far more relaxed and informal style. Evening services are now held in a more Socratic teaching style using visual aids and concentrating on developing mature Christians who in turn were

trained in reaching out to friends and relatives with the message of God's saving grace.

Pastor Butterworth has always used discipleship as a key method and has encouraged others to offer personal discipleship to new Christians. In later years a number of his congregation assisted in discipling others as well as taking leadership in the congregation. Three of those he disciplined are now serving in full time Christian ministry: missionary Robert Marsh, and pastors Wayne Schmidt and Robert Bravery. Pastor Butterworth, like a growing number of the South African Independent Baptists, although personally never disciplined himself, has developed a philosophy of ministry that focuses on personal and small group discipleship<sup>93</sup>. Many of the Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries and pastors have moved away from the more American "pulpit centered" style of pastoral ministry. Discipleship, counselling and mentoring that focus on personal Bible teaching is provided over a period between ten to thirty weeks. These private lessons are designed to train the new Christian in the essential elements of the Christian faith. Matters of doctrine and the Christian spiritual life are discussed from Scriptural texts and the use of "question and answer times" allows for inter-personal interaction. On occasion, these discipleship sessions are for couples or small groups, as well.

The recent integration of discipleship groups and small home study groups is another development not common to the American Independent Baptist and Bible church

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<sup>92</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, – personal interviews and through written questionnaires. 1996-2000. (Interview date, 27-9-98)

<sup>93</sup> Discipleship, though personal discipleship is not a common practice among most of the American Baptist missionaries, the exception would be the General Association of Baptist approved missionary agencies, The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism and the Evangelical Baptist Mission.

philosophy, but is being well received in South Africa. Pastor Butterworth is a leader in many of these developments.

While still a relatively new Christian, Alastair Butterworth accepted the “call of God” to go into the Christian ministry. The decision to go into Christian ministry was made during the time that Stuart Waugh, who was serving as the Interim Pastor of the Community Bible Church, Leondale, was being planted by Independent Faith Missions missionary Mark Grings. He attended the first “Church Ministries Institute” lectures under missionary Mark Grings from October 1977- to April 1981; Alastair and Pam received further encouragement and training from John and Penny Jackson of Evangelical Baptist Mission for one year (1982), and he studied formally for the ministry through Gethsemane Bible College (1981-1985).<sup>94</sup>

Pastor Butterworth served as a senior lecturer, as well as the registrar, at Gethsemane Bible College in later years. He was a founder and one of three pastors who wrote the constitution of the Calvary Bible College (1989-1990), now operating as the night school of Calvary Theological Baptist College. He obtained a Master of Ministries Degree from Baptist Bible Seminary, Clark Summit PA. in May 1995. This course was an extension ministry to South Africa sponsored by the Association of Baptist for World Evangelism in Durban.

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<sup>94</sup> The Gethsemane Bible College was started in January 1981. The first faculty included, Jack Moorman, Lou Finney and Joel Baines with Mark Grings, Roger McCrum, Paul Seger, John Tyner, Sengen Wolford. The college offered non-credited certificates and an unofficial listing of students includes, Christian Workers Certificate (1 year), Peter Thomas, John Doyle; Alan and Marion Mercer; Graduate in Bible (3 years) Pam and Alastair Butterworth, Bill & Nina Meyer. A Bachelor in Bible (5 years) was also offered. Part-time students in the early years included, Linda and Gerhard Van Den Berg, Lynn McIlrae, Flip and Marinda Naude, Judy Finney, Bill and Shenna Esslemont and others. The college closed in 1988 primarily over disputes related to the “King James Only” debates.

Since 1994 Pastor Butterworth has been a leader in the Gauteng Leadership Pool (GLP) an independent, ministry "management group" promoting evangelism and church growth through a process of "learning teams." He is also the Director and Principal of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute a local church based non-formal Bible College dedicated to training leaders for the local independent churches of the Johannesburg region.

Freeway Park, like most Independent Baptist Churches supports a number of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church missionary efforts. The following missionaries have been supported in prayer and finances for a number of years by this church: Alex Couper, ministering in Newcastle, Natal and sent out by Kempton Park Bible Church; Graham Peacock, ministering in Hillcrest, Natal; Pieter Nell, ministering in the Fundamental Baptist Church of Eldorado Park; Robert Marsh - Democratic Republic of the Congo sent out by the Community Baptist Church of Leondale and the Independent Faith Mission, Greensboro, N.C., USA. Further support is given to Warren Hoffman ministering in Zambia and sent out from Community Bible Church, Leondale. This church also has a missionary interest in the ministry of Brother Jimmy Shields who serves with the Tsonga people near Kruger National Park. He is sent out from Brackenhurst Baptist Church, Gauteng.

Another issue highlighted by the ministry of Pastor Butterworth is the problem faced by some of the South African Bible Colleges that have been established by Independent Baptist missionaries. This is relatively easy to identify. Many of the colleges were established around American theological and educational principles.



There is a tendency for these institutions to fall short in training their students for the South African context. Butterworth shares some of the related complications:

I quickly found that a lot of what I had been taught - especially relating to pastoral ministry and the process of planting a new church had to be reworked into a South African context.

I ... found it difficult to conform to what American missionaries thought I should do (from their context or vantage point).

I am a fundamentalist by conviction and have stood for what I believe to be true Biblical doctrine - even when some of the Americans who taught me the value of fundamentalism did not themselves remain faithful to these fundamental principles.

With these lessons behind him, Butterworth has been at the forefront of developing the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute and making every effort to see that the future training offered to pastor and missionary trainees was relevant to the culture and context of the South African Independent Baptist churches.

### **3.3.2.3 Kempton Park and Sandton.**

#### **The Bible churches of Paul and Joan Seger.**

Church Planting missionaries are a key factor in the evangelistic thrust of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. Paul and Joan Seger are classic examples of Church planters establishing a beachhead for a Bible-preaching, soul-winning fundamentalist movement. Paul Seger was born March 31, 1951 to parents serving as missionaries with Sudan Interior Mission in Nigeria. Paul grew up going to boarding school, a common situation for missionary children in many countries. His wife, Pamela Joan, was the daughter of Frank and Betty Davis missionaries to Malawi and Rhodesia. They met at the Appalachian Bible Institute<sup>95</sup> in America and after

<sup>95</sup> Appalachian Bible Institute, located in West Virginia, is an Independent and Fundamental Bible Church training centre. It is oriented toward Bible churches but also has close ties to the Independent Baptists. This college is a

graduation went on to study further at Faith Baptist Bible College in Ankeny, Iowa. They have two children, Ryan and Joanna. Their home church is Community Baptist Church in Reidsville, N.C. where Paul served as assistant pastor under pastor Jim Dotson until joining WEF<sup>96</sup> to serve as church planting missionaries in South Africa.

Teamwork has always been at the core of the Segers' ministry. Their attitude toward team ministry is an outstanding example of the new approach of missionary teams and co-partnerships with South African spiritual leaders. This new team/partnership as a church planting philosophy and missionary outreach methodology is prominent among the Independents today. The young couple spent their first six months as missionaries in Berlin, Germany, filling in for a missionary on "furlough" and while they were waiting for their visas for entry into South Africa. Another American missionary couple, Tom & Marilyn<sup>97</sup> Wilson joined Paul and Joan and formed one of the first ministry teams to be established by independent and Fundamental missionaries in Southern Africa. Their first, team styled, church-planting project was the Natal, Newcastle Bible Church.

When the Segers returned from their United States furlough in 1980 they moved to Kempton Park to take over the ministry which Frank Davis (BMW) had started while they were overseas. Upon the Segers return, Frank and Betty went to Newcastle,

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product of the 1930's American fundamentalists debates and the rise of the American Bible College movement, both of value in motivating and training the many thousands of missionaries sent and being sent by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches of America.

<sup>96</sup> WEF was later amalgamated with MCI and two other independent and fundamentalist missionary agencies to become the Biblical Ministries Worldwide.

<sup>97</sup> Jack Davis, Marilyn Wilson's father, recruited both couples. Jack had served in Natal with the Africa Evangelical Mission in earlier years, but for over ten year had promoted fundamentalists missionary outreach as a voice representing and recruiting couples for missionary service in every part of the world.

Natal to encourage the development of the ministry there. Seger served in Kempton Park until 1992 at which time the South African and Church Ministries Institute Student-pastor, Peter Thomas,<sup>98</sup> accepted the call as the permanent pastor of the Kempton Park Bible Church. During the twelve years of ministry in Kempton Park Seger led three building projects and trained two men for the pastorate (Dennis Emerton and Peter Thomas). Of course, other students were involved in the Church Ministries Institute and would later serve in a number of capacities.

In 1987 Seger started planting the Sandton Bible Church while finishing his ministry at the Kempton Park Bible Church. In addition he had other leadership responsibilities such as teaching in the Church Ministries Institute and serving as the Field Leader with Biblical Ministries Worldwide. The broad level of responsibilities was possible due to the fact that C.M.I. student-pastor Peter Thomas was successfully taking increased responsibility for the Kempton Park Bible Church's ministry. Pastor Seger officially "pastored" both churches until he left Kempton for full time ministry with Sandton Bible Church in 1992. The team ministry and partnership spirit of these two families has been a great example and source of motivation for many others.

The Sandton Bible Church first met in the Rivonia Hall, a community centre and they met there until the church started meeting in their home in 1992. Upon reaching a regular attendance of 50 the new congregation moved to Norscot Manor which is another community centre and met there until the church completed its own building in 1993. Seger left Sandton on November 1993 to move to the United States to begin

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<sup>98</sup> South African pastor, Peter and Kathy Thomas, are pioneering a new ministry with many exciting developments. Regretfully, as in the case of Alan & Deanna Heathcote and some other BMW missionaries, could not be featured

ministry as the Director of Biblical Ministries Worldwide with headquarters in Atlanta, Ga. USA.<sup>99</sup>

The Sandton Bible Church was continued by Dennis Chapmon (1991 - to the present). The young congregation was well disciplined and poised for ministry growth and had approximately thirty people in attendance in 1992 when Dennis Chapmon became the church-planting pastor. From 1996, the ministry was also co-pastored by Dave Brown who made many valuable contributions to the development of the congregation's spiritual life and to the advancement of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute. Pastor Brown's ministry (1996 - 1998) added to the overall concept of "Missionary Partnership and Teamwork"<sup>100</sup> by providing organisational strength and strategic planning that set a new standard and vision for master planning as a tool to better minister to a contemporary society. The church purchased land and completed phase one of their building programme in Douglasdale by September 1994.

Strategically the church now had visibility and a sense of stability in the community. Within three years the church grew to 125 in Sunday morning worship attendances. The church saved funds for phase two of their building programme that included a larger sanctuary and additional Sunday school rooms and office space. This building programme was completed in early 2001.<sup>101</sup> The Pastoral Team / Elders of the congregation include: Rob (Ros) Warren, Brian (Joan) Gouws, Wayne (Lindy) Gordon. Other leadership includes Mike and Lydia Lomas, Rob Cranna, and Franz Lombard. Internships: Graeme McKibbin; Garth, Daniel Warren.

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due to lack of original source material. The East Rand ministry these couples are developing is yet another new church planting approach and deserves attention in the future..

<sup>99</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires. 1996-2000. (Seger, Paul, BMW, 14-04-97)

The Sandton Bible church was, like most similar Biblical Ministries Worldwide outreaches, a team effort. Paul Seger planted the ministry in 1988, but in addition to Paul, his wife Joan, and other BMW missionaries have assisted with the church at various stages of its growth. These supportive BMW ministers include: Dale Fries, Alan Heathcote, Don Smith, and during 1996-1998 David and Karin Brown served with Dennis and Joanna Chapmon in the ministry. The church's pastoral leadership has taken a leading role in the Gauteng Leadership Pool,<sup>100</sup> evangelism, discipleship, strategic planning and leadership training and other supportive ministries with other Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches.

Chapmon's special pastoral skills are especially along the lines of team building,<sup>103</sup> encouragement, and teaching. He and his wife, Joanna, place a high priority on discipleship, as did the Segers, and subsequently, this has a major emphasis in the church. The Gauteng Church Ministries Institute programme for training leadership and pastors is also integral to the church's future. The congregation has been divided into "caring groups" and an Elder/Deacon team is responsible for caring for these families. Sandton Bible Church supports missionaries in both prayer and finances. The churches missionaries include: Alex and Gloria Couper in the Madadeni Bible Church in Natal; Bill and Nina Meyer in the Cape; and Peter Paul John in Zimbabwe. The church is currently in a planned and strategic phase, transitioning between

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<sup>100</sup> Bell, C. R., *Managers as Mentors*, San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996, xi, xvii., 112,133.

<sup>101</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000.* (Chapmon, Dennis & Joanna, 19-11-99.)

<sup>102</sup> Senge, Peter, *The Fifth Discipline—The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, New York, Currency Doubleday, 1990, Section II. (Also See Thesis Appendix III – Learning Teams (29-12-99/ M.S. Blackwell Sr.)

<sup>103</sup> Gungel, K. O. & Wilhoit, J. C., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1997, 125,126.

Chapmon's church planting missionary leadership and the new Church Ministries Institute trained national leadership.

### **3. 3. 2. 4 Brackenhurst Baptist Church, from Sunday school to full ministry.**

In 1972, when Marlene and Jason van den Heuvel moved to the Brackenhurst area and began a Sunday School and Bible study. Events would lead to what would become a third style of Independent Fundamental Baptist church planting, i.e. the providential direction of a Christian family's concern for their neighbours' spiritual well-being, and a willingness to use one's own home to make a change in their community. The foundation was laid for another Independent Fundamental Baptist Church.<sup>104</sup>

In late 1974 and early 1975 Baptist International Mission, Inc. (BIMI) missionary Jack Moorman was asked to teach and then hold services to preach for the little group. In a short time, progress was made and the decision to move ahead and plant a church was taken. The ministry was organised and was making good progress when Pastor Moorman decided to move to England to minister there.

In 1976 a piece of land was purchased from the Baptist Union of Southern Africa for the purpose of building the church's first building. Then the Moormans moved to England from 1978 to 1985, but the church continued to grow, though more slowly. The Moormans returned and ministered once again at Brackenhurst during 1986 and

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<sup>104</sup> Van Meter, D., *A Brief History of our Church*, Gauteng, Brackenhurst Baptist Church, 1999, 1. Brackenhurst Baptist Church was planted in 1974 from a Sunday School that had been started in 1972 by Marlene and Jason van den Heuvel.

1987, returning to England once more in 1988. By this time John Grant, a deacon, was called to pastor the ministry until 1993.

The Brackenhurst Baptist Church has had an evangelistic and missionary outreach through its Bible publishing ministry, its involvement in the Gethsemane Bible College and being...

... instrumental in starting four other Independent Baptist Churches in the Gauteng region: Freeway Park Baptist, New South Baptist, Naturena Baptist<sup>105</sup> and Kingsway Baptist Churches. They are now active in advancing a fifth branch church planting ministry in Rustenburg.<sup>106</sup>

In 1993 the church called Pastor Doug Van Meter, an American Independent Baptist missionary, to serve as their pastor. However, Van Meter had only intended to stay for a few years, and the obvious blessing of the Lord on his ministry at Brackenhurst led to him emigrate permanently to South Africa. In 1995 Gary van den Heuvel, son of the founding family – Jason van den Heuvel – returned from Bible college in the United States to become the church's assistant pastor.

In 1997 Dan Crichton, joined the church as a missionary pastor and now serves as the third person on the pastoral staff and is "on loan" to the Rustenburg "branch" ministry. The church has a membership of over 150 and average attendances of over 225.

The philosophy of ministry of a church changes over the years. A spiritually maturing congregation needs that change, pastoral ministries that offer different strengths, but

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<sup>105</sup> Bruce Matthew, a graduate of Calvary Baptist Theological College actively travels the 450 kilometres to assist Pastor Godfrey Ngonane in Mashamba.

for the Independent Fundamental Baptists the focus on a simple and clear presentation of the Gospel and an emphasis on standing true to the fundamental truths of God's Word are central to such a church's very being. During discussions with Van Meter, and his team of assistant pastors, deacons and lay leaders and workers, it was made quite clear to me that the church's desire to proclaim the simple Gospel message remains the primary goal.

Although committed to the Gospel, Brackenhurst's leaders and congregation are equally committed to a rather special discipleship ministry. Rooted in Steve Miller's 1994 ministry and based on Jeff Adam's, pastor of the Kansas City Baptist Temple, discipleship programme, Brackenhurst is a leader in a discipleship-training ministry that engulfs all who attend the church. First, there is a discipleship that is required of every member, then second, there is a one year family study that is designed to lead the whole family into a more effective Christian experience.

Brackenhurst provides a further level of discipleship: the Shepherd's School. This ministry is "character centred" in philosophy and has a faculty comprised of the church's three pastors. The requirement for this course of study is interesting to consider: matric must be completed, a reasonable level of practical ministry experience is required and all the other levels of discipleship courses must have been successful completed. They prefer students who have already completed a secular university degree before coming to their Shepherds School ministry.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Van Meter, D., *A Brief History of our Church*, Gauteng, Brackenhurst Baptist Church, 1999, 1

<sup>107</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, 1996-2000. (Doug Van Meter, Brackenhurst 15-04-99.)



Brackenhurst Baptist's congregation should be remembered for their practical commitment to and love for God's Word. As early as 1982, they were printing Bibles, Bible portions under the name of the Fundamental Bible Press. Since 1996, their *Word to the World Publishers* has carried this ministry forward into a multiple language Bible and Bible portions printing ministry. Van Meter was experienced in a previous ministry known as "Bearing Precious Seed" a ministry of his American home church, the First Baptist Church of Milford, Ohio. The current ministry is funded and operated by the Brackenhurst congregation. Additional missionary financial gifts come from a number of other Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in South Africa.

### 3. 3. 2. 5 Gauteng Suburbs.

#### **Testimonies to Independent Baptist cooperation.**

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are by nature of their strict autonomy not a people easily led to great levels of cooperative activity. This seeming lack of open cooperation is not extraordinary, not at least, if one is referring to formal controls, associational memberships and inter-church organisational structures. On the other hand, and possibly due to the influence of South Africa's oldest congregation – Brackenhurst Baptist Church – the level of cooperation, informal as it is, is a historical reality. Though the following observation is just a glimpse into this rather unusual occurrence, it is certainly heartening. The story is an account of many years of a team ministry and networking among the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches and missionaries in these Southern Metro-Johannesburg Suburbs

The various linkages and relationships may be somewhat confusing, as they tend to intertwine and weave a most complicated informal strategy. Let us begin by looking at one congregation, the New South Baptist Church, established by Brackenhurst Baptist Church in 1985, pastored by the father, John, and then the son, Keith Doyle.<sup>108</sup> The church is currently pastored<sup>109</sup> by Wayne Schmidt.<sup>110</sup> Schmidt is the first to admit that his church... “has been through rough times.”

When Pastor Schmidt came as the pastor of New South Baptist the church had, like many other churches, been literally forced by events into the difficult experience of having to apply “church discipline” to a brother that had been loved and respected for years. This had led to the church experiencing a congregational “split,” from which it seemed they would “barely recover,” but Pastor Schmidt’s motto is:

Security is not in the absence of danger, but the presence of God, no matter what the danger.<sup>111</sup>

New South Baptist church is doing much better and the young pastor reports that:

All in all the Lord is using the church to grow myself day by day. Recently one of my member’s mother was saved by the Lord, and soon we will be having a baptism service for a few others, this is exciting for me.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The young pastor, Keith Doyle was quite open about his “second generation” willingness to use the new church approaches of Bill Hybel’s Willow Creek Church & Rick Warren’s Saddleback Southern Baptist Church. Reference, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1995. The Purpose-Driven paradigm teaches, “Lord, help me to do what you are blessing and not how can we build...but what is keeping our church from growing.” (15); Church Health, not church growth are central (17) and everything should seem new – as if you are ignorant of church history (19). Beware of too many activists – with their “Major on Majors.” Reinforce your vision regularly – it fades easily (118). Set-out to balance a system and structure of Warren’s “five purposes” (122) always remembering that a single purpose - church is dangerous (124-125). The focus must be “Outside -In” (140) and the pastor must learn to “exegete his community” – rather than just exegeting his Bible (155, 157, 160).

<sup>109</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, – personal interviews and through written questionnaires. 15-4-1999. The previous pastor, Keith Doyle pastored from 1992 through 1999. He reported attendances and ministry phases as follows, 1992 – Church Building Construction, attendance averages 92; 1993 Christian School building project, attendance averages 93; 1996 Extension of Christian School facilities for pre-primary; 1997 Attendance averages, 70; 1998, attendance averages, 130; 1999 attendance averages, 150. He reported the church’s one weakness was balancing the school and church ministries and saw it as a goal of his ministry..

<sup>110</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, e-mail correspondence between January and June 2001. June 14, 2001

<sup>111</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, June 14, 2001.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, June 14, 2001

The intertwining and weaving of relationships seems to start and end on this very subject: evangelism. All of these Christians have one common and very obvious thread running through their inter-relationships and Christian spirit of unity ... it is a radical commitment to what they would refer to as *winning souls for Christ*. Schmidt's own link would first begin with his mother, Daphne and dad, Leonard, who raised him as a committed fundamentalist. His father, Leonard, is a pastor of the Community Bible Church in Leondale founded by missionary Mark Grings (IFM). Missionary Grings and his co-workers like Leonard Schmidt, and so many others over the years, have created a ministry that has served as a veritable "green house," or nursery, for raising "plants" that have grown and spread throughout South Africa for twenty-five years.

Schmidt's "trail of committed soul-winning friendships" should include many friends, area pastors, missionaries and co-workers.<sup>113</sup> Many of these people are the core of independent fundamentalism in the Southern suburbs and they span more than fifteen to twenty-five years of ministry. But the "trail of ... soul-winning friendships" really begins at the 1976 Leondale children's "Good News Clubs" taught by missionary Wyla Grings. These children's clubs were the virtual spiritual beginning point for Wayne Schmidt, Robert Marsh<sup>114</sup> and many others. Christian camping programmes, youth groups, Christian elementary and high school educations, the Gethsemane and Calvary Bible Colleges<sup>115</sup> plus the Evening School of the Bible all

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<sup>113</sup> A random sampling of some public -- e-mail listed -- friendships. Trevor Bell; Tom Wilson; Tom Wilmoth; Spud Willoughby; Roger McCrum; Robert Marsh; Peter Thomas; Peter Swanepoel; Mike Neilson; Mark Grings; Kevin Brosnan; Kenneth Eubanks; Keith Doyle; John Grant; Joel Bain; Henry Davis; Gavin van Zutphen; Gary vd Heuvel and there are so many others who pray for and encourage this young pastor of New South Baptist Church.

<sup>114</sup> Robert and Esther Marsh are currently serving as Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and are supported as Independent Faith Missions (IFM) Greensboro, N.C. and through the gifts of many independent fundamental churches of South Africa.

<sup>115</sup> Some have gone to the United States for their studies, i.e. Keith Doyle and Gary van den Heuvel, among others.

play key roles in the development of the intertwined relationships of the Southern suburbs independent fundamentalists. Another key to their close relationships is their tradition of weekly evangelistic training and “visitation programmes” – the central ingredients in their aggressive “soul winning” efforts. Discipleship, once completely informal has now taken root as a formal ministry and part of most of these Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches overall programme.

As a postscript to these many Southern Johannesburg suburban churches, missionaries and the young second generation pastors – their unity must *not* be seen as having been gained without cost to others. Regretfully there have been years of arguing and though they all vary in their viewpoints regarding the King James Version<sup>116</sup>, this region has generally been the core region for churches emphasising, if not requiring<sup>117</sup>, the use of the King James Version in their ministries. Though some of this is moderating at this stage, the issues of “double inspiration<sup>118</sup>” for the KJV and the TR have caused much division and harsh attacks on other fellow independent fundamentalists<sup>119</sup> that have not agreed with these, sometimes - quite extreme, views. It is a distressing and poor testimony for the independent fundamentalist movement to have wasted so much time, money, energy and friendships on arguments like the King James Version’s potential “inspiration.”

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<sup>116</sup> Pickering, E. D., Baptist Principles vs. Interdenominationalism, Clarks Summit, Baptist Bible College & School of Theology Publications, 1976, 21-30 (Eclecticism).

<sup>117</sup> Ankerberg, J., and Weldon, J., The Facts on the King James Only Debate, Eugene, Harvest House Publishers, 1996, 41-42.

<sup>118</sup> White, J., The King James Only Controversy. Can you Trust the Modern Translations, Minneapolis, Bethany House Publishers, 1995, 1-5.

<sup>119</sup> Grisanti, M., A., ed., The Bible Version Debate, The Perspective of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, C.B.T.S. Publications, 1997, 6, 10 – “Fundamentalist are not necessarily King James Only.”

Other issues<sup>120</sup> such as “Lordship Salvation<sup>121</sup>” or even many lesser-understood problems related to Calvinism<sup>122</sup> have surfaced through the Calvary Baptist Theological College, Sunny Ridge and through the Calvary Baptist Church in which it meets for classes. The privilege, possibly even the right, to disagree is not in question and Independent Fundamental Baptists have fought many a battle on that basis. The question is: are American missionaries going to import every abstract and unrelated argument known in America, and then make it an issue, a test of faith and / or fellowship here in South Africa? It is especially strange when different Independent Baptist missionaries separate from each other over issues raised on the “field” while most of them are financially supported by many of the same supporting American churches. The good news is that the Good News is still a central theme – even dominating theme has kept and is keeping these American missionaries and their churches “on course” most of the time.

One example of the good focus on the Gospel is the outreach ministry from the Calvary church, college and others who have supported their evangelistic and church planting missionary projects. Pastors Kevin Brosnan (BWM) and Louis Martuneac, though pastoring a small church of less than fifty and faithfully serving in an even smaller Bible College setting, have sent out five Church planters. They report the following as regards these five ministers and their ministries: <sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Martuneac, L., *Biblical Answers to Lordship Salvation*, Gauteng, Calvary Baptist Theological College, 1998.

<sup>121</sup> MacArthur, J.F., Jr., *The Gospel According to Jesus*, Grand Rapids, Academie Books, 1988.

<sup>122</sup> Martuneac, L., *Biblical Answers to Calvinism*, Gauteng, Calvary Baptist Theological College, 1998.

<sup>123</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, – personal interviews (October 1998).

1. Martha and Godfrey Ngomane. Finished a Three year course called the *Graduate of Bible Certificate*. He returned to his home village in 1995. Members of Calvary Baptist Church ordained Brother Ngomane and 147 people attended with an "amazing outpouring of love shown by all. Bruce Matthew (Naturene), also a graduate of Calvary Baptist Theological College actively travelled the 450 kilometres to assist Pastor Godfrey Ngomane in Mashamba. This ministry was transferred to Samuel, who is a chief of five villages.
2. Gavin Liechan, four year course, known as a *Bachelor of Theology Degree*, 11-1996. Moved to Port Elizabeth to serve at Faith Baptist Church with missionary Church planters Vince Kobosh and Tom Wilmoth.
3. Dean Verwey, Pastor Grace Baptist Church, Krugersdorp, having merged with another congregation has also developed a Christian School.
4. Deogratias Pika, Democratic Republic of Congo, graduated in 1997 with a B.Th. from Calvary Baptist Theological College. He ministered with Bruce Matthews for one year in Naturene and then started a ministry in Lenasia in early 1998. Has a long-term goal to return to the Congo.
5. Jose' Tshemba, Democratic Republic of Congo, a B. Theology student at C.B.T.S. Member of New South Baptist Church.

There are also encouraging signs of greater moderation and a spirit of patience and love growing on the Southside of Johannesburg. The pastor that reported this encouraging news added:

For the sake and testimony of Christianity and Christ, one can but hope that this encouraging moderation will continue to flourish.<sup>124</sup>

### 3. 3. 2. 6 Pretoria and Primrose.

#### **Congregations formed from Biblical convictions.**

Churches are often started as branch efforts or due to strategic missionary planning, but the Grace Fellowship in Pretoria serves as a fourth style of Independent church

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<sup>124</sup> He shall remain anonymous.

planting approach, i.e. one created from a purely doctrinal sense of conviction and responsibility. The congregation began holding services in September 1993 under the direction of Brahm Hattingh. Formerly a Methodist youth pastor, Hattingh decided to begin a new church in Pretoria after coming to the conclusion that much of his previous practice and theology had been unbiblical. Instrumental in guiding Hattingh's thinking at this time was Patrick Howell, a missionary from Grace Community Church in the Los Angeles area, USA. John MacArthur's famous church and radio ministry also had a significant influence on this new church planting effort.

Joel James assumed the preaching and pastoral duties of Grace Fellowship in February 1995. After three years of ministry under James, the church enjoyed good growth and a Sunday morning attendance of over 80 people. One of the significant ministries of Grace Fellowship is the South African Shepherds' Conference, an annual church leadership conference held in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. One of the long-term goals of Grace Fellowship is to start a training school to prepare South African men for pastoral ministry. This church naturally has a close relationship to the Primrose Grace Community church, though they are both fully Independent Bible Churches in their own right.<sup>125</sup>

The Primrose Grace Community Church is an additional example of a church born from Biblical convictions. The church was begun in 1992 by a small group of Christians that have themselves explained that they found themselves disillusioned with the reckless disregard of God's truth by many churches.<sup>126</sup> With just seven people attending the first worship service, the founding church planters, Franklin

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<sup>125</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (James, Joel. Grace Fellowship, 6-01-98.)

Louw, Willie Proudfoot, and René van Aardt began services in a private residence.

They were bound together by a common love for God's Word and a desire to be taught it with accuracy. With the assistance of the sermon-tapes of John MacArthur, of Grace Community Church in California, the new congregation grew towards the establishment of an autonomous church in 1993.

Like other new Independent Bible Churches surfacing throughout South African, the American connection was obvious, but the new congregation's stronger Calvinistic emphasis, stronger at least than the average congregation being born from a more evangelistic centre point, gave this congregation more of its own identity.

A brief history of the church must include the dedication of its first church building in 1993; the 1994 attendance of twenty-five and the installation of its first pastor, Dawie Hyman in 1996. Hyman was a graduate from The Master's Seminary, a seminary directly connected to MacArthur's Grace Church.<sup>127</sup> In 1998, the church added a small in-house Bible School that has been most effective. The church's first pastor wrote:

The heritage of Grace church is its commitment to God alone and His Word alone, in contrast to the secularising of the church and the disregard for God's Word by the vast majority of churches in our day.<sup>128</sup>

Since 1999 Pastor Brian Biedebach has helped the congregation to appreciate this genuine heritage, the heritage of all Bible-believing and practicing congregations.

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<sup>126</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, 1996-2000. (Hyman, Dawie, 29-01-1998.)

<sup>127</sup> The Grace Community Church is a member of the IFCA, the Independent Fundamental Churches of America.

<sup>128</sup> Hyman, D., *Questionnaires*, 29-01-1998, 2.



The church's distinctives are in keeping with other fundamentalist churches being planted in South Africa though the term conservative might describe the congregation better than fundamentalist.<sup>129</sup>

Grace Christian Church of Primrose is clearly committed to a serious or focused Biblical worship of God, as revealed in the Scriptures. They are committed to God's Word in numerous distinctive ways and Hyman's comments on the issue of Biblical worship clearly emphasise the distinctive elements:

Whereas worship is our ultimate priority, preaching, teaching and applying Scriptures is our practical priority. We know that the Scriptures alone thoroughly equip God's people for a God-honouring life (2 Tim 3:16-17). In all we do - in evangelism, prayer, singing and living for God, we seek to know God's will through responsible study and sober application (2 Tim 2:15) of Scriptures. How else will one truly glorify God? Our motto is: *If the Bible says it, we do it. If the Bible does not, we do not.*<sup>130</sup>

This congregation like all Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church congregations has a special and narrow commitment to the church as the Body of Christ. They consider the local church as the primary instrument through which God's work is done. They are therefore peculiarly and particularly committed to the growth, nurturing and protection of the local church. They do not belong to a denomination, as they are an Independent Bible church and thus are committed to God's programme as outlined in the Scriptures. As a worshipping community of believers, this type of church is especially committed to equipping God's people in order to enable all to be competent for Christian ministry (Eph 4:11-13). This ministry involves practical care and love for all people, including evangelising the lost by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 3

### 3. 3. 2. 7 ABWE Durban and Kwa-Zulu Natal regions:

#### (1. ) Metropolitan Durban

The history of the South African A.B.W.E. church planting ministry begins at the 1980 Candidate School in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, United States of America. Two couples, Marc & Judie Blackwell and Dale and Karen Marshfield met at this gathering of candidates and resolved, by God's grace, to form a team that would lead to many future church-planting ministries in South Africa.

#### (1.1) Westville-North: The transitions of fundamentalism.

This ministry represents a fifth style of Church planting among the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. This focus was on training leaders and using pastor-trainees at the heart of the church planting process. The Blackwell's arrived in Westville in January 1981 and began their work of surveying, visitation and discipleship. The Church Ministries Institute was opened with Henry and Shirley Davis as the first pastor trainee couple. A small number of lay leaders and potential pastoral students attended in the first years. The Marshfield's arrived in June 1982. The Westville-North, Community Baptist Church was a ABWE Team effort by these two couples who worked together until early 1984.

A summary of the first church planted at Westville North should begin with an account of the many stages of preparation for team ministry. In 1981, Marc and Judie Blackwell, Sr. started the first ABWE church plant in South Africa, the Community Baptist Church of Westville. The preparatory work necessarily includes taking the steps to carry out a regional survey and the related demographic studies. The initial stages also included preparation of materials, training courses and carrying out the

simple plans and activities that would open doors to evangelistic outreach. This strategy and philosophy of "Relationship Evangelism" called for careful and thoughtful friendship building. Home Bible studies or "Growth Groups" were initiated and the project started. When Dale and Karen Marshfield joined the Blackwell's ABWE in 1982, two years of team-effort would begin. This team effort would lead to a good level of progress. Souls were saved, discipleship opportunities were taken whenever possible. The basic programmes necessary for starting worship services and the supportive ministries for church planting were undertaken.

ABWE missionaries Walt and Lois Anderson also joined in the work in Westville from 1986 to 1987. The church was officially organized and the congregation called CMI pastor-trainees, Richard and Ann Mondon to pastor and lead the congregation from 1987. Due to financial pressures the Mondons felt they must resign the pastorate in 1989. Richard and Ann continued to serve as leaders in the church over the years to come, but the church would ask to be placed back under the umbrella of the Natal Field Council of ABWE. During 1991, the church called South African/ABWE evangelist and church planters Rob and Rebecca Elkington. During the Elkington's ministry, ABWE short term missionary Michelle Hammaker joined them from 1993 to 1995. ABWE missionaries Bobby and Sara Hile ministered with the Elkingtons from 1994 to 1998. ABWE missionaries Jim and Diane Lytle also ministered at Community Baptist from 1995 to 1997. The Elkingtons continued to minister at Community until 1998 when they accepted the call to a pastorate in Canada.

The church's character and membership had gone through a complete transition and had taken on a very new personality and image. The community had likewise undergone major cultural changes and had to "reformat" their ministry to effectively meet the new and exciting challenges. After returning from furlough in 1998 ABWE missionaries Steve and Julie Thompson started pastoring the Community Baptist Church of Westville and continue there to this day.<sup>131</sup>

Returning to the planting of the Westville North Community Baptist Church one can observe how a CMI student can be effectively trained "on-site." In 1981 Henry and Shirley Davis enrolled in the Church Ministries Institute in Natal. The institute was just being developed by missionary Marc Blackwell, Sr. -- who had moved from the Independent Faith Mission and a Rhodesian ministry to be re-commissioned under the Association of Baptist for World Evangelism to begin church planting in South Africa. Stuart D. Waugh, a Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) had just been appointed under the Independent Faith Mission to plant churches in Southern Africa<sup>132</sup> and joined Marc Blackwell, Sr. in Durban to develop the new Church Ministries Institute. The CMI curriculum was built around a mixture of formal educational lectures and a modified T.E.E.<sup>133</sup> concept. Non-formal or Socratic style of teaching was used in some of the class situations and at this time was considered by most to be quite unusual or even questionable.

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<sup>131</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 9 Dec 1999, Steve & Julie Thompson. (Davis)

<sup>132</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2001, (Daniels, Waugh, Peacocke) After planting the New Germany Baptist and the Hillside Baptist churches, the Waughs relocated to Zimbabwe to carry on missionary church planting there.

<sup>133</sup> Theological Education by Extension course from Kenya and sourced through Bob Trout, ABWE Missionaries Colombia were used as a partial model and were modified for use in the more urban or suburban social situation facing these missionaries.

The changing definition of fundamentalism and separatism was also a pressure for these young missionaries and new congregations. Fundamentalism was, like the American culture itself, undergoing transition and the effect of this on “overseas” ministry and on South African perspectives would be felt by the Church planters and congregations alike. The Charismatic movement was having a direct influence on worldwide Christianity. The doctrinal norms of literal and dispensational Bible interpretation, like the doctrine of separatism – a core issue of fundamentalism, were being challenged and questioned. Traditional Independent Fundamental Baptist worship styles, evangelistic methods for outreach and congregational and personal Christian music standards were all being questioned within fundamentalists circles. The American church was confused and divided and the South African church was soon to face the same challenges.

The Westville church started with home Bible Studies or Growth Groups and discipleship classes. The first such group was in the home of Paddy Fitzpatrick in Durban. The early classes of the Church Ministries Institute were also located in private residential home settings. These humble settings were in the mind of the founders of the Institute, “the genius” of the plan – since no central campus would be required, the training would be personal, somewhat like that of Christ Himself, and it would be affordable and available.<sup>134</sup> The congregation moved to the Westville-North Library & Community facilities and growth was slow but steady. Youth programmes were begun, Bible studies expanded to new homes and the congregation began to take form. Property was purchased and a “branch” ministry in Northdene strategised.

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<sup>134</sup> The Handbook, The Church Ministries Institute, Westville North and Germiston, Natal, 1981.

Additional ABWE missionaries arrived and they were welcomed, given orientation, practical support and all possible encouragement in carrying-out the Natal Field Council's Strategy. Missionaries serving with other agencies such as IFM , EBM and BBF also joined in the church planting effort in Natal. The progress was encouraging to all concerned.

At first the Church Ministries Institute's classes moved back and forth between the two suburbs where the first two newly planted congregations had their focus. The New Germany Baptist Church of Stuart Waugh (IFM) and the Westville North, Community Baptist Church – both of which were in reality, at this stage, only “house churches” and they had no more than fifteen or twenty adults in attendance. The Church Ministries Institute comprised only a handful of students with a most simple curriculum and teaching plan.

An additional development took place as Pastor George Moodley led his Reservoir Hills Independent Baptist Indian congregation to reconstitute, and began cooperating with the Natal ABWE evangelism and church planting strategy. His major role added a new perspective to the ABWE Durban ministry focus and led to exciting ministry opportunities among the Indian community.

The Community Baptist Church<sup>135</sup> became an autonomous congregation at its organisational meeting on the 2 August 1987 and would be ABWE's first fully autonomous and indigenous organised church. The use of strategic planning, team ministry, national partnership teams, local church pastoral training programmes and

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<sup>135</sup> “The Church Planting Ministry of Marc & Judie Blackwell, Sr. from 1967 through 2000,” Unpublished.

an emphasis on Christian counselling by American Church planters represents a fourth style of church planting to be used by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in Southern Africa.

### **(1.2) Queensburgh**

In early 1983 student-pastor Henry Davis, with ABWE missionaries D. Marshfield and M. Blackwell formed a special Church Planting team relationship around the Westville Community Baptist Church's plans for a new branch effort in Queensburgh. By April 1983, it was decided to change the congregation from its "branch" status, to a more independent status. Church Ministries Institute students, Henry and Shirley Davis, would carry out the primary responsibilities of planting the church and would be mentored and assisted by the two missionaries, Blackwell and Marshfield.

Under the leadership of South African student-pastor Henry Davis and with the support and help of his wife, Shirley, Grace Baptist Church of Queensburgh was founded.<sup>136</sup> From the beginning, student-pastor Henry Davis was encouraged to take the most possible visible role. Davis would preach in all of the morning worship services and would be assisted in pastoral counselling by Marc Blackwell and pastoral ministry by Dale Marshfield. The two missionaries would only preach on Sunday evening or Wednesday night services. Dave and Julie Rudolph arrived in 1986 and spent a year of orientation at Grace, and assisted the ministry as well, before moving to minister in Cape Town. Rob Elkington was training through the CMI – Church Ministries Institute as a full time student-pastor and member of Grace Baptist Church in 1987. The church was officially organized in 1990. ABWE missionary Beth Kuhar

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<sup>136</sup> Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000 (Davis).

joined the Davises in 1992 and resigned in 1998 when she married. ABWE missionaries Dave and Julie Zentz also joined the Davises in 1995 and resigned in 1996. ABWE missionaries Henry and Janet Houk joined the ministry team at Grace in 1999 to open the doors to a Zulu ministry.

Both Shirley and Henry were saved under the ministry watchcare of Independent Faith Missionary, Mark Grings, in 1976. The couple trained in the division of the Rhodesian Pastors Training Institute (1978- 80) operated by Marc Blackwell, Sr. in cooperation with the Grings' ministry in Leondale, Tvl. Then with the opening of the Church Ministries Institute in Durban the Davis's moved to Durban to study for the independent Baptist ministry their. He graduated in 1985 with a certificate from the Institute and the Bachelor of Theology degree from the University of South Africa. In 1994 Brother Davis completed his work for a Masters of Ministry degree from Baptist Bible Seminary, Clark Summit, Pennsylvania. This degree programme was linked to the Baptist Bible Seminary of Natal and many others have earned their Master's degree in this ministry.

The early spiritual development and growth of the Davis' is in many ways a mirror of other similar pastors and leaders. From 1976 with their conversion in a nearby outdoor theatre where Christian films were being shown by a lay evangelist on the weekends, to the home of Independent Faith Missionary (IFM) Mark Grings and his Home Bible Studies, to a church starting in a private residence's garage in Brackenhurst – the ministry of Independent Baptist and Bible church "church planting" missionaries can be easily observed. As a Bible believing church was being



planted in Leondale, the couple would from the beginning of their spiritual walk have a model to follow.

With the Davis's sincere desire to serve the Lord they left for the "Contact Mission Station" in Walkerville where they came to a point of appreciating their need for formal pastoral training. Though they had no training before the 1978 courses with the Pastors Training Institute with Marc Blackwell, then an Independent Faith Mission missionary, they were witnessing, counselling and doing whatever they could to share the Gospel of Christ with others. This spirit of Christian service is quite common among new converts in any church, but the simple and informal nature of Independent Baptist and Bible churches church-planting ministries seems to capitalise on this spirit and numerous young Christians sense the "call" to Christian service.

Then once the Natal Church Ministries Institute announced its opening in 1981 the Davis family moved to Durban. They joined the Community Baptist Church of Westville, being planted by missionary Marc Blackwell, and began studies under the tutorship of both Marc Blackwell ABWE and Stuart Waugh (IFM). The Westville church was being planted as a team effort of Marc and Judie Blackwell together with the newly arrived ABWE missionaries, Dale and Karen Marshfield ABWE. The Westville congregation and the ABWE missionary team started considering the possibilities of a "branch" ministry as an arm of the Westville-North congregation. The plan was a part of a larger Durban Metropolitan survey and strategy carried out by Blackwell, Marshfield and others – including a number of the students from the new Church Ministries Institute.

The strategy for the new “branch” ministry of Community Baptist Church focused on the suburb of Queensburgh and specifically Northdene. An unused Anglican Church had been discovered during the survey process and this gave birth to the need for an “Emergency Fund” to raise R65000-00 to purchase the property. After major renovations and preparations a borrowed pump organ was made ready and the opening worship service was held on the 1 May 1983. The new strategy was one placing the South Africa student-pastors at the forefront and keeping the American Church planters in a secondary role. Further the plan focused on using a student-pastor to start the ministry as a part of his on-site training. This student-pastor would do all the Sunday morning worship sermons, from the very beginning. The team theorised that if the American missionaries took a “secondary role” this would give the new church the greatest possible amount of indigenous leadership and from the earliest possible stage. However, the team of student-pastor Henry Davis and missionaries Blackwell, Sr., and Marshfield would officially pastor the church while doing their best to keep the focus on the South African student -pastor. The first three families in the new congregation were the Davis, Monks and Funnels.<sup>137</sup> By 1984 attendance was averaging 30 in the morning worship services and 19 children in the S.S Auditorium. The Anglican sanctuary quickly proved to be too small for the growing group and they moved to the church hall.<sup>138</sup> Then, the church extended the Hall to allow an extra 40 seats. The 1989 average Sunday morning adult attendance was 85. On the 28 April 1990 the Grace Baptist Church officially organised as an independent Baptist Church with 71 members. The newly organised congregation

<sup>137</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2001. (Davis) The Funnels were a family with roots in the BMW Richards Bay ministry and they represented the first family to move between the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches by a transfer of membership.

<sup>138</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2001. (Davis) The adult morning attendances were, 1985 - 43; 1986 - 60; 1987 - 68; 1988 - 70.

called Henry Davis as their pastor and the first deacons were: John Bevan, Malcolm Groger, Carlos Esteves, Jorge Soares, and Craig Gove.

1991 – 1992 a matter of church discipline caused attendances to drop to 74 adults, but by 1993 the attendances reached 80 adults in morning worship services. Beth Kuhar, a single Church Planting Assistant with ABWE joined the team. By 1994 attendances were at 105 and in 1995 Dave Zentz arrived as Music Director. The Zentz family served about a year and a half before returning <sup>139</sup>to the USA..

Attendances of the Grace Baptist Church were averaging consistently over 100 and at this stage the church started planning for a new building to seat 250. The 1996 attendance was 112 adults in the am service when the building was completed with the help of an ABWE missionary construction team from the States. The people of Grace Baptist Church raised R105,831-00 and raised a bond for R181,000-00. The Church and the ABWE team labour saved about R160,000-00. The buildings value is about R500,000-00 In 1997 attendance was still over 100 adults in the am service, but another Church discipline issue caused the loss of four families lost and many people were affected. Since 1997 the attendances have exceeded 100 adults in the am service and a 1998 total restructure of lay leadership under the guidance of the pastor led the Grace church into a more effective ministry approach.

A summary profile of this ministry: the Davis's, Henry and his wife Shirley and their three boys: Graham, Gary, and Grant have served the Lord in the Queensburgh Baptist Church since their "student pastor" years as Church Ministries Institute students. They have been among the most successful Church planters in South

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<sup>139</sup> Under church discipline.

Africa. Their ground breaking three-way team style and methodology proved to be especially successful and represents, at least, yet a sixth style of church planting used in South Africa by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches.

### **(1.3) Glen Hills**

Early in 1984 the Mashfields moved to Glen Hills to open the Fellowship Baptist Church. In 1983, a second church was started. the Fellowship Baptist Church of Durban North. From 1986 to 1988, ABWE missionaries Howdy and Virginia McClure joined the Marshfields. Beth Kuhar also ministered at Fellowship from 1990 to 1991. South African student pastor Craig Brannan trained in the church from 1988 to 1990. South Africans Vic Willis joined the Marshfields in 1989 as the student pastor. Vic advanced to the associate pastorate in 1991 and since 1996 has pastored the Fellowship. In July 2000 the FBCSA celebrated a ground breaking ceremony at the church's building site.<sup>140</sup>

### **(1.4) The early years in Durban: a review and assessment.**

In 1981, Church Ministries Institute (CMI) was initiated by ABWE missionary Marc Blackwell and Stuart Waugh, a missionary with the Independent Faith Mission. The Church Ministries Institute was growing and developing organisationally. I.F.M. missionary, Waugh, Marshfield and Blackwell cooperated in updating the curriculum and direction of this ministry. Henry and Shirley Davis, Richard and Ann Mondon, Rob Elkington, Craig Brannan and Vic Willis received their training in this programme.

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<sup>140</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (The Fellowship of Baptist Churches in South Africa)

An initial Ten Year Strategy for the Greater Durban region was written by Marshfield and Blackwell, Sr. which reflected an increased commitment to ABWE enlistment efforts for missionaries committed to Indian, Black and Coloured ministry.

The ministry of ABWE's M.A.P (Missionary Apprenticeship Programme) teams were especially effective. Anne Zellar and Bob Shelton were the first team. These teams were primarily formed from Bible College or seminary students in the United States. These annual visits and lively teams have been used effectively for three to six week ministries in South Africa for the past twenty years.

Much enlistment / recruitment activity had already taken place in the United States and the first of a number of new couples to arrive were the McClures in January of 1986. The McClures completed an orientation programme with the Marshfields and then stepped-in to carry on Dale Marshfield and Karen Marshfield's Durban North Fellowship Baptist ministry while they returned to the U.S.A. for furlough. By the middle of 1986 the Andersons, the Rudolphs and the Gelinas had also arrived. 1987 was the year that the South Africa A.B.W.E. Field Council was officially formed by Hopewell. The first Field Council Chairman and Secretary were brother and sister McClure and the first Treasurer was Dick Gelina. The Rudolphs moved to the Cape to begin surveying, and introductory language study in February. The early months of 1987 brought ABWE's Morris family and the returning Marshfield family.

## **(2.) Kwa-Zulu Natal's Second Phase.**

### **(2.1) Whitfield Park.**

During 1987, the Gelinas and Morris families formed a church planting team and moved to Whitfield Park, Natal to start the Grace Baptist Church in Amanzimtoti.

Beth Kuhar joined the Grace team from 1989 to 1990. In 1991, Craig and Rene Brannan were called as youth pastor. The Gelinass left Grace in 1995 to start another ministry. The Brannans continued to pastor Grace until 2000 when they accepted the call to a pastorate in Canada. David Morris is presently pastoring Grace.

The first "short term" ABWE missionary, Bob Entwistle began his ministry together with the 1987 *Missionary Apprentices Programme Team*. This was also the stage of ABWE's growth when the Shovers joined this independent Baptist agency<sup>141</sup> to serve as their first Indian missionaries. For practical and ministerial reasons the Shovers would first plant and pastored a multi-cultured branch ministry being established by the Grace Baptist Church of Queensburgh. This ministry was established as a cooperative effort with the ABWE-Natal Field Council. 1987 was also the year that Miss Beth Kuhar was approved as ABWE South Africa's first single woman missionary.<sup>142</sup>

## **(2.2) Montclair**

In 1987, ABWE missionaries Walt and Lois Anderson started church number five, Southlands Bible Baptist Church of Montclair. The Andersons left the field in 1990 due to a conflict with a Field Council strategy decision. ABWE missionaries Ed and Rebecca Shover took over the ministry from 1991 to 1999. ABWE short-term missionary Esther Spink ministered with the Shovers from 1992 to 1994. South African associate pastor Craig joined the Shovers from 1997 to 1999. In 1999 the church voted and called Craig as the senior pastor. In 1999, the Shovers went back to the United States on a medical furlough and resigned from ABWE.

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<sup>141</sup> A.B.W.E. The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism

### **(2.3) Phoenix.**

#### **First stages.**

A Baptist Bible Fellowship missionary, George Pollock, ministered for a short time at the Phoenix Bible Baptist Church in 1983. South African pastor George Moodley ministered in the church after the missionary left. ABWE missionaries Howdy and Virginia McClure took over the ministry in 1989. This was ABWE's first venture into an Indian ministry. ABWE short-term missionary Sandra Morris joined the McClures from 1990 to 1992. Bobby and Sara Hile joined the Phoenix Bible Baptist church in 1999. In 2000 the church voted on and accepted Leo and Caroline Govender as associate pastor.

In 1991, the Baptist Bible Extension Seminary began. The ABWE Durban Field Council believed it was necessary to provide further training for the South African leaders. To achieve this goal the Baptist Bible Seminary of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, was approached in 1986 and asked to establish an extension of their College and Seminary in Durban.

After years of planning and negotiating, the extension was established as a cooperative venture between ABWE Durban and Baptist Bible Seminary to grant Masters level degrees. The extension seminary graduated a number of students before it ceased operations.

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<sup>142</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, The Fellowship of Baptist Churches in South Africa.

In 1991, the Church Ministries Institute of Natal was replaced with the Baptist Bible College of Natal. The Fellowship of Baptist Churches in South Africa was formed in 1991 and has responsibility for the college. From 1991 to 1995 Dale Marshfield was the director. In 1995 the college board appointed Jim Lytle as director. In 1999 the college was accredited through the University of Potchefstroom and now grants Bachelors and Honours degrees in theology.<sup>143</sup>

#### **(2.4) Phoenix:**

##### **Second stage.**

The Phoenix Fellowship of Phoenix was planted by Dale and Karen Marshfield and Dave and Karen Hamrick in 1997. This is one of the newest and potentially most exciting church planting efforts and represents a new or possibly a third phase of church planting ministry in Natal. The congregation has moved to a larger facility and is praying for God's blessings on their evangelistic outreach.

#### **(2.5) Glenwood.**

In 1998 the ninth (ABWE, Natal) church was started in Glenwood when Jim and Diane Lytle and Paul and Diane Osborn started Bethany Baptist Church. The Osborns moved into a music training/equipping ministry in 2000. Bethany Baptist moved into new facilities in early 2001.<sup>144</sup>

#### **(2.6) Richards Bay ABWE.**

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<sup>143</sup>Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (Fellowship of Baptist Churches in S.A.)

<sup>144</sup>From a "prayer letter" requesting prayer "that God would bless their outreach as they grow into these new facilities." <abwepayer@citynet.net> November 01, 2001



In 1996, Dick and Ruth Gelina, missionaries with ABWE started the Calvary Baptist Church of Richards Bay, their seventh church plant. Steve and Julie Thompson ministered in Richards Bay with the Gelinas from 1996 to 1998. South African student pastor Henry and Chris Bro began their ministry at Calvary in 2000. The church has now completed new facilities and reports that it is experiencing many blessings and good progress.

### **(3.) The Baptist Bible Fellowship churches in Kwa-Zulu Natal.**

Another group within the Independent Fundamental Baptist movement is the Springfield, Missouri based BBF. The first BBF church planting missionaries to come to the Durban area were the Ennis Pepper family. They were friends of the Blackwells, and both families were supported financial by the Peppers "home or sending church," the Jacksonville , Florida, University Baptist Church.

The Baptist Bible Fellowship International has had eight missionary church planting couples come to serve in South Africa since 1980. They have ministries in more than fourteen locations, some now autonomous. They are evangelising and church planting in both English and Zulu languages. Plans are being made for a future Bible college and orphanage for the Durban area.

#### **(3.1) North Coast Baptist Church.**

Though the A.B.W.E. Field Council was already establishing the Fellowship Baptist congregation on Natal's North Coast, Pepper felt the Durban North area's population and future growth could easily accommodate a number of new churches. Pastor

Pepper explains that he came to this area for no other reason than a personal burden for the community's spiritual welfare. He adds:

In retrospect, I am not sure I made the decision the right way but have never been comfortable with the idea of going anywhere else. 'Sticking it out' - here in Durban - has been a very life changing experience for me and has moulded my thinking regarding future ministries...<sup>145</sup>

The Peppers arrived in South Africa on the 12 March 1986 and began their first worship services five months later on the 9 of August. This new ministry was be sponsored as an independent Baptist church under the auspices of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International, Springfield, Missouri. The Pepper's home and sending church is University Baptist Church, Jacksonville, FL., USA. Their new church planting ministry began when they led their first new converts to accept Christ. They did not officially organize the church until 14 April 1998. They began their worship services with families that were not born-again believers in Christ. Since these families did not have a background and strong foundation in Bible-believing Christian churches Pepper was careful to teach them the fundamental truths of God's Word before allowing the church to grow and go further in its organisational development.

Pepper reports:

I have taken a very cautious and, therefore, long term approach to developing leadership. I organized later rather than sooner to allow time for people to grow spiritually. For this reason, our growth has only been gradual.<sup>146</sup>

Yet, it is important to note that the congregations growth was steady as the church's record<sup>147</sup> of baptisms clearly reveal:

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<sup>145</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000., (Pepper, Ennis, Interviews, 1998 and 1999 and e-mail notes.)

<sup>146</sup> Pepper, Ennis, *Personal Notes and Church Records of Baptism*, North Coast Baptist Church, Durban North, South Africa, 1999.

<sup>147</sup> North Coast Baptist Church, Durban North, South Africa, 1999.

1. November 1987, two people baptized
2. \*November 1988, four people baptized
3. \*November 1989, two people baptized
4. February 25, 1990, seven baptized
5. February 24, 1991, seven baptized
6. February 16, 1992, four baptized
7. November 15, 1993, three baptized
8. March 13, 1994, four baptized
9. November 27, 1994, five baptized
10. January 8, 1995, four baptized
11. June 1997, four baptized
12. March 8, 1998, three baptized
13. March 1999, ten baptized.<sup>148</sup>

As a church planting pastor-missionary, Pepper did not believe he should take a strong stance on giving and tithing in the initial stages of a new ministry like this. He explained that this cautiousness or reserve regarding teaching the financial responsibilities of the Christian life caused the new congregation to “struggle financially in the early stages.”<sup>149</sup> However, as Pepper gained confidence to handle these issues the church’s offerings increased. The congregation began supporting missions as a part of their budget in late 1993. The mission’s budget was funded by taking ten percent of the general fund – something quite common in Independent Baptist Churches. Other contributions, from people who designated offerings to a particular missionary cause or ministry also advanced the cause of Christ through missionary ministry throughout Southern Africa.

In May 1999, the North Coast Baptist Church held their first Faith Promise conference. Interesting to the understanding of Independent Baptist missionary work is Pepper’s explanation of the method of their missionary outreach. Pastor Pepper reports that,

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<sup>148</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (North Coast Baptist Church, Church Records)

<sup>149</sup> Pepper, Ennis, Interviews, 1998, and 1999 e-mail notes.

During the missionary conference, no one was encouraged to give to missions unless they were first of all tithing and those who were not tithing were encouraged to commit to do so in the future. In this conference our missions commitments increased five fold and seven people committed to begin tithing.<sup>150</sup>

A major obstacle of growth to South African Independent Baptist Churches has been their lack of facilities. The North Coast Baptist church, like many others, has used rented facilities for their entire ministry. Often, as was the case for the NCBC, they have very limited access to these facilities. At present, the church is using two different rented facilities in addition to the pastor's home to accommodate their various worship services and Bible studies. Youth activities and young people's ministries are being organized in various homes too.

North Coast Baptist church financially supports three missionaries, Bill Meyer in the Western Cape, Graham Peacocke ministering at Hillsdale Baptist, Natal and Ben Johnson working in a Zulu speaking church in the New Germany area. Other mission's projects include supplying Bibles for the African churches started by BBF missionary, Brent Moeller. Each Christmas the North Coast church provides gift packets for the people in missionary outreach works among the underprivileged.

This young congregation has also made one-time offerings of R5,000 each to two different missionary works, one in Tanzania (food relief) and one in Mexico (building project) both of which involved church planting ministries of BBFT missionaries.

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<sup>150</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1998-2000. (Pepper, Ennis,)

Northcoast Baptist has also recently begun a Bible Institute. A distinctive of this ministry is its requirement of a tertiary degree or diploma as compulsory to enter the Bible Institute.

### **(3.2) Cato Manor / Mayville, and Amawoti Village Kwa-Zulu Natal**

#### **Brent & Sheila Moeller.**

Missionaries sent out by the Baptist Bible Fellowship International are well trained to focus their ministries on local church ministry. Many missionaries trained in other Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church Bible colleges are equally well taught in the use of God's Word as pastor-teachers, but the evangelistic focus and commitment to a singular ministry through the local church is unique among those trained by Baptist Bible Fellowship Bible colleges. Brent Moeller is a classic example of this type of ministry.

He has served in South Africa since 1991. His early ministries were opportunities for "sharpening his skills" by providing the oversight for ministries already established by outstanding veteran missionaries Don Mingo and Rick Moeller, his brother. These two ministry periods were 1991-1992 with oversight of the Mingo's ministry in Ladysmith, KZN and in 1992-1993 in Newcastle, KZN. Since 1994 Brent and Sheila have served in the urban center of Durban which they believe to be an exciting and promising ministry for them and their student-pastors and evangelists. Brent explains:

Due to the post apartheid developments the urban centres of South Africa have been flooded by people coming into the centres from the rural areas. They are looking for jobs and trusting in the hope of "free housing." Squatter camps or "Informal Settlements" sprung up almost overnight. My wife and I were led of the Lord to minister in these areas. <sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (July 22, 2000).

Between 1994 and 1996 the Moellers ministered in the Kennedy Road Informal Settlement (Springfield Park). What began as a promising ministry faded away as political violence between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) erupted. Many of their church family and other believers were forced to disperse to other areas and even to this day the Moellers have not been able to learn where many of them fled. A handful of congregants remained.

From 1995 to 1999 the Moellers began their evangelistic and church planting ministry in the Cato Manor / Mayville informal settlement area. This began as open-air meetings Sunday after Sunday. Often more than one hundred would gather to hear the preaching. Little foundational work could be done though, since there were no facilities for meeting regularly for worship and teaching. By 1997 they were able to rent a small building and Bible teaching on a regular basis led to a more thorough grounding and good progress. Attendances actually declined but membership grew. The average number attending was 47.

Something else was taking place that was momentous and bringing real stability to the area. The new government had declared the area a "Presidential development programme" area with new homes, clinics and schools. The old informal settlement was being transformed into a proper community.

From 1999 the ministry has progressed and they now have a new (relocated) facility. Attendances have doubled and offerings have trebled. The newly forming congregation is already able to support their own "missions projects." They also

hope to begin supporting a South African national missionary in the near future.

Pastor Moeller reports:

We have a national leader who is being slowly groomed for this ministry. We currently have more than twenty people coming to the service from another area known as Amawodana and a church will be planted there as well.<sup>152</sup>

They have been holding Bible College level classes for two young men who are interested in receiving training for the Christian ministry. Another ministry is underway in Amawoti Village and services held in a home have already drawn a regular group of attendees averaging over 40.

The importance of a solid ministry philosophy in all church planting efforts is essential, but working in an ever expanding and fluctuating population calls for clear thinking that is Biblical and practical. The Moellers recognize the problems of unemployment, economic hardships, often caused by HIV/AIDS and other diseases, plus in this social setting the need for providing for the extended family is everyone's duty. In this environment the thought of having a fully salaried national pastor for each church seems a distant goal. Before a church can support its own pastor it would have to grow to quite a large size. A bi-vocational pastor is their answer and they are providing training in Bible and in career-skills to enable their student-pastors to become effective. The focus on a "bi-training" institution, where a young man who has not already become established in a career can be helped, is at the heart of their overall strategy

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<sup>152</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, 1996-2000. (July 22, 2000).

The Moeller's church planting strategy includes the idea of establishing a "Mother Church" where evangelistic satellite outreaches can be used to draw converts in from other surrounding areas. Then, eventually, these areas must be developed as "branch" ministries and be led to autonomy, as well. The Moellers also see the need for an AIDS orphanage. Pastor Moeller explains the environment in which they work:

There are several observations that I would make in regards to ministry among the Zulu people in the city and especially for those living in informal settlements -versus those in the rural areas. The city dweller tends to be more cautious, less trusting and more apt to be anti-Christian and anti-missionary.

There are far more churches and religious groups that one encounters in the city and therefore there are more voices clambering or competing for the ears and hearts of the people.<sup>153</sup>

Church Planting in this setting is Christian compassionate action that is practical and carried out patiently and with a fixed set of goals: evangelise, teach, provide practical helps, provide leadership but work through national trainee-pastors and meet the real needs both spiritually – leading to trust, and physically –leading to career skills. Aim at an autonomous and indigenous church but plan for a distant goal.

The need to give the Gospel as a message of personal salvation and hope must be bound tightly to compassionate action that understands the pain of poverty, disease and even facing the loneliness and abandonment linked to HIV/AIDS tearing lives, homes and even society itself apart.

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<sup>153</sup> Insights from a personal discussion following a Sunday morning worship service at Kato Manor/ Mayville in connection with a preaching and teaching mission and a personal visit by the author. April 2000.



#### **(4.) The Biblical Ministries Worldwide Natal Ministries.**

##### **(4.1) Richards Bay (WEF/BMW).**

Bill and Joy Baxter (WEF /BMW) started an Independent Fundamental Bible Church in the Richards Bay area in 1982. The ministry was showing good progress and some good fruit, with families like the Funnels and others like Carlos and Esme Esteves adding much to the ministry. The new Natal Church Ministries Institute, located in Durban, offered extension classes and Modified-TEE and Cassette Tape training for the many sincere Bible students amongst this young congregation. There was no Baptist Union of Southern Africa church in the region at that time and three families with BUSA backgrounds were members of the new church.<sup>154</sup>

Though it was never the practice of the independent Fundamental churches to intentionally compete with the BUSA churches in a given area, the reality is that some members from both the Independent churches and the BUSA churches have transferred memberships to the other groups from time to time. The inevitability of transfers of membership should cause no surprises or serious problems. Of course, there have been a few (but happily very few) minor complications over these twenty-one years.<sup>155</sup> In the case of Richards Bay, conflicts of interests have occurred but these have never been allowed to bring any discredit or dishonour to the Lord by either group.

Nevertheless, for the Richards Bay Bible Church the announcement in the Zululand Observer of 1 February 1985 would prove, in time, to be the young congregations "undoing." The announcement of the coming of Louis Marais and his family to

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<sup>154</sup> Personal letter from missionary Bill Baxter dated February 5<sup>th</sup> 1985. (On file.)

pastor a new church, the Richards Bay Baptist Church, “affiliated to the Baptist Union of Southern Africa” and with “the financial backing of the Natal Baptist Association”<sup>155</sup>, would be a major set back for the small church in a small town. The Bible church eventually closed, and in 1987 the Baxters joined Tom and Marilyn Wilsons BMW in a team ministry at Benoni Bible Church until 1989.<sup>157</sup>

#### (4.2) Newcastle.

This WEF-BMW church planting team effort was begun by Tom and Marilyn Wilson and Paul and Joan Seger. The Wilsons had preceded the Segers by six months in July 1976. The Wilsons already had a Sunday School started with contacts in their neighbourhood. The young group met in the Wilson’s flat and had a good attendance forcing them to look for a place to meet. The strategy, as explained by Wilson was a part of a ten year WEF ministry strategy planned by Field Leader Frank Davis. The two phases included:

Stage One. 1976-1981. Focus on the high number of Iscor workers moving in and out of the area. Though turnover of membership was a problem, many were saved, baptised and disciplined in the basic Christian faith.

Stage Two. 1981 –1984. Property construction and preparations for official formation of the new congregation would be led by Frank Davis.<sup>158</sup> The church would be formally constituted on Sunday, the 25, November 1984.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>156</sup> *Zululand Observer*, February 1, 1985, 12.

<sup>157</sup> Also see *Biblical Ministries Worldwide* sections in Natal and Gauteng.

<sup>158</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*. – personal interviews. (Tom & Marilyn Wilson, 15-6-98)

<sup>159</sup> ABWE missionary, M. S. Blackwell, Sr. was guest speaker for the “Constitution Sunday.”

Under the leadership of Pastor Wilson<sup>160</sup> the Newcastle Bible Church congregation secured the use of an old church building in downtown Newcastle where the church met until they moved into their own church building where they presently meet. The Segers worked with the Wilsons for 3 years before taking their first furlough to the United States. Other BMW missionaries ministered<sup>161</sup> over the years: Frank Davis, Bill Hunter, Dave Davis, Don Smith [interim], then the first national pastor, Dennis Ernerton<sup>162</sup> was followed by Alex Couper who served as an interim pastor at first but was called to the church as it's regular pastor in 1999.

Alex and Gloria Couper serve as good illustrations of how South African Independent Baptist and Bible Church missionaries enter Christian ministry. They both accepted the Lord as their Saviour on Easter Sunday in 1983 during a service at Croydon Baptist Church. The church was pastored under the ministry of missionary church planting pastor, Roger McCrum of Baptist International Missions Inc., and was personally led to Christ by South African missionary Bill Mayor who was, at that time, a deacon at Croydon Baptist Church. Alex was "called to the ministry" under the teaching ministry of Pastor Allan Mercer and entered Calvary Bible College. He worked with missionary Charles Hoblitz in Lenasia and started an outreach to build a Zulu congregation in Edenvale. The Edenvale ministry saw many people saved but nonetheless closed after one year. Alex was preaching three times a week, became an active member of Kempton Park Bible Church and started teaching Standard 5 Sunday school classes. He then became a deacon of the church and by August 1980

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<sup>160</sup> The Wilsons relocated to do further church planting in 1985 in Benoni. Their three-phase strategy, (1.) Initial Core-group stage, 1985-1987; (2.) Team Ministry with the Baxter's; 1987-1989 and (3.) Building Leadership through training (C.M.I.) and restructuring for handing over the ministry to South African leadership. (Notes from a personal conversation in 15-6-1998.)

<sup>161</sup> All of the Newcastle missionaries were with BMW (then Worldwide European Fellowship or WEF Ministries) with the exception of the national pastors.

was sent out as missionaries. He began his missionary ministry as a co-pastor and church planter of the Madadeni Bible Church.<sup>163</sup> Then in 1999 he was called as the interim pastor of the Newcastle Bible Church. He then accepted the pastorate of the Newcastle Bible Church though he continues to maintain his missionary ministries among the Zulu people of Kwa-Zulu Natal.<sup>164</sup> The Church Ministries Institute has offered non-formal Bible and Theology classes in the church over many years.<sup>165</sup>

The methodology of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church planters is clearly illustrated in the Couper's church planting ministry plan. The churches are started and built-up through house-to-house visitation, and personal, or one-on-one, evangelism. Then home Bible studies are held in various sections of the township to disciple and teach the new converts. These house meetings are on going. Then, meeting mid-week in small prayer and fellowship / discipleship groups, the congregation grows. As more neighbours and friends come to these groups those that normally don't visit churches are reached. This simple New Testament styled approach is at the core of all Independent Baptist and Bible church ministries throughout Southern Africa.

### **3. 3. 2. 8 The greater Cape Town region's learning through teamwork.**

#### **(1.) Baptiste Bybel Kerk - Macassar.**

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<sup>162</sup> Under church discipline.

<sup>163</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, (Alex Couper, 10-12-1999) The Madadeni Bible Church. Zulu speaking, 1] Founder, Missionary Pastor Don Smith 1989, 2] Co Pastored Don Smith & Alex Couper 1990-1993, 3] Pastor Alex Couper 1993-present. The church has one deacon Thomas Mduli who is training (through C.M.I.- Newcastle) for the ministry. The work was started from a small group of believers originally with the Evangelical Bible Church [TEAM]

<sup>164</sup> The Couper News. The occasional prayer letters of Gloria and Alex Couper.

<sup>165</sup> The first classes were held in 1983.

Bill Meyer was called into the ministry by the Lord in an evening service in Croydon, Tvl. in 1984. Pastor Vic Lazarus of Chatsworth (ECSA), Durban, was preaching and challenged the congregation about the great need and potential for missions in South Africa. During a holiday to the Strand in 1984 the Lord called the Meyers to work among the Afrikaans speaking people of the Western Cape. Their burden to share the Gospel with these people and to teach them God's Word continued to grow. After selling their business in Johannesburg they moved with Roger and Darlene McCrum to Somerset West<sup>166</sup> with the intent of starting a ministry amongst the Afrikaans speaking peoples.

The Baptist Bible church was started when Bill Meyer was contacted by Piet Mostert,<sup>167</sup> who had just led a lady to accept Christ as her Saviour and who lived in Macassar. On meeting the woman, Elize Sprague, the church planters asked her permission to start a Bible study in her home, to which she agreed. The first Bible study was started in November 1987. This was the first<sup>168</sup> Independent Baptist congregation established by South African missionaries Bill and Nina Meyer and their children.

In February 1988 missionaries Roger McCrum<sup>169</sup> and Bill Meyer managed to find a crèche in which to meet. A few months later Brother McCrum and his family left to help a church in Kempton Park.<sup>170</sup> The new church planting effort was now the

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<sup>166</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, McCrum – while visiting Stellenbosch 1999.)

<sup>167</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, The Mosterts were members of an Afrikaans Evangelical Christian Reformed congregation in Bellville and they were both committed to lay - evangelism and have often encouraged missionaries whenever possible.

<sup>168</sup> John Jackson attempted the planting of what would have been effectively the first Independent Baptist Church in the Cape, the Faith Baptist Church in Rondebosch, but this work was later to fail, though it had a most effective ministry for many years.

<sup>169</sup> Baptist International Missions Inc. (B.I.M.I.) - Headquartered in Rossville, Georgia, U.S.A.

<sup>170</sup> The Kempton Park Baptist Church was planted by Missionary Roger McCrum.

responsibility of Pastor Bill Meyer and was effectively the first congregation he had planted. The new church grew and was soon able to purchase a plot of ground.<sup>171</sup>

The first deacon was appointed in 1990 – Miles Schilder. After obtaining funds from the Cape Town based Vision in Action Foundation the church commenced with a building project and the building was completed in 1993. In 1994 it was decided to send out two men to start a new evangelistic and church planting effort in the Strand. The two men to lead this new ministry were Miles Schilder and Jeremy van Reenen. Miles Schilder later went on to pastor the church in the Strand and Jeremy van Reenen was appointed their first deacon. Two new deacons were appointed for the Baptiste Byble Kerk in Macassar – John Klassen and Cyril Adams. In April 2000 Cyril Adams was voted associate pastor with the intention that he would later take the ministry over from Bill Meyer. In July 2001 Brothers Adams and Schilder were ordained to the Gospel Ministry and Pastor Adams has now accepted the pastorate at Baptiste Bybel Kerk.<sup>172</sup>

The ministry style or focus in Macassar has had it's emphasis on direct evangelism - making use of door to door visitation, Gospel tract drops, encouraging people to bring visitors etc. There has also been a strong emphasis on Bible teaching, and on the training of leaders to equip them for ministry in their local church. There has also been selective training of men for fulltime ministry.

## **(2.) Everglen Baptist Church, and Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente.**

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<sup>171</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, – personal interviews. (2-7- 2001)

<sup>172</sup> South African Independent Baptist church-planter, Bill Meyer, had now begun a third church in Stellenbosch.

*Two Congregations—One Building.* Dave and Julie Rudolph planted the Everglen Baptist church in Durbanville, Western Cape. Marc and Judie Blackwell, together with Bryant and Sharan Crane would follow with the Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente.

### **The Survey Phase in planting the new Everglen Baptist Church. (1987)**

The Rudolphins were asked to consider the northern suburbs of Cape Town for church planting. The ABWE team of Marc Blackwell, William Hopewell and Bill Parmerle had carried out a survey trip in 1980. The Durban-ABWE Field Council and the IFM Missionary Stuart Waugh resurveyed the Cape in 1985. These surveys reported their findings regarding the Cape region: the summary statement identified the Cape to be a prime region for new church planting and in genuine need of new churches. The Rudolphins arrived in Durban in 1986. The Rudolphins and Blackwells made three further survey and planning trips to Bellville/Durbanville over a nine-month period.

In January 1987, the Rudolphins moved to Durbanville and over the following six months embarked on an intensive survey of Durbanville itself. The Rudolphins also worked on a preliminary strategy of team ministry and church planting with Marc and Judie Blackwell during that first year. Either the Blackwells would travel down from Durban to Cape Town every three months, or the Rudolphins would travel to Durban. Eventually they would join and form a team in Durbanville. The team was successful in acquiring a strategic tract of church planting land in that first year.

During that first year of ministry in Durbanville, the Rudolphins visited the Faith Baptist church in Rondebosch on a regular basis and Dave taught their first CMI course, "History of Fundamentalism" which was written for the Durban CMI by

Marc Blackwell. The Rudolphs maintained a close relationship with Faith Baptist church in the ensuing years. By the middle of 1987 the Rudolphs were reaching new families with the Gospel of Christ and were discipling them in their homes. In the last quarter of 1987, they held regular "Friend Evenings" in their home on Sunday evenings in an effort to solidify the new converts, and to attract others in their community.

#### **Planting the Everglen Baptist Church. (1988)**

By the end of 1987, the team expanded by two more church planting families. Dr Bill and Ruth Hopewell, retired Administrators of ABWE committed themselves to spending two six-month terms of service with the team in the Cape. Newly arrived ABWE missionary church planters, Dave and Anita Devore, and their daughters Angie and Danelle, also joined the Cape Team at that time. The Devores completed their orientation ministry through the Everglen church, and both families were a great encouragement to those early beginnings of the Everglen Baptist Church. The new Church Ministries Institute, now meeting at both the Faith Baptist church in Rondebosch and at the Everglen Baptist church in Durbanville also benefited from these pastors and Bible teachers and their wives. An effective tool in Everglen Baptist's early church planting history should be attributed to Julie Rudolph, Anita Devore, and Juanita Ambler and their neighbourhood Joy Clubs. Every week children were brought to redecorated garages and ministered to by these women. Many families of these children were evangelised and this children's ministry gave the young church a wonderful visibility and interaction with many families in the community.

With the vision and partnership of all four couples (Rudolphs, Blackwells, Hopewells, and Devores) the Rudolphs announced Sunday morning services in the Stelleberg



High School hall on the last Sunday of January, 1988. Friends from the Faith Baptist church also joined in worship that first Sunday bringing the number in attendance to over 40. The next Sunday, and every other Sunday for some time thereafter, Everglen Baptist averaged a more realistic 18-25.

**(3.) The Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente: The ground is prepared.” (1989)<sup>173</sup>**

In the second year of ministry in Durbanville, the Cape Team was joined by lay Christians, Flip and Marinda Naude. The Naude’s moved from Kempton Park Bible church at the invitation of Marc and Judie Blackwell with the goal of encouraging the planting of an Afrikaans congregation in the community. Although Rudolph and Blackwell had talked about sharing facilities between two congregations, they never imagined how successful that sharing relationship would become. The testimony of *Two Congregations—One Building* is now a reality in Durbanville for all to see! This approach to church planting represents, at least, a seventh different style of church planting being used by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in South Africa. The ABWE church planting missionaries, Bryant and Sharan Crane joined Marc and Judie Blackwell in a team-ministry to strengthen the development of the Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente. Bryant Crane provides some background on the involved process that leads to building a team like this:

Sharan and I joined ABWE in 1988 and were appointed to South Africa. I visited the field in the fall of that year to visit the various ministries and missionaries. Upon visiting the Cape and talking with Marc Blackwell, Sr. concerning the needs among the Afrikaans speaking people and an envisioned Afrikaans ministry, I was confident that this was where the Lord wanted us to serve.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Originally the Nuwe Baptiste Gemeente

<sup>174</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, (Bryant and Sharan Crane, 16-7-1997)

These two independent fundamental and otherwise completely separate Baptist congregations have grown and shared facilities ever since.

### **The Everglen Baptist Church's Formative Phase. (1990)**

The Rudolphs carefully planned and focused the first three years of their ministry between evangelism and discipleship. Although conscious of the need to identify and train local church leadership, Dave looks back with the belief that they ...

... tended to do more of the work of the ministry than perhaps they should have. (Often willing Christians were overlooked for service opportunities.) Dave feels he: might reconsider their strategy the next time.<sup>175</sup>

However, the time the Rudolphs spent just ministering and growing the young Everglen Baptist church in their knowledge and responsibilities to God's Word has proven to be extremely profitable. They were building their identity as a church, and their early strategy allowed them the opportunity of becoming known as a caring family-oriented church in the community.

### **The Everglen Baptist Church's Organisational Phase. (1991)**

A landmark time during this phase was the offer to assist the Baptist Bible Theological Seminary of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania in their missionary apprenticeship programme. Seminary student Jim Eaton, his wife Natalie and their three children came from America for a 10 month internship. This time of hosting an internship gave the congregation the experience of an additional "staff member" and brought the Everglen congregation into a new level of maturity. Besides the new emphasis on visitation during this phase, Jim also led teams of young believers in the writing of a "Confession of Faith" for the two churches - Everglen and Tygerberg.

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<sup>175</sup> Rudolph, D., Notes on the Church Planting Ministry of Everglen. 1999.

Jim Eaton had these young believers write out their testimonies and these were incorporated into their new innovative doctrinal statement, which can be easily read and understood by an average believer. The two churches still use these same confessions of faith, though formal doctrinal statements have also been written.<sup>176</sup>

### **The Everglen Baptist Church's Expansion Phase. (1992-1993)**

The fourth and fifth years of church planting at Everglen brought the greatest depth in the development of local church leadership. Five men, and their wives, committed themselves to being trained more definitively for part-time ministry in the church. These men met once a week for theological studies, pastoral ministry training, and instruction in small group leadership.

The relationship between the Everglen Baptist church and the Nuwe Baptiste Gemeente (soon to be re-named the Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente) was developing well. Marc and Judie Blackwell were joined by church planters Bryant and Sharan Crane and their children in 1991. Bryant Crane outlines the next steps of this ABWE team.

I returned to Cape Town with my family in May of 1991 to work alongside the Blackwells in the Afrikaans ministry. By that time, they had progressed far enough in learning the language to begin the Afrikaans congregation. For the next year, we involved ourselves in the ministry of the church and gave ourselves fully to learning the Afrikaans language.

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<sup>176</sup> Geloofsbelydenis, Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente, Posbus 3298, Tygervallei, Westelikekaap Provinsie, 7536.

In August of 1992, the Blackwells returned to the states for their furlough and fundraising for building projects. This forced me to preach and minister in Afrikaans much more than I would have normally – which also accelerated my language acquisition. With God's grace and with the help of national missionary and church planter ds. Bill Meyer, plus the assistance of ds. Jan Müller – all the preaching schedule and ministry responsibilities were met. TBG continued to grow.<sup>177</sup>

Sometime after the formal organization of the Everglen Baptist Church, three men, Lawrence Waugh,<sup>178</sup> Marc Ambler and Tiny Coupar were nominated by the Senior Pastor to hold the office of Assistant Pastors in the church. The congregation at a special congregational meeting voted these three men into their part-time positions. Along with the Senior Pastor (Missionary) Dave Rudolph, these men were joined on the Pastoral Team by the CMI students who are currently training for ministry.

To some extent, the pastoral approach of Everglen Baptist church was charting new territory of local church leadership within the normal practices of Independent Baptist church planters in South Africa. In addition to the development of local church leadership, the church's leadership placed a high priority on formal organization of the church. Congregational groups worked on a church covenant, a church constitution, and the earlier written confession of faith and on Sunday, January 31, 1993 with 43 members present, the church was formally organised.

#### **The Everglen Baptist Church's Building Phase. (1994)**

The young church was now motivated to concentrate on the next hurdle—the construction of their first building. Over the ensuing months a committee was to be formed for the development of the building strategy. The arrangement between the

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<sup>177</sup> Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires, (Crane, 16-7-1997)

two churches to use the same rented facilities was also satisfactory. The logical next step was to consider a building suitable for the use of both congregations on the Everglens property. The committee was comprised of representatives from both churches and they worked tirelessly over the next 12 months to prepare for and to coordinate the building operations.

It was during the time of Wally Stephenson's ministry that the construction of the church buildings took place. The sequence of events just mentioned gives testimony to the genuine spirit of teamwork and cooperation they tried to foster in the church planting strategy in the Cape. The Learning Ministry Team (LMT) notion grew out of years of research by Marc Blackwell Sr on the subject of Team Management.<sup>179</sup> From the beginning of these ministries in the Cape, the missionaries determined to minister together for the strengthening of all the church planting projects in a spirit of sacrifice and sharing. This became the driving force behind the teamwork model.

Every team ministry that was started:

Cape Growth Fund (CGF)  
Cape of Good Hope Publishing Ministry (CGHM)  
Vision in Action (VIA)  
Church Ministries Institute (CMI)

... was approached with shared ownership<sup>180</sup>, input, and the benefit of every church planter and congregation in mind. Every leader voluntarily shared the commitment of providing their abilities and resources for the advancement of all the church planting projects and the auxiliary ministries. Missionary Bryant Crane summarises:

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<sup>178</sup> Having retired in 2000, now resides in Natal.

<sup>179</sup> Blackwell, Marc S., Sr., The Notion of a Learning Ministry Team, Cape Town, Cape Leadership Pool, 1996.

<sup>180</sup> The paradox of this attitude between Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches and their leadership is self-evident. The fact of this paradox focuses matters on the reason for this huge paradigm shift. That reason is to be found in the need to overcome the limitations of small ministries without yielding congregational autonomy. The Learning Organisation theory of management opened the door for this possibility. M. S. Blackwell, Sr. 15-8-2001

Our co-ministry ... and our greater Learning Ministry Team (LMT) effort of team church planting in the Cape has been and continues to be a learning and growing experience for me and my family. We are thankful for the ministry the Lord has given us here in Cape Town.

The Vision in Action foundation (VIA) provided the structure through which the money would be funnelled, both from its South African and American sources. The VIA also became the conduit through which both congregations agreed to “duplicate” what was given to them by agreeing to make monthly missionary payments over the next 10-15 years back into the fund.

The financial plan was for each donor church to pay back into the foundation the entire value of their buildings, and then to continue payments over and above that amount in an effort to offset inflation and some of what would have been paid to a commercial bank as interest. All of this is done in a desire to further church planting in the Cape and to provide a perpetual construction fund for future church buildings. There is no contractual agreement between VIA and the churches, neither have there been any bonds registered on the properties. By maintaining integrity and cooperation in this missionary endeavour the VIA furthers the Lord's work in the Cape.

### **The Strengthening Phase. (1995-1998)**

It was also during this time in the development of the church that three more ministering families arrived from North America. Julie Rudolph's parents, Dr Mel and Betty Reed had made several ministry visits to the Cape over the years. Following

their retirement from the Emmanuel Baptist church in New Brunswick, Canada, they came and spent almost five months of ministry with the church.

During this time, even though they helped with interim pastoral responsibilities at the Community Baptist church of Blue Downs, they were attached to the Everglen ministry. Their maturity and ministry experience provided the ministries here with great encouragement. Several people in both communities were led to Christ during their brief tour of duty. God burdened the Reed's hearts to return more permanently to the Cape as supported missionaries, and since that time they have spent six months of each year here as a part of the team.

In addition, Mark and Debbie Christopher and their children arrived from California, USA to join the church planting team in the Cape. They were invited to do their orientation with the church, and then to continue on as ministry partners. Mark's effective communication skills and his love for preaching and teaching added depth to the ministries of the church. The Christophers spent three years of ministry at Everglen before responding to a need for ministry in Newlands in 1999.

One special ministry couple from North Carolina, USA, Gene and Jeanne Hayden, has been a tremendous encouragement to the Everglen ministries. Gene is an electrical engineer by trade and along with Jeanne faithfully ministered in his local church for a number of years. When early retirement became an option, this couple dedicated their lives to serving the Lord in another country. God led them to join the Cape Team. God brought this couple to Everglen church at just the right time to

help us in various auxiliary ministries. Over the past five years they have assisted every one of the church planting ministries among the Independents, in the Cape.

One important ministry was the AWANA children's ministry. In 1995, one of the members, Ann Russell, helped the church to begin this ministry. This is a very exciting and well-structured ministry for children, but is extremely leader-intensive though there is good reason to rejoice over the families who have been reached for Christ because of AWANA.

One of the pressures additional ministries create for a church is building space. The problem was compounded with the fact that two congregations meet and run children's programmes on Sunday evenings—at the same time! Something had to be done. Firstly, the Lord opened the door for a house that had recently been built next to the church, to be offered for sale at a reasonable price. The house was so ideally suited for ministry use that it would be difficult to pass up the opportunity. The church planting team was able to purchase the “Manse” with gifts and a loan given from a Christian foundation in the USA. This new facility offered us room to expand. But a larger hall to accommodate the children's ministry was needed. Again funds were raised, and with the help of VIA a 14 x 24 metre AWANA/ Youth Building was erected adjacent to the existing church building as a joint venture between the Everglen and Tygerberg churches. Yet another benefit to two churches sharing one building!

The discussion of this strengthening phase of the Everglen Baptist church would not be complete without the inclusion of two more significant advances. Firstly, the



Church Ministries Institute. A keen observer of the church planting strategy would notice the high priority placed on leadership development. This has mainly centred round the CMI. The church planting team has succeeded in the development of a comprehensive ministry training programme that takes a student through five years of preparation—both theologically and practically. For some time the Church Ministries Institute wanted to find academic accreditation for the programme, but had no success until a meeting with the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PUCHE) produced positive results. There was an immediate affinity on their part to the non-formal/conceptual approach and after a year of discussions and preparation enlisted us as an accredited agency under their Bachelor of Theology degree programme. CMI uses the programme, adhering to prescribed academic standards, and they accredit it and confer the degree. This was a dream come true for us after a decade of development and dreams.

The second significant advance in this decade is the milestone the Everglen Baptist church reached in the initiation of the first “subsequent” or “branch” ministry. At the tenth anniversary service, the church voted to launch the Langeberg Ridge “branch” ministry.<sup>181</sup> One of the pastoral student couples, Llewellyn and Felicia de Kock has spearheaded that project, beginning with a mid-week Bible study in that new community. The church had previously taken this project to the Cape Learning Ministry Team (LMT) and a “Learning Team” was mandated to survey that area, along with three other areas for the possibility of a “branch” ministry.

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<sup>181</sup> Later renamed the Good Hope Baptist Church.

The learning Team was comprised of leaders and CMI students from across the Cape and they came back with a recommendation for this ministry to go ahead. A new Learning Team was mandated to write a church planting strategy for that project and they have since completed their work. The Lord has done a wonderful work in the founding of yet another independent Baptist church, and all the Glory belongs to Him.

#### **(4.) The Newlands Bible Church.**

Mark Christopher, ABWE, pastor and church planter set out to develop this relatively new congregation from 1998. The congregation started in November 1994. A few key families decided to start the church as they were not happy with the level of teaching at the churches in the area. After approaching the other churches in the area to explain what they were doing and gaining agreement from all they began in the home of John Temple. They moved to rented facilities at the YMCA on university of Cape Town's campus. After about a year they moved to the Scout Hall in Newlands. Then they moved to the Lady Buxton Clinic, where they have been for the past three years. They started looking for a spiritual leader to assume the ministry in 1997.

The people of Newlands Bible church are strongly Reformed in soteriology. The church is focused on: strong expository pulpit ministry, a goal of evangelising the Newlands area, family oriented ministries, building a solid missions programme, and equipping the church family for the work of the ministry. Mark outlined the intended strategy:

Directing potential students to the CMI programme, using concentrated evangelism--literature drops, special services, special events, tract distribution, personal evangelism, etc., resolving the church's property need, advancing family ministries programmes, further developing Sunday School, missions programmes, fostering the Cape's Learning Ministry Team notion, developing a music programme and to continue discipling through a men's discipleship group.

By the beginning of 2001 the Christophers had decided to change their ministry direction and resigned from the Newlands church to begin plans for a church planting effort in the southern suburbs region of Cape Town.

### 3. 3. 2. 9 Zimbabwe (Rhodesia):

#### (1.) Hillside.

Hillside Baptist church was planted by Kevin McGuiness. He graduated from Northeastern Baptist Bible College in the United States in 1973. He started a full-time Christian youth ministry with the Central Baptist Church, (Salisbury) Harare, (Rhodesia), Zimbabwe. Two years into the youth pastorate at Central Baptist church he was encouraged to plant a church in the suburb of Hillside. He writes about this new challenge and time period in his life:

Certainly this was an area in which I had had no formal training and I continued to flounder in my attempts to start the church until such time that I met Marc Blackwell, a newly arrived church planter from the United States. Along with a number of other ministers, we met regularly in pastoral training courses which included: fundamentalism, church planting, church growth, Christian counselling. These proved invaluable to me as did the personal counsel and training.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> McGuiness, Kevin, e-mail response to thesis questionnaire – dated 8-11-97

Like many church planting efforts Pastor McGuiness used a five-year format or strategy to plant his church. He reported<sup>183</sup> that this plan was built on the model of “Genesis to Deuteronomy” learned in the Rhodesian Pastoral Training Institute. The Hillside Baptist church formally constituted into a Baptist congregation in 1977 with 38 members, though many more attended regularly.

When Pastor McGuiness moved to the Calvary Baptist ministry in the United States in October 1979 the Hillside Baptist church called Mike Rutter, a businessman from Bulawayo, to pastor the church. When Brother Rutter left, due to medical problems, he was succeeded by Pastor Ray Pountney. In 1989 the church merged<sup>184</sup> with Chisipiti Baptist Bible Church.

## **(2.) Chisipite, Harare**

Marc Blackwells travelled to Rhodesia in October of 1974 to carry on a one-month survey. The survey of Rhodesia included discussions with a senior Baptist pastor, Jack Gardner, and with the independent and fundamentalist American based Bible church missionaries serving under *Missionaries for Christ International*. The survey included discussing the needs and problems facing the country with missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Evangelical Alliance Missionaries (TEAM), and the African Evangelical Fellowship (AEF). The survey concluded with a positive outlook regarding the need and potential. Rhodesia was already involved in a military conflict that everyone expected to increase in intensity over the coming years.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., McGuiness, Kevin, e-mail response to thesis questionnaire – dated 8-11-97

<sup>184</sup> Calvary Baptist Church, New Jersey, U.S.A., where McGuiness and his wife presently minister, recently voted to merge with another Baptist church in the area. McGuiness reports that he plans “to refer back to the ‘Genesis to

The Blackwell's long-term strategy looked to future expansion of their church planting efforts to include some of the key cities of South Africa. They would be the first missionaries in Southern Africa committed to the particular task of planting an Independent Fundamental Baptist church; at least they would be the first to do so without building on a pre-existing church or group.<sup>185</sup> Both Rhodesia<sup>186</sup> and Southern Africa had a well-chronicled<sup>187</sup> history of missionary ministry and there were many Baptist and Bible church missionaries from America, who had already planted a good number of evangelical churches.<sup>188</sup> The Baptist Union of Southern Africa pastors such as W. Martin, C.J. Newell, W.T. Edmunds, Sydney Hudson-Reed, R.H. Philpott and J. Niebuhr all had effectively planted a number of congregations on behalf of the Central African Baptist Union.<sup>189</sup> The English Brethren missionaries, the Southern Baptist Convention (FMB) missionaries, the Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) and the Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF) mission also had planted numerous churches, and many were also ministering in hospital and school ministries. Some of these were ordained Baptist ministers and had been serving in Rhodesia for many years, but none had come to specifically follow-up their evangelism with a discipleship based on the lessons learned and the convictions held by the Independent Fundamental Baptist churches. Through personal contact and ministry opportunities,

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Deuteronomy' church planting strategy notes he learned in the Rhodesian Pastor's Training Institute, to reach out to this new area of ministry, as well.

<sup>185</sup> Jack Moorman (BIMI) had been involved with a Bez Valley, Johannesburg church's contemplations of separating from the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, and he would also establish a church from a work already begun by a lay Christian, Mr. Van den Berg. Others like Geimer, and Repke, having separated from the TEAM and AEF missionary agencies, would start churches using men that had been trained by these evangelical but not (strictly speaking) fundamentalist missionary agencies.

<sup>186</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., ed., *Baptists in Southern Africa*, Volume 3, Section Number two, Philpott, R. H., *The Baptist Union of Central Africa (Rhodesia and Zambia)*, 124-157. Other sources available in the Baptist Union of Southern Africa Archives, *The South African Baptist Handbook*, 1974; *the Central African Baptist Review*, 1974 and the Rhodesian Baptist Association Minutes 1956 to 1960

<sup>187</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., *By Taking Heed*, Roodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1983, 323 to 348.

<sup>188</sup> The Jack and Frank Davis brothers, the Jones, Jim Geimers, Chris and Joyce Goppert, Kevin and Terri McGuiness, Smiths, Reinsbergers, George & Pat Dee and Repkes working with AEF, FMB, TEAM and other agencies.

<sup>189</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., *By Taking Heed*, Roodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1983, 323 to 348.

it became clear that many of these missionaries were *almost* the same in their doctrinal views to the Independent Fundamental Baptists.

The Blackwells, Judie, Marc Jr. (5), Michael (2), and Marc Sr. departed for Rhodesia on January 20 arriving in Salisbury, on the 30, January 1975. Not long after they arrived in Rhodesia a leading ecumenical and neo-evangelical<sup>190</sup> parachurch leader asked: "why have you come to Rhodesia to do missionary work?"<sup>191</sup> Since as he explained, "Rhodesia was already a Christian land." Missionary Blackwell's response summarises the Independent Baptists attitude regarding missionary ministry:

I am sure my reply confused him and possibly many others since, but it was nonetheless the truth behind our motives. I explained that as fundamental, Bible-believing independent Baptists we were committed to evangelism that led to discipling new believers in an explicit trust in the literal teachings of God's Word the Bible. I further explained to him that my earlier research and survey revealed that only a few new churches had been planted since the Rhodesian conflict had begun and that evangelism was in large stagnated.

It was further evident, at least to some Christians, that the traditional churches were failing to call for holiness of life and separation from sin and compromise. False teaching was also making serious inroads through liberalism, the cults, and the Charismatic Movement. Few Rhodesian churches taught the reality of the immanent coming of Christ, or regarding the exciting and positive message of the Rapture of the Saints, or even of a literal one thousand year coming Millennial Kingdom where Christ would reign and rule in Peace on earth.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Dollar, G. W., History of Fundamentalism in America, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1973. The fundamentalists consider anyone to be a part of or cooperative toward the eventual union of all churches to be an "ecumenical." For example, An individual or organization that practices co-operative evangelism or is inter-denominational (compare non-denominational) is generally viewed as sympathetic to ecumenicalism's efforts to avoid doctrinal differences. Neo-evangelicalism is an attitude or position, which professes to adhere to the fundamentals of the Christian faith while advocating an attitude of tolerance toward those who would "re-examine" the Scriptures to see if they are true. Dialogue with liberals and others who compromise the truths of the Bible is important since they consider tolerance and love more practical than holiness and righteousness. (Also see Glossary for fundamentalism and non-denominationalism)

<sup>191</sup> Blackwell, M. S, Sr., A Church Planter's Memoirs, Chapter two, "A look back at the founding of the Baptist Bible Church, Chisipite," (Salisbury, Rhodesia) - Harare, Zimbabwe. 10-July-1999, Unpublished memoirs.

<sup>192</sup> Blackwell, A Church Planter's Memoirs, 13.

Independent Fundamental Baptists were not that different from many who had come before teaching salvation by God's grace alone, through faith alone and without the addition of doing good works or receiving religious sacraments. The Independent Baptists like many – though not all – others preach a salvation based on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, and in His literal resurrection, and His mediatorial work in Heaven. Independent Baptists taught the importance of a publicly declared separation from liberal and charismatic “confusion” as an important distinctive issue. They also believed it important to oppose the World Council of Churches, the Baptist World Alliance and any ecumenical evangelistic or para-church groups.

As Independent Baptist church planters the Blackwells were primarily committed to evangelism, but their particular strategy of evangelism also included “follow-up:” i.e. discipleship, and pastoral counselling for marriages. They also emphasised Ephesians 4: 11- 17 and pointed to the church's responsibility to meet the individual Christian's needs in three areas: 1. personal needs, 2. his or her need for adult education – in the form of - Biblical teaching, and 3. encouraging Christians to take more opportunities to *serve* the Lord and thus to contribute to one's own growth by helping others in their growth.<sup>193</sup>

Personal (relationship) evangelism was the key to the Baptist Bible church of Chisipite's growth. This method was founded on developing personal relationships i.e. “manifesting” or “making the Gospel simple or plain to the understanding of others by way of a living example.” Then, discipleship for new converts (including Biblical counselling) followed with “one-on-one,” small-groups or cells, luncheon

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<sup>193</sup> Ephesians 4,11-17.

meetings, home classes and by way of personal or family counselling opportunities. Independent Baptist Churches, like the Baptist Bible church of Chisipite are planted as congregations to include their own leadership training programmes. Though they are small they nonetheless accept the need to train laymen and pastoral leaders for the future. This local church established a "Pastoral Training Institute" which used a modified Theological Education by Extension approach mixed with the educational principles of non-formal education. In a few cases, courses in theological studies from the University of South Africa augmented their programme of education. Among the Institute's first students were Stuart and LaVerne Waugh who are now serving in Southern Africa as church planting missionaries.

The church was started through a series of outreach projects:<sup>194</sup> teaching seven daytime high school Scripture classes, writing pamphlets, and brochures on the Gospel message, Independent Baptist doctrine and the announcement of the goal of planting a church in Chisipite, Salisbury. Visiting new families and contacts, preaching occasionally at Northside Boroughdale, and preaching on Sunday mornings at Calvary Baptist church in Mabelreign for nine months, plus teaching the weekly classes in the new *Pastor's Institute*, on Counselling and Biblical church administration opened opportunities that led to the outreach and growth of the church.

The core of the church planting strategy was the Weekly Home Bible<sup>195</sup> studies known as *Growth Groups*<sup>196</sup> and were used to support the growth of the new converts to Christ.

<sup>194</sup> Personal Journal" 18th of March 1975

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, Blackwell, Journal, January 1976

<sup>196</sup> Churches Alive, Inc., *Discovery Classes and Growth Groups*, San Bernardino, C.A. Publications, 1973.



In February teenager Dave Rudolph<sup>197</sup> accepted the Lord as his Savior. By early 1977 an average of 50 young people would be attending these meetings. Many of these young people were saved and have gone on to be active Christian leaders in Independent Baptist and Bible churches in South Africa, and other lands. Three of these young people pastor churches in South Africa today. (Dave Rudolph, the Everglen Baptist church; Alan Heathcote, East Rand Bible church and Vic Willis, Fellowship Baptist church)

Easter Sunday morning the 18 April 1976 the new church held its first Sunday morning worship service at the Chisipite Girls School and the church met there until moving to the Lewisam Junior School's new Hall once it was completed. The congregation was organised on 14 May 1976 as the Baptist Bible Church. Randy Pike was their guest speaker.

In July 1976 the first *Family Life Retreat* for parents was held at Resthaven and on the 23 July the church held its first AGM with thirty-four attending. A few years later Kit Pherson, a student at Bob Jones University ministered as the first Independent Baptist "summer apprentice" and had an excellent ministry among the Chisipite youth and church family. Property was purchased and re-zoning was soon completed.

*Church planters*, by nature of their itinerate ministries, always leave and hand their ministries over to others. The transition toward the ending of the missionary church planter's ministries came with Stuart Waugh's year of training and then was followed by the beginning of ministry by Pastor Don Maitland. Don and Irene were a couple

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<sup>197</sup> Rudolph would attend Bob Jones University, join the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism and return to

especially gifted in teaching the Word of God. Faithful ministers such as Chris and Joyce Goppert (TEAM), and the current pastor, Nick Burtenshaw, have led the Baptist Bible Church, Harare, Zimbabwe to minister today to the glory of God.

### **3.4 An Overview of the Overseas Sponsors and Organisations.**

The Independent Baptist, the Bible Churches and the other baptistic and fundamentalist missionary boards or sending agencies that operated in South Africa during the twentieth century include:

- A.B.W.E.: Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, Harrisburg, PA .
- B.B.F.: Baptist Bible Fellowship, Springfield, Missouri.
- B.I.M.I.: Baptist International Missions, Inc. Rossville, Georgia.
- B.M.M.: Baptist Mid-Missions, Cleveland, Ohio.
- B.M.W.: Biblical Ministries Worldwide, Atlanta, Georgia.
- B.W.M. Baptist World Mission, Decatur, Alabama
- E.B.M.: Evangelical Baptist Missions, Kokomo, Indiana.
- G.F.A.: Gospel Fellowship Association, Greenville, South Carolina
- I.F.M.: Independent Faith Mission, Greensboro, North Carolina.
- IND. or No Agency: Sent from churches in various regions and states in the United States of America.
- (Qual-Ind. Bap.): Ordained or members of Independent Baptist churches but serving through inter-denominational agencies.

It is important to note that the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries, though sent out by a particular missionary agency, have a broad degree of individual ministry autonomy and personal liberties. It is difficult to say how much

control a missionary agency might actually have over its missionaries since this varies greatly from agency to agency.

The basic concept of the Independent Baptist agencies is one of deferring to the home or sending church, and the ultimate authority over a missionary or a particular missionary project or ministry is seen as a responsibility of the home church. The supporting churches, i.e. those assisting in the financial support of the missionary (but not the missionary's own home or sending church), also generally defer to the home church as the final authority on matters of policy and methodology.

Within the framework of cooperation common to the Independent Baptist and Bible churches the sending and supporting churches delegate to the agency varying amounts of superintendence of their missionaries – especially to overseeing issues of doctrine, morals, ethics and finance. If problems do arise, then the missionary society or agency will enter into communication with the sending church and in certain cases all the supporting churches concerned with this particular missionary or missionary family.<sup>198</sup>

Independent Baptist missionaries may be individually, or through their home church's regional alliances, indirectly members of a regional American or Canadian Baptist fellowship, or association. These loose-knit organisations are not denominations in the traditional sense of a denomination with hierarchies, headquarters, retirement funds or other infrastructure or controlling mechanisms. The level of loyalty or emotional commitment to these fellowships and associations is one of a personal

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<sup>198</sup> Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, The Principles and Practices, 1997 Revised.

matter since there is little means available for these groups to exercise any actual control over a missionary or member church or group.

Independent Baptist and Bible church associations and fellowships may include, for example, The Fundamental Fellowship of Missions, the Baptist Bible Fellowship, The Independent Fundamental Churches of America, The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, The Southwide Baptist Fellowship and many similar, though often smaller and more regional, groupings.

An example of one of the larger associations is the G.A.R.B.C.: The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (U.S.A.). A review of the GARBC Constitution provides a good overview of some of the central ideas and purposes found among these associations and fellowships of Independent Baptist churches.

To maintain an association of sovereign Bible-believing, Christ-honouring Baptist churches; to promote the spirit of evangelism; to spread the Gospel; to advance Regular Baptist educational and missionary enterprises at home and abroad; to raise and maintain a testimony to the truth of the Gospel and to the purity of the Church; to raise a standard of Biblical separation from worldliness, modernism and apostasy; to emphasize the Biblical teaching that a breakdown of divinely established lines between Bible believers and apostates is unscriptural and to be a voice repudiating cooperation with movements which attempt to unite true Bible believers and apostates in evangelistic and other cooperative spiritual efforts.

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The procedures for approval of churches desiring to fellowship with the GARBC reveals an important doctrinal attitude or emphasis regarding how memberships may be acquired and how they must be "limited memberships."

It is useful in understanding the independent movement to note that the word "fellowship," not "membership" is important to the churches of this movement. Independent Baptists believe that a Baptist church cannot be a member of anything outside of itself. It can declare itself in fellowship with any body of Baptists on earth, but cannot be a member. Bible churches do not have the same degree of stringency as to their polity and attitudes toward membership, but the affinity between these two groupings of independents, especially in South Africa, is obvious to all. The value of the word fellowship is clear in the following document by the General Association of Regular Baptists:

Any Baptist church on the North American continent, the United States and her territorial possessions which is not in fellowship or cooperation with any local, state or national convention, association or group which permits the presence of liberals, liberalism (modernists or apostates), and which church subscribes to the Constitution and Articles of Faith of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches contained in the current church directory, and which desires to fellowship with the GARBC ... Upon the recommendation of the Council of Eighteen at the annual meeting of the GARBC, and a majority vote of the Association, the church shall be received into fellowship.<sup>200</sup>

Independent Baptists take their doctrinal views to a maximum degree of practical and even legal application. They see a "fellowshipping church" as totally free to withdraw from an association or fellowship at any time and for any reason ... "sufficient to itself." In conformity with the historic Baptist position, even the property rights of such a church cannot be legally prejudiced or endangered by such a withdrawal.<sup>201</sup> This attitude obviously filters down or permeates through the

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<sup>199</sup> GARBC, The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, Constitution, Section I, 1995 revised, Schaumburg, Illinois.

<sup>200</sup> GARBC, The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, Constitution, Section I, 1995 revised, Schaumburg, Illinois.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, Article V. Cessation of Fellowship, Section 1.

Independent Fundamental Baptist movement and has a direct effect on the levels of freedom of expression and autonomy afforded missionaries.

Most of these associations and fellowships abstain from creating and/or attempting to control educational, missionary and other benevolent agencies. The tendency is to prefer approving agencies that are Baptist, or Bible with "Baptist" or "Baptistic" in their subtitles, and that are considered by the association's churches to be sound in doctrine, organization, and ethical practices. The approval of various missionary or other Christian agencies<sup>202</sup> is honoured by the fellowshipping churches to whatever degree the individual church cares to give. In a very real sense these approved agencies are recommendations more than actual "approvals."

In the case of the General Association of Regular Baptists (GARBC) the Southern and Central African region has three such approved<sup>203</sup> agencies in South Africa, The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism ABWE, The Evangelical Baptist Mission (EBM); and in Zambia, The Baptist Mid-Mission (BMM).

**A.B.W.E.: Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.** This agency is a 50/50% mixture of General Association of Regular Baptist church Missionaries and Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries. This agency was born from a reaction against liberalism in the (Northern) American Baptist Convention.

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<sup>202</sup> GARBC, *The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, Constitution*, Section I, 1995 revised, Schaumburg, VII. Approved Agencies, Section 1.

<sup>203</sup> Recent decisions within the General Association of Regular Baptists have removed the need for such "approvals."

**B.B.F.: Baptist Bible Fellowship**, Springfield, Missouri. This agency was born from a reaction against liberalism in the Southern Baptist Convention and has a strong emphasis on the local church - rejecting any doctrinal connection with the "Universal Church" - which they consider as Biblically unacceptable. It has a strong historical link to the Baptist Bible College of Springfield, Missouri.

**B.I.M.I.: Baptist International Missions, Inc.** Rossville, Georgia. This agency was born from a relationship with the Tennessee Temple College (later the Tennessee Temple University and Seminary) of Chattanooga, Tennessee. It is a conservative and culturally Southern college that is moderately fundamentalist.

**B.M.M.: Baptist Mid-Missions**, Cleveland, Ohio. This agency is dominantly made-up of Midwestern United States churches that are members of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. Its missionaries may also be Independent Baptist church missionaries. This agency was also born from a reaction against liberalism in the (Northern) American Baptist Convention.

**B.M.W.: Biblical Ministries Worldwide**, Atlanta, Georgia. This agency was born from a union of a number of Fundamentalist Bible church missionary agencies. The BMW ministries in South Africa include church planting and pastoral training.

**B.W.M.: Baptist World Mission**, Decatur, Alabama. This agency was an outgrowth of a number of smaller struggling agencies reorganising. Their ministries focus on

church planting and leadership training. They are particularly vocal regarding separatism, and the King James Version of the Bible.

**E.B.M.: Evangelical Baptist Missions, Kokomo, Indiana.** This agency is also an approved General Association of Regular Baptist agency and was born from a reaction against liberalism in the (Northern) American Baptist Convention.

**G.F.A.: Gospel Fellowship Association, Greenville, South Carolina** This agency is a mixture of Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries who have generally graduated from the Bob Jones University of the same city. . This agency was born from a reaction against liberalism in America and considers itself to be especially separatist and fundamentalist in conviction.

**I.F.M.: Independent Faith Mission, Greensboro, North Carolina.** This agency is a mixture of Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries who are sent out from churches that were themselves born from a reaction against liberalism in America.

**IND. or No Agency:** These missionaries have come to minister without involving particular sending agencies. However, for legal reasons these missionaries may look to missionaries working through missionary agencies to sponsor or recommend them to the local governments. They are usually sent under the direct responsibility of an American congregation.



**(Qual-Ind. Bap.):** Qualified, educated and/or ordained as an Independent Baptist, or a member of an American or Canadian Independent Baptist congregation, but nonetheless serving in an Interdenominational or African based missionary Agency.

**A.E.F. African Evangelical Fellowship.** Though the AEF is an evangelical and non-denominational missionary agency, in the period before the independent fundamentalists had their own sending agencies, a good number of independent fundamental Baptist missionaries ministered in South Africa through the AEF.

The periods when a good number of American fundamentalists were present in AEF ranks should include and even be limited to the periods from their “Sixth Decade, 1940-1950,” to their “Eighth Decade, 1960-1970.” These were periods when “candidates increased, especially from”<sup>204</sup> “... American, and Canadian Sending Councils” and as mentioned earlier, before the American independent agencies became active. These independent fundamentalists should include, among others, Jack Davis now ministering with BMW, Frank and Betty Davis, Bill & Elsie Hunter ( both couples with (WEF/BMW) but now retired), and Jim & Evelyn Hix (currently in Nova Scotia). These families are especially interesting since they all resigned from AEF to join Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionary agencies. In the early seventies these new independent fundamentalists agencies showed a willingness to come into Southern Africa. Many missionaries who were members of independent Baptists and Bible churches chose to stay within the AEF until they

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<sup>204</sup> The African Evangelical Fellowship, History of the Fellowship, 1985, African Evangelical Fellowship International Office, Reading, Berks, England. Current, P.O. Box 411167, Charlotte, N.C. 28241, USA

retired. It must be clearly stated that the AEF as a non-denominational agency was never linked directly to independent or fundamental Baptist churches.

**T.E.A.M. The Evangelical Alliance Mission, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.** The missionaries of T.E.A.M. were like the AEF missionaries, especially noted as “theologically conservative” missionaries for from the 1950’s to the 1970’s. The TEAM missionaries are generally members of non-denominational community or Bible churches but many are members of other denominations, but numerous Baptist churches are also represented in the various countries where TEAM operates. From World War II until the early 1970’s they were among the most conservative American missionaries in South Africa. Over time, the American division between fundamentalist and evangelical grew wider and the T.E.A.M. missionaries were perceived by some to be moving to a less conservative or more contemporary evangelical position. The independent fundamental missionary agencies would attempt to “fill the void” they perceived to be created by these doctrinal shifts.

**Other Independent Baptist:** Other types of (non-American based) Independent Baptist groupings also exist in South Africa. Examples include:

The Free Baptists of Sweden who have served in South Africa since 1892. They have worked among the Zulus in Natal province and also in Transvaal. In the former area an independent Baptist church was formed in 1976, and in Transvaal, a Transvaal Independent Baptist church in 1985.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Wardin, A.W., ed., Baptists around the World, A Comprehensive Handbook, Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995. 59.

### 3.5 The Independent Baptists Missionary Motivation and Vision.

The Independent Baptists are in practice a dedicated evangelistic and doctrinally evangelical people<sup>206</sup>.

#### 3.5.1 Missionary motivation.

Evangelism is literally at the heart of their ministry and is their primary motivation.

Worship, as vital as it is, is not viewed as superior to or necessarily detached from evangelism and mission<sup>207</sup>. Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches see the classic scripture passages such as Matthew 28:19-20, John 17:18 and Acts 1:8 as mandating the ministry of evangelism to both the individual Christian and the corporate Christian congregation. Independent Baptists agree with Charles Van Engen when he explains that this view of mission was greatly lost to the church at large especially following the Second World War:<sup>208</sup>

During the 1960's the growing enthusiasm for the relationship of church and mission was reflected in the documents of Vatican Council II, as well as in the World Council of Churches study, "The church for others and the church for the World." Unfortunately, the activism of the time ended up making church and missions nearly synonymous, defining the church in terms of its usefulness for social change. The church only really mattered as it contributed to radical changes in the world. The dominant phrase became, "The church is mission." But a vital component was mission, as Neill pointed out when he warned that "if everything is mission, nothing is mission."<sup>209</sup>

Independent Baptists have taught and practiced the message of a congregation taking the Gospel to the whole world - to all non-believers - as a core concept of their understanding of Christianity. Although their goal has been one of establishing churches that would have Biblically based worship styles, and mature spiritual lives among their membership, the core ministry of Independent Baptists is training and

<sup>206</sup> Jackson, P. R., *The Doctrine and Administration of the Church*, Regular Baptist Press, Schaumburg, 1980, 11-22

<sup>207</sup> Amstutz, H. E., *The Church Planter's Manual*, Cherry Hill, Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, 1985, 35

<sup>208</sup> Van Engen, C., *God's Missionary People*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1991, 79.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

encouraging (soul-winners) evangelists and missionary outreach through the direct efforts of their lay membership.

### 3.5.2 Missionary vision.

The Independent Baptist missionaries have a clearly stated goal of planting and multiplying local churches.<sup>210</sup> Their vision is to carry this focus to their churches where missionary ministry transfers to the congregation where “branch” churches can be born.<sup>211</sup> In more technical terms, the Independent Baptists are seeking the creation of autonomous and indigenous churches competent and committed to reproducing themselves.

In South Africa the goal of congregations reaching a maturity level enabling them to be reproductive has often been more difficult to reach than many expected. The first reason for this goal being so illusive is partially due to two related problems of balance: some are being too hasty and others far too modest in leading congregations to independence from the church planting missionary or the missionary agency. This problem of balance is directly related to training leadership to a competent level. The training is often left to too late in the church planting process, or too hastily done. As South African leaders are trained the missionaries are often slow in recognising their emerging leaders.<sup>212</sup> The selection process of ordaining men to the ministry also faces similar “timing” problems. The danger of creating an *elitism* among ministers results from training leaders who do not have a “servant leadership” ministry style.<sup>213</sup>

<sup>210</sup> The Principles and Practices of The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, Harrisburg, Pa. 1997.

<sup>211</sup> Allan, R., Missionary Methods - St Paul's or Ours?, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962, 83

<sup>212</sup> Hodges, M. L., A Guide to Church Planting, Chicago, Moody Press, 1973, 76.

<sup>213</sup> Greenleaf, R. K., with Spears, L.C., ed., The Power of Servant Leadership, San Francisco, Bennett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 1998, 13-19. [R. Greenleaf was a life-long member of the Religious Society of Friends -Quakers.]

Though the Methodists example is useful here - it is clear that Baptists also create similar attitudes among their deacons or career pastors. Bengt Sundkler explains:

The use of "lay-workers" by the Methodists, Anglicans and even the Lutherans in Zululand illustrates well the problem of adapting the originally intended indigenous and autonomous leadership to something "less," i.e. the Methodist "class" system, the dynamic cellular structure, or something different. S.B. Ngcobo writing on the African elite in South Africa, mentions the ministers of religion as the first example of an "educated elite."<sup>214</sup>

For churches and/or missions within the Independent Baptist and the non-denominational evangelical groupings these "educated elite" style of leaders should be a direct affront to their stated congregational doctrines and non-hierarchical polity. Yet it is often a fact of life among these churches that an elite leadership has been created. This creation of an *élite*<sup>215</sup> leadership may be due to the strong influence of the South African reformed religious culture, or just the missionaries' failure to provide a clear alternate response and example. Where the missionaries lead from an *élite* mindset they will scuttle their own efforts at filling the gap between Baptist theological idealism<sup>216</sup> and the pervasive South African reformed culture which is effectively a "second nature" to many of those who are converted out of Reformed, Anglican or Catholic traditions.

Another reason why Independent Baptists have faced struggles with their goal of indigenisation and autonomy in South Africa is the problematic issue that has developed over the role of an Eldership<sup>217</sup>. Eldership, as a popular development has opened a window to the concept of a vague authority given to church leaders. The title Elder has in many South African churches only added to a class structure and resolved very little regarding the creation of an indigenous and autonomous government for the churches. This is especially so when the Elder seems to be a hand

<sup>214</sup> Sundkler, B. G., *World of Mission*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1963, 47.

<sup>215</sup> Allan, R. *Missionary Methods - St Paul's or Ours?* Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1962, 82.

<sup>216</sup> Ideologically Independent Baptists teach that every Christian is a "priest before God" and that the pastor is to be a servant of the congregation - not a separate class or distinct authority figure.

<sup>217</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr., *The Anatomy of a Church*, Pompano City, Word of Grace Communications, 1984, 128.

picked “co-worker” of the missionary. Though gaining some new popularity, Eldership remains generally unacceptable to the majority of Independent Baptists since they consider it as either a “quick fix” with only short-lived value and something that leads to longer term problems or they consider it as simple misuse of the concept of pastor.

An added problem of eldership relates to the fact that the use of voluntary elders as “the pillars of the local congregation” a common understanding of these leaders in so many South African missionary ministries,<sup>218</sup> has introduced a level of confusion within some Independent Baptist ministries. This confusion is due to the eldership representing a conflicting and “considerable influence and power”<sup>219</sup> structure that leads to real pressures among the Independent Fundamental Baptist churches. Baptist churches have traditionally placed an emphasis on congregational government and consensus leadership and have not provided a structure or office for those who have managerial or other forms of leadership skills, something now being introduced through the eldership concept.

Within the South African context the issue of indigenisation, though not fully resolved in its traditional form, is now faced with even further challenges. The separatist churches are raising the question of Africanisation in a spectacular way.<sup>220</sup> These informal but very real African congregations<sup>221</sup> and groups play an increasing

<sup>218</sup> Sales, J. M., *The Planting of the Churches in South Africa*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishers, 1971, 144.

<sup>219</sup> Sundkler, B.G.M., *Christian Ministry in Africa*, 65 and a quotation from by S.B. Ngcobo, (The International Social Science Bulletin, No. 3, 1956,) 121; Elders, 159.

<sup>220</sup> Vorster, J.M., ed., *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Church History Society of Southern Africa, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, June 1998, Volume XXIV, No. 1, A Comparative Study of Two Ecclesiologies, the Coptic and the African Initiated Churches, L. D. Jafta, 56-57

<sup>221</sup> Pillay, G.J. and Hofmeyr, J.W., ed., *Perspective on Church History - An Introduction for South African Readers*, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, HAUM Tertiary, 1991, “The Ethiopians are more orthodox, the Zionists have retained

role and have an increasing influence on the future perceptions of anything claiming to be an indigenous church. "Christened with variegated sets of names" ... the separatist churches ... "are to be found in most parts of the continent. In the Republic of South Africa alone, the government has registered some 2000 of them."<sup>222</sup> These groups by their popularity are "calling for a greater contextualisation" i.e. Africanisation, under the banner of indigenisation. They are also influencing many churches to reframe worship styles around the more popular interpretations versus the more Biblical and traditional approaches. In addition, and possibly in some connection with the "separatist churches," the Charismatics have used "Contemporary Christian Music" (CCM) and "user friendly"<sup>223</sup> contextualised worship styles to reply to this post-modern<sup>224</sup> societies' various "felt needs."

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in Southern Africa have generally tried ignoring this influence, but in the new South Africa and the fast changing religious and social picture this growing influence will be increasingly difficult to ignore. As long as the Baptists continue to convert "separatists" followers, re-baptise them, and accept them into the membership of their churches - these influences will grow.

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certain elements of traditional African customs, while the Messianists cling to the idea of a new 'messiah,' a black messiah of their own." 260 .

<sup>222</sup> Northcott, C., *Christianity in Africa*, London, SCM Press Ltd, 1963, 90, Referenced to, Sundkler, Bengt, *The Christian Ministry in Africa, Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Oxford Press for Institute of African Affairs); also of note, Welbourn, F.W., *East African Rebels*, SCM Press.

<sup>223</sup> Hybels, B., *Becoming A Contagious Christian*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1994, 197-210.

<sup>224</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., "Dialogue Motivators," The Church Ministries Institute, Cape Town, 1999.. The central tenants of Post-modernism state that (1.) Nothing is absolutely sure. (2.) Nothing is absolutely wrong or evil. (3.) Every individual's lifestyle deserves acceptance. (4.) One's lifestyle choices are personal and should be interpreted on the basis of the individual's own subjective standards. (5.) The ethical and moral aspects of our lives is simply fatalistically controlled or a matter of pure chance, thus no one must be understood as personally "guilty" or responsible by others. (6.) Our various individual, family and national cultures are ethically and morally neutral. In fact, culture needs to be understood as "free" from any real liability or accountability. Ref, Carson, D.A., *The Gagging of God*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Another issue or problem that needs to be addressed by the Independent Baptists (if they are to have any long term role or future influence in South Africa) is the issue of race relations. The issue is really the matter of church race relations and is an important issue requiring serious attention. Church race relations must not be developed through conformity but based on a truly Biblical perspective. Alan Paton told the All-Africa church conference at Ibadan, Nigeria (1958):

Our churches are to a dangerous degree conforming churches, and instead of transforming society, have become conformed to it. There are Christians and church-men, both lay and clerical, who have refused to conform and who have spoken out against conforming. But, on the whole, in racial matters the South African churches obey the customs of the country rather than the great commandments ... the Church's duty is not to preserve the *status quo*, its duty is to conserve those supra-temporal foundations on which the *status quo* was based. The people of Africa are on the march into the modern age; and the church must march with them, the guardian not of what is old but of what is ageless.<sup>225</sup>

For Independent Baptists we must add to, or even replace, Paton's term "ageless" with the term "Biblical." - but the point is nonetheless quite valid. Bishop Desmond Tutu helps clarify the importance of this issue, while pointing to a reality of life in South Africa, when he states:

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<sup>225</sup> Paton, A., The Church in Changing Africa, 54.



In South Africa, the whole process of reconciliation has been placed in very considerable jeopardy by the enormous disparities between the rich, mainly the whites, and the poor, mainly the blacks. The huge gap between the haves and the have-nots, which was largely created and maintained by racism and apartheid, poses the greatest threat to reconciliation and stability in our country. ... Reconciliation is going to have to be the concern of every South African. It has to be a national project to which all earnestly strive to make their particular contribution ...”<sup>226</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century missionary outreach was at an extremely effective stage. “The South African General Missionary Society (established in 1904 but conceived by Andrew Murray Jr., in the 1880s) spurred much of this growth.”<sup>227</sup> But it was not long before the growing complications and difficulties in evangelisation were being recognised. In 1911 Gustav Gerdener, a South African and the General Secretary of the Student’s Christian Association of South Africa in Stellenbosch, wrote:

“It is doubtful whether the Conference as constituted today can serve the effective evangelisation of South Africa.”<sup>228</sup>

The early Baptists learned that issues of indigenisation, autonomy, church race relations and of course the matter of human rights were all growing together to form a ‘wall’ blocking much of the consistent development they had hoped to experience once their ministries matured<sup>229</sup>. Earlier ministries of such men as William Davies of the Baptist Missionary Society (1832-1838)<sup>230</sup> would be among the first to recognise

<sup>226</sup> Tutu, D. M., *No Future Without Forgiveness*, London, Rider, 1999, 221-222

<sup>227</sup> Shaw, M., *The Kingdom of God in Africa*, A Short History of African Christianity, 212, Referenced to, Falk, Growth of the Church in Africa, 181-182.

<sup>228</sup> Gerdener, G. *Studies in the evangelisation of South Africa*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1911, 202 (Not to be mistaken for the S.A. Missionary Conference – an ecumenical conference.)

<sup>229</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., *By Taking Heed*, Rodepoort, Baptist Publishing House, 1983, 302

<sup>230</sup> Stanley, B., *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1992*, Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1992, 215 and Reference to, BMS Committee Minutes, 1 Dec. 1831, 76-8; 23 Aug. 1838, 81.3.

difficulties of resolving these issues. The larger missionary efforts, also once so effective in the Cape Colony, would face these same challenges and much of their earlier effectiveness<sup>231</sup> was being greatly slowed!<sup>232</sup> The London Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Methodists, though most successful, tried to reply by making the Cape Colony<sup>233</sup> their focus and preserve but they would discover their strategies would also face the complications (of consistent development and maturity) related to issues of indigenisation<sup>234</sup>, autonomy, church race relations<sup>235</sup> and human rights<sup>236</sup>. Even the acclaimed missionary ministry of the Dutch Reformed church (NGK)<sup>237</sup> was slowed and had to modify its approach to outreach and mission due to these issues or challenges. <sup>238</sup>

The problem of who and what constitutes someone being identified as a “heathen” and who and how<sup>239</sup> someone might be offered <sup>240</sup> salvation or identified as a believer is a complicated matter<sup>241</sup> for sponsoring missionary agencies and churches alike. The Independent Baptists depend on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans - especially the first five chapters- to settle this issue, but the matter is more complicated than many recognise at first and the Independent Baptists have been no exception.

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<sup>231</sup> Latourette, K.S., *A History of Christianity*, Penetration of Madagascar, and Africa South of Sahara, New York, Harper & Row Publishers, 1953, 1306.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 1078-1079.

<sup>233</sup> Note, This general term the Cape Colony refers to the whole Cape, both East, West and Northern provinces.

<sup>234</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 1309.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, 1437.

<sup>236</sup> Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, 31

<sup>237</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 1306.

<sup>238</sup> Roy, K, *Zion City RSA, The Story of the Church in South Africa*, Cape Town, The South African Baptist Historical Society, 2000, 189.

<sup>239</sup> Sproul, R.C., *Willing to Believe - The Controversy over Free Will*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1997.

<sup>240</sup> Nettles, T. J. *By His Grace and For His Glory. A Historical, Theological and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1986, 388

<sup>241</sup> Makhubu, P., *Who are the Independent Churches?*, Johannesburg, Skotaville, 1988.

Just a seemingly “simple matter” of the choice of one’s Bible translation can play such an important role in determining the interpretation of both theology and cultural application and this fact, as often as not, has alluded the sponsoring churches and missions and thus affected the degree of training, orientation and even education thought necessary for missionaries and nationals. Examples of how complicated the matter of interpretation can become can be illustrated in the writings of Gerstner:

The translators (of the Dutch States Bible) were requested to add marginal commentary clarifying the more obscure passages of the Scripture. These glosses were not intended to be theological treatises, but brief explanatory comments. Not surprisingly, however, one finds here a clear presentation of Orthodox Reformed interpretation of passages. As F.W. Grosheide put it, “No one would have any trouble finding the entire Reformed Dogmatics in the glosses.”<sup>242</sup>

To further illustrate how complicated missionary work can be and how even a Bible translation can be “a stumbling block” in a given missionary setting, I refer to the Bible used by the early Voortrekkers which was full of interpretive commentary. How much these poor interpretations and commentaries actually had on the effectiveness of early missionary work we will never know but the lesson of those complications illustrates the same problems in our own day. Although the Voortrekker Bible’s commentary explained that the translated term “heathen” could also be understood as “nations,” the commentators did not encourage such an interpretation. [See Psalm 2:8] Next it is important to examine the States Bible references on the issue of covenant theology; the relationship between Old and New Testament. There is sufficient evidence of the “Voetian view” that the New Testament people of God are Israel. Another example is Galatians 6:16 where Paul gives his blessing upon the “Israel of God.” The States Bible commentary explains “that is for all true

believers.”<sup>243</sup> There are many other examples of interpretive confusion relating to the church being referred to as Israel and these ‘national benefits’ being ascribed to the Afrikaans people, or possibly one or another church or even race.<sup>244</sup>

A further example of how South African churches have not always been as Biblical as its sponsors intended and how local culture has influenced matters is also to be found within the black cultures. An example is given by Bengt Sundkler in this quotation: “From South Africa an African pastor relates that a deceased missionary ‘came in a vision in a heavenly robe. He gave me hymn no 173 in Afrikaans and also Psalm 60 and 70.’ This was decisive for his vocation to the ministry.”<sup>245</sup>

Another example of this theological and sociological confusion effecting churches is the “unspoken” arrangement within the dominantly white or ‘European’ Baptist churches of sending their missionaries only to the blacks, or the so-called coloureds but exempting the whites and white communities from being the targets of missionary church planting. There has also been a general attempt at influencing the various American Baptists and the different American evangelical missionary groups to focus their evangelism on blacks, to the exclusion of whites. This does not seem unusual in South Africa where the whites strong Calvinism creates a spirit that implies that the whites are already Christian. It is interesting to note that in America and Europe there are no racial targets and evangelism and church planting is carried on among all sectors of society.

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<sup>242</sup> “De Theologie der Statenvertalers,” in Nauta, 143. Groshede documents many more theological glosses.

<sup>243</sup> 1682 edition of the States Bible.

<sup>244</sup> Gerstner, J. N., *The Thousand Generation Covenant*, Leiden, E.J. Brill Publishers, 1991, 108.

Although the Independent Fundamental Baptists and Bible churches were never divided into racial groupings, the missionaries came with racially confused backgrounds, and the South Africans that have become Independent Baptists have equally struggled overcoming their own biases and problems, but at least the churches were never officially divided and can build on a more positive foundation. Yet, the point of the illustrations regarding Bible interpretation and commentation make the reality of mission work more realistic and the issues are there to hinder the Gospel.

Cross-cultural influences have often been problematic for Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries. The complexities of mixing American culture with Southern African must not be overlooked in understanding these Independent churches. Some of these ministries were influenced by the American approaches, strategies and religious issues. The overseas churches' viewpoint has often been one of encouraging their missionaries to produce an equivalent, or in some cases -even a copy of their own American doctrinal and ecclesiastical emphasis or even their style. Yet, the results have often been far different to what the sponsor's had expected. The factors of cross-cultural influences have often challenged the tendency toward Americanism.

Certainly the results of recent church planting efforts by the Independent Baptists are such that many of the identifying distinctives of their sponsoring United States based congregations cannot be found in the local applications. The differences between South African culture and United States culture may seem superficial to some, but

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<sup>245</sup> Sundkler, B. G.M., *The Christian Ministry in Africa*, London, SCM Press LTD, 1960, 22.

there are many genuine differences: cultural diversity, language, First, Second & Third World issues and more.

### **3.5.3 The Independent Baptists missionary vision for team ministry.**

To understand a good part of the Independent Baptists outreach into South African one would need to understand the strong commitment of these missionaries to either, or both, an informal and/or a cooperative team<sup>246</sup> concept. This practical and strategic mutual-assistance helped form the base of a philosophy of ministry for many of the newer Independent Bible church missionaries. Though these missionaries were “American based” they would, in time, develop a genuinely South African approach to their ministries. This type of cooperation has, at times, played a vital role in many of the independent and fundamental churches developing a high level of practical unity, as paradoxical as it might seem.

The growth in team ministry and team strategies has played an important role in creating unity, amidst a fair amount of diversity, without leading these independent brethren to formally organise into unions or other denominational bodies or structures.

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<sup>246</sup> Seger, P., Director, Biblical Ministries Worldwide, Atlanta, GA “We are grateful for the Independent Baptist missionaries who assisted us in those early days of ministry. The Lord used such Church Planting missionaries and leaders to help us formulate a philosophy of ministry. The major areas in which this assistance was instrumental would include the concepts of relational evangelism, discipleship and non-formal education and Biblical counselling.”

It must nonetheless be admitted that a good number<sup>247</sup> of Independent Baptists remain very detached from, even un-cooperative toward, other Independent congregations and groupings and they continue to find little reason for cooperation.<sup>248</sup>

Many independent and fundamental missionaries have increasingly focused on team strategies that generally follow four principles:

- I. Church planters should give priority to training both pastoral and lay leadership. The 1970's church planting ministries in Rhodesia and South Africa provided the precedent and early frameworks for such training programmes as the Church Ministries Institute in Gauteng, and Cape Town, Johannesburg's Gethsemane Bible College, and Calvary Bible College and Natal's Baptist Bible College and there are a number of other similar programmes and institutions.
- II. Church planters should instil both a concern for and practical commitment to establishing "branch" ministries as outreaches of the churches planted by Independent Baptist missionaries. Team efforts between missionaries would allow more than one infant ministry to be overseen at a time.
- III. Church planters should lead to the development of "home missionary" ministries led and staffed by fully trained South African ministers and fully financed by South African churches.

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<sup>247</sup> Possibly 35% of all the Independent congregations. Estimate based on an interpretation of information from the "Directory of Independent Fundamental Churches and Leaders in Southern Africa" Dated, 04/06/99.

<sup>248</sup> Anderson, Leith, Leadership that Works, Minneapolis, Bethany House Publishers, 1999, 28-34.

**IV. Church planting by additional missionaries should be encouraged and planned as a part of an informal nation-wide strategy.** These new missionaries would be encouraged to branch out and open "new areas" that are beyond the reach of the existing churches.

This fourth principle assumes that new communities or areas will remain the primary commitment of these independent missionaries but that this would be accomplished by some measure of continuing cooperation between the older churches and the new ministries. These cooperative efforts would include prayer, planning and practical or even financial assistance from churches committed to this same basic strategy.<sup>249</sup>

#### **3.5.4 The Independent Baptists missionary vision for training.**

The issue of training is an issue of vision. Missionary ministry that does not include active involvement in leadership training is simply not efficient missionary ministry. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries have all found ways to effectively involve themselves in training lay and pastoral leaders and this fact is clearly to their credit.<sup>250</sup>

##### **(1.) Pastors Training Institute – IFM in Rhodesia, and Alberton, RSA.**

Established in Rhodesia 1974 – 1979 by Marc S. Blackwell, Sr. and with special courses provided in cooperation with Mark Grings in RSA. Some of these earliest

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<sup>249</sup> Sourced from notes, articles and minutes of the Cape Association of Baptists for World Evangelism and that of Gauteng's Biblical Ministries Worldwide.

<sup>250</sup> Brewer, Monroe, The Training Connection, Non-formal Education, Sun Valley, Project Missionlink, 1990, 26-27.



(1977-81) part-time and full-time IFM - Pastor Training Institute students

included: Alastair Butterworth, Henry Davis, Leonard Schmidt.

**Salisbury/ Harare:**

The Pastors Training Programme - Independent Faith Mission in Rhodesia, 1974 - 1979. Established in 1976 by Marc and Judie Blackwell as the "Pastors Training Programme" this training course was designed to train local church members and others interested in lay and pastoral leadership. The method was one of working together to do specific tasks or ministry responsibilities "in little packages." The idea was: "Come, and we'll do it together." Courses taught included: (1.) Pastoral counselling, (2.) Bible prophecy, (3.) Preparation of expository sermons, and later in 1979, (4.) "The history of fundamentalism" with a "history of Baptists" included.

Although focus was given to the core or primary course themes, efforts were made to cover the essentials of any standard Bible Institute programme. Expository preaching and teaching in the local churches and in the weeknight Bible studies allowed the missionary to provide a focus and example of Biblical exegesis and often to provide sufficient survey studies of the central books of the Bible. The goals were based on a simple understanding of adult education centred on a modified Theological Education by Extension, and basic Socratic teaching methodology. The primary object was to train pastors to a level of competency that they could both minister themselves and one day train others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

**(2.) The Church Ministries Institute - Durban, 1980 -1988:**

The Blackwells, who were now serving with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, moved to Durban in 1980, and were joined by the first graduate of the Salisbury Pastors Training Institute, Stuart Waugh and his family. The Waughs had recently been approved to serve with (IFM) the Independent Faith Mission. Waugh agreed to work together to produce a revision of the Salisbury Pastors Training Programme. Waugh was influential in adding much organisational structure and additional content to the programme. The name was changed to the Church Ministries Institute of Natal. This ministry began by using a modified version of the Theological Education by Extension concept.

1. The curriculum required students to complete thirty questions a week (five questions to be answered per day). These abstract or *Socratic* questions were designed to guide them in their preparatory outside reading and textbook studies and to help the student determine if they in fact had gained sufficient proficiency in understanding how a specific doctrine or Biblical concept was exegeted from a specific verse or section of Scripture.

2. The Church Ministries Institute further modified the "come along side" training approach from the Salisbury Pastor's Training Institute. Using a more structured apprenticeship model where the student would first read every available resource in the *mentors* own library on the assigned subject. The student would then attend and observe the particular class or opportunity with the mentor and then discuss the differences between what he was reading and what he was seeing or experiencing. Next, the mentor would lead the student to help and then to actively participate on an

increasing basis. The mentor would then transfer the class, group or task to the student to give the student opportunity to gain independent practical experience over a period of several months with the mentor present - at first, and then with the mentor dropping completely out of active involvement. Then, the mentor would debrief the student on both the positives and negatives of the experience encouraging and reminding the student that often more is learned from failures than successes.

3. Students have usually been afforded personal discipleship opportunities.

Discipling the student is viewed by many of the Independent Baptists as the best way for the educator to teach using the informal contact of discipleship as an opportunity to educate by sharing as friends.

4. Using three to four hour monthly Saturday seminars content was covered that was not possible in the normal two-hour evening class times, and this also allowed the teacher to introduce special themes or subjects in a "modular" format. When the second ABWE missionary, Dale Marshfield, arrived in Durban he assisted in a further revision of aspects of the Church Ministries Institute syllabus. Some of the missionaries believed there was a need for the programme to become more acceptable academically and possibly even able to see the programme develop or change to the degree that formal accreditation could be obtained. By 1986, the Natal C.M.I. committee<sup>251</sup> decided that the original CMI concept was not sufficient. The curriculum team reorganised the concept into a regular Bible college.

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<sup>251</sup> Archival notes and informal minutes of the Church Ministries Institute, Cape Town, 1981-1989.

Some of the Durban students, had always questioned mixing two methods: traditional lecture style teaching and non-formal style teaching. The belief that a formal degree level educational programme was more profitable won the day.

### **(3.) The Church Ministries Institute - Cape Town, 1988 to 2000:**

Dave Rudolph and John Jackson started this programme in Cape Town in 1988 but struggled to decide if it should become more formal or non-formal and it eventually closed for a time in 1991. Then in 1992 a number of the Cape's newly arrived independent fundamental missionaries who were discipling a few of their men started adding further coursework. Their emphasis was on practical local church training.

Observing the changes in Natal, a traditional Bible College or Seminary lecture style with its focus on transferring content seemed to the Cape committee to hold too many drawbacks. The more personal lessons of "life-content" messages available through the non-formal style<sup>252</sup> would also be less available in the formal lecture style. At this stage in the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church history a majority of the South African independent and fundamental pastors, currently serving Independent Baptist churches in South Africa were originally trained by one or another non-formal concept of education. To leave the non-formal behind seemed unnecessary and after further deliberation<sup>253</sup>, it was decided to put their energy in improving the non-formal rather than abandoning it.

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<sup>252</sup> Whitehouse, Frank, *Systems Documentation*, London, Business Books Limited, 1973, 15-23, 50-74, 85-86, 95  
<sup>253</sup> Gangel, K. O. & Wilhoit, J. C., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1993, 65,79, 125, 211, 310.

In time, this led to a renewed interest in the Church Ministries Institute being reorganised along the original Rhodesian and early Natal philosophies<sup>254</sup> for use in the Cape Town Metropolitan region. The Church Ministries Institute has grown in size and improved its curriculum and organisational structure. It continues to this day with an emphasis on Socratic, non-formal, and a more (Biblical) Outcomes Based (OB) curriculum and syllabi.<sup>255</sup>

Though some formal or traditional classroom styled lectures are used to meet specific course requirements, teaching non-formally provides a majority of our course work. Teaching non-formally or Socratically requires continued training, classroom experience<sup>256</sup> and much preparation time. Before a missionary can come from a traditional American Bible College or Seminary to teach using a TEE<sup>257</sup> and non-formal classroom discussion style, a time of re-training and transition is necessary. The students also need sufficient time and help in making the transition to the non-formal style of study and classroom inter-action central to this method.

The Cape Church Ministries Institute is now accredited through the Potchefstroom University. Its Christian Higher Education philosophy and high standards in curriculum, grading and student record keeping have added much to our overall programme. In addition, semi-annual guest lecturers have often taught two-week modules that replace the earlier C.M.I. Saturday Seminars.

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<sup>254</sup> Adams, J. E., *More than Redemption*, A Theology of Christian Counselling, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979, 88, 170-171.

<sup>255</sup> Ford, L., *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education*, Nashville, Broadman Press, 1991, 67-76, 104, 248, 250-258, 291-293.

<sup>256</sup> Lassey, P., *Developing a Learning Organisation*, London, Kogan Page Limited, 1998, Note, Chapter 7, Learning and coaching, Chapter 8, A flexible approach to learning, Chapter 9, The learning resource centre.

<sup>257</sup> TEE. Theological Education by Extension. An approach, which attempts to take the training to the learner as opposed to bringing the learner to a central institution. (Glossary.)

The Church Ministries Institute of the Western Cape works together with its sister institution in Gauteng to upgrade its strategy, methods, and courses in an effort to meet the needs of men and women in these churches who want more training for leadership positions in church ministries. Some of these students only want to know their Bible better, while others want training to become better Sunday school teachers, or better deacons or youth workers. Of course, many seek the training that would prepare them for ministries as church planters, missionaries working cross-culturally, evangelists or pastors.

The goal of these independent fundamental churches is practical training for ministry. As already pointed-out, the training includes discipleship, apprenticeships,<sup>258</sup> formal and non-formal classroom<sup>259</sup> instruction, along with supervised ministry experiences, that are always focused<sup>260</sup> on the ministries of the local Independent Fundamental churches. The students' own pastor and local congregation play a key role in helping the student acquire this training and develop effective ministry gifts. The courses are open to either men or women. Husbands training for a specific ministry are encouraged to invite their wives to study alongside them. High school young people as well as university students are welcome to attend casually, or audit particular courses or study part-time. The primary goal is to better prepare and educate the local church congregation for practical Christian service in ministries to children, young people or through Bible studies or discipleship groups.

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<sup>258</sup> Adams, J. E., Back to the Blackboard, Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1982 128-129.

<sup>259</sup> Issler, K., and Ronald, H., How We Learn, A Christian Teacher's Guide to Educational Psychology, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House Co., 1994, 29-39, 203-224

One of the strengths of this Church Ministries Institute plan is its balance between academic instruction, personal discipleship and practical ministry experience in the student's own church. The discipleship and ministry experiences are vital parts of the C.M.I. philosophy of ministry and since the students are personally supervised by the student's own pastor the education is quite personalised. Much depends upon the student's interests, desires and initiative. The academic instruction comes from two sources: local pastor-instructors, and visiting lecturers. Using the Potchefstroom University Christian Higher Education curriculum as a framework, adding the Church Ministry Institute's workshops, and practicums, the students may earn *certificates* as they progress through the programme, and at the end of five years of study may also satisfy the credit requirements of P.U.- C.H.E. for their B.Theo. degree.

Some of the more recent students seeking to serve in independent fundamental churches have personalised educational needs. The Church Ministries Institute has responded in recent years by offering courses in music ministries, and youth leadership, missions and other practical ministries areas. These courses often include studies through other universities (either correspondence or residential programmes).

Specialised courses are made even more flexible by including "Church Planting Practicums" of six months to a one year. The practicums are offered through one of the local church ministries. During this time, the student is invited to join a ministry team in a local church planting situation so he or she can gain ministry experience in the student's chosen field. These "Church Planting Practicums" could even lead to a

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<sup>280</sup> Allen, R., *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1962, 119, 121-122.

longer internship in certain cases. At the end of the practicum, a C.M.I. committee would meet with the student to assess his development and experiences. The independent fundamental churches believe that the highest recognition a student can obtain is the recognition of his or her own local church. For a pastor, such recognition would be the local church's own ordination.

Over five years, the Cape Church Ministries Institute programme evolved into three parts: (1.) Sunday evening classes require the registered student to study the assigned Scriptures, read assigned texts and commentaries, take notes on the evening's discussion contents and prepare a Bible Study assignment in the form of a written report, a sermon or Sunday School lesson. (2.) Sunday afternoon classes meet on alternate weeks and the course studies and requirements are determined by the instructors and include applied theory assignments or practicums. (3.) Some intensive module courses are also offered during the course of a year. Often they will be taught by visiting guest instructors from the United States of America.

#### **(4.) The Church Ministries Institute in Gauteng:**

This Johannesburg based ministry began in 1985 and operates into the present time. In 1982, Paul Seger began developing a Biblical Ministries Worldwide application or interpretation of the Rhodesian, Natal and Cape Church Ministries Institutes with their various successes and failures and different causes and effect carefully considered. The goal to have a local church serve as a training base for Christian leadership development was met within the first few years. At first, the goal of linking University of South Africa theology courses with C.M.I. was generally speaking too optimistic and was not needed or successful.



The Church Ministries Institute as a thoroughly non-formal approach did not find popular acceptance in Johannesburg at first. In most cases, it was necessarily mixed with traditional or formal Bible College methods. This mixture of methods was due to the available teachers all having a formal Bible College background and thus, to a degree, a lack of understanding and appreciation for the non-formal method. In retrospect, it is evident that insufficient teacher training, needed to assist missionaries to teach with these new non-traditional methods, was a fault in the early years.

Regarding the general idea of apprenticeship - it worked in a majority of cases, but often the failures that did occur in apprenticeship projects should have been expected in such young churches, among such young converts, and with a staff that was often overworked. The apprenticeship concept often struggled and struggles to this day in each of the cities where it is applied, largely because it takes an enormous amount of time on the part of both the mentor and the students. Some of the solutions for resolving the apprenticeship problems were: (a.) to have fewer and better planned apprenticeships, (b.) to be more specific in setting goals and plans for each individual and each apprenticeship project, (c.) to recognise the importance of flexibility on everyone's part, and (d.) to minister as a team in planning, organising and implementing individual apprenticeships.

Further analysis<sup>261</sup> in regard to "apprenticeships" shows that ... the amount of time spent on apprenticeships by one missionary for a student varied heavily over the years from missionary to missionary and from student to student. The general lesson all learned, throughout the country, is that the amount of time needed increasingly became difficult

to give on both sides. The need for ongoing teacher training and development, and the need for improving materials as a important aspect of the administrative team of any Church Ministries Institute effort. Paul Seger's perspective is especially helpful here:

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One of the characteristics of the early days of CMI on the Reef was that we were in a major learning curve. We had all come from a background of formal institutionalised training programmes. I had been involved in a Bible institute with other missionaries which was very much oriented towards the typical western style of education. Though we have some experience in non-formal education, this will be an ongoing problem for us. We will habitually revert back to using methodologies by which we were taught. During those years, we periodically budgeted time to talk about this subject. Marc Blackwell would often conduct these sessions. I believe it was critical for us to keep hearing about the subject of non-formal education. We probably did not do it enough. I think it is important to keep learning about the subject of non-formal education itself. As you plan for the future, it would be important to have that as a regular standing item, so that these issues and principles would be kept before everyone.

Write papers, conduct seminars, have Socratic discussions, practice it together.... keep the subject of non-formal education in the forefront of everyone's thinking. I think that the weakness in the apprenticeships we conducted were due to a lack of understanding of the philosophy of non-formal education. Often, the apprenticeships became assignments to go and do rather than lets do it together.

Paul Seger, as one of the initial leaders and teachers of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute, explains some of the early growing pains in more detail:

In analysing the Johannesburg Church Ministries Institute, one must look at several stages of development. There were the first few years where we were all in a period of trying to learn the concepts plus take care of men who were already committed to going into the ministry. Things were moving at a fast pace for all of us—probably faster than we could assimilate.

<sup>251</sup> Notes from an informal discussion with pastors and missionaries and previous students of the Church Ministries Institute - Gauteng in 1997.

<sup>262</sup> Seger, P. with Blackwell Sr., M. S. ed., *An assessment of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute*, 1997.

As we started we were heavily dependent upon the resources and help of the men in Durban. The curriculum which we used initially was almost entirely from Durban. We would purchase courses from them. The core of that material was the programme text approach, whereby 30 questions would be answered before coming together for the lecture and discussion. A half hour (per course) was spent in reading in the morning and then another half hour answering questions in the evening. Husbands and wives worked together on this programme. For the first several years we depended heavily upon the expertise and input from Durban. Then, further down the road we got, the more we drifted from the programme text, and many of the men were writing courses themselves. Marc observes that much of this early material was itself in transition, untried, and not always specifically serving the need that we had all hoped it would supply.

The second stage we went through was after that first group of students had completed their studies. We were without men committed to training for the pastorate. We had failed to keep people in the pipeline. Many of our energies were going into helping the men we already had and not enough time was spent developing other men in the church so that there would be a continual flow of men training for the pastorate. As you plan for the next stage of developing CMI, it would be important to keep in balance that constant flow of reaching new believers, training believers, and preparing men to go into the pastorate. It is, of course, difficult to keep all of these in balance but is must somehow be monitored.<sup>263</sup>

This problem of balance has been common to all of the cities where the Church Ministries Institute has operated, and the very nature of church planting leads to "lull" periods. Each of these Independent churches or co-operating groups of churches has had to carefully reorganise from time to time. This education programme is focused on meeting the local church's actual needs. The independent fundamental missionaries do not want their efforts to be dominated by educational programmes that stifle efforts to evangelise and plant churches. Yet, maintaining some classroom instruction, even if it be informal and simplified, has also proven to have a special value: potential students can be introduced to the possibilities available to them even through a simplified programme. The following historical comment from Paul Seger adds further perspective to CMI:

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<sup>263</sup> Seger, P. with Blackwell Sr., M S. ed., An assessment of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute. 1997, 1.

During the early years in Gauteng all the students came together in one of our churches for the course work. The apprenticeship and discipleship took place in the local churches. Further on in the development of CMI, we decentralised to provide courses in each of our individual churches and the teachers travelled rather than asking the students to come together at one central place. One of the advantages of this was that we reached many more students. Now the course was being offered within reach of people within the local church. Often times it was integrated into the normal programme of the church. Part of our reason for doing this was to try to use this as a feeder programme into full-time pastoral training programme. <sup>264</sup>

#### **(5.) The development of the Church Ministries Institute:**

The Church Ministries Institute has played a vital role of building a leadership base for independent and fundamental churches in Southern Africa. It is important to recognise that the Church Ministries Institute is only one example of many different local church-based training programmes used by the various Independent Baptist and Bible churches. The Church Ministries Institute has developed and is more ordered but not a more formal organisation. Some of the other smaller leadership training programmes are just as effective as the somewhat larger efforts and no loss of effectiveness in general terms has been found. Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches are training good leaders.

#### **(6.) The Church Ministries Institutes achievements and strengths:**

The history of the various Church Ministries Institutes in Southern Africa cover a period of more than twenty-five years and they have played an important leadership training role that began in Salisbury, Rhodesia 1975 (Harare, Zimbabwe). The necessity for such Bible institutes is found in the strategy of missionary church-

planting. As overseas based church planters there was a vital need to duplicate themselves by training other 'national' local church planters and pastors.

Lay-leaders and lay-preachers were needed for effective Church Planting and courses for training deacons were equally helpful. The following list is an arbitrary selection. Some who have been included were chosen simply because they have not received much mention in the earlier sections, others because they illustrate a particular type of student and others just at random. The pastors who have trained these individuals (men or women) have been, to a large extent, not formally trained as educators, but the subject they teach is a subject they are specialists in and the results of the non-formal mentor style education speaks for itself.

As a part of developing Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches, a number of additional Church Ministries Institutes were established: Durban (1980-82), Johannesburg, (1983-85) and Cape Town (1988-91). A small group also meet informally in Newcastle. The emphasis has generally remained one of training pastors, evangelists and church-planters, but additional training was added to include special training for youth workers and worship leaders.

#### **(7.) The Students:**

To understand the size, growth and impact of the Church Ministries Institute a listing follows with random profiles of some of the students from each period:<sup>265</sup>

**1975 Salisbury, Rhodesia:** The first students were: Stuart Waugh, Lance

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>265</sup> Archival notes and Informal Minutes of the Church Ministries Institute, Cape Town, 1981-1989

Davis, Alfred Magadzire, Stephen Makwena, Don Maitland, Lawrence Waugh, Ulrich van der Westhuizen, Kevin McGuinness.

**Profiles from 1975-1980 period:** Stuart Waugh has since planted two autonomous - indigenous independent Baptist churches in South Africa and has just returned to Zimbabwe to plant churches there and to encourage national leaders in further church planting. An example of a lay preacher is Lawrence Waugh - who in his 70s served actively as a team-pastor and part-time preacher and teacher in an Independent Baptist Church outside of Cape Town. Another student from this period, Kevin McGuinness, has pastored the same Independent Fundamental Baptist church for over twenty years.

**1980 - 1988 Durban, South Africa:** Full-time Pastoral Students: Henry Davis, Richard Mondon, George Moodley, Robert Elkington, Graham Peacock, Craig Brannan, Vic Willis; part-time pastoral and lay-ministry students: Norman Clements, T. Wagenaar, and numerous single course students.

**Profiles from 1980 -1988 period:** Pastor Henry Davis started the first independent Baptist "branch" ministry which he serves today as pastor over ten years later. Pastor Moodley led his previously "independent Pentecostal church" out of that movement and founded an independent Baptist church that continues to this day. Pastor Graham Peacock assisted in the founding of the Hillside Baptist church, an independent Baptist congregation, and now serves as its pastor. Pastor Elkington served as an interim pastor for an A.B.W.E. church planter, then pastored the Westville-North congregation before moving to a congregation in Canada. Vic Willis

who with his wife, Nicolette, came to the Lord through an outreach ministry of the Westville-North Community Baptist Church in 1985, was disciplined, trained, ordained and is pastoring a church planted by A.B.W.E., through Dale Marshfield.

**1983- 1996 Johannesburg, South Africa.** Some of the earliest (1977-81) part-time and full-time students were a part of the Independent Faith Mission, the Baptist International Mission, Inc and other Independent Baptist outreach efforts. Alastair Butterworth, Leonard Schmidt, and Bill Meyer. Some of these would begin their studies under the early Pastor's Training Institute modules, and would continue formal studies under the Gethsemane Bible College or the courses offered later through Calvary Baptist. A partial list of the earliest students would include many who are now pastoring and many who came through the ministries of the Biblical Ministries World-wide.

A partial but representative listing of some of the Gauteng Church Ministries Institute students include: Peter Thomas, Dennis Emerton, Barry Springhall, Alex Couper, Alex Cerf, Chris Lambert, Shaun Cerf, Peter Englebrecht, Daniel Warren.

Examples of some part-time lay preachers and evangelist students are represented in such students as Brian Gouws, Dave Gough, Robert Warren, and Lee Gates, and many others.

**Profiles from 1983 -1996 period:** Pastor Peter Thomas is pastoring a ministry established by one missionary, and brought to autonomy by another. Alex Couper serves in a double role of pastor of a Newcastle congregation and as a missionary church-planter to the Zulus on the outskirts of Newcastle. He and his family are

supported financially by their present congregation and various other fundamental churches.

**1988 - 1996 Cape Town, South Africa: The Cape's Church Ministries Institute**

(Student List): Mark Ambler, Lay-preacher & Deacon Programme; F. Naude, Lay-preacher & Deacon Programme; M. Naude, (General); Marc Blackwell, Jr. (Certificate Graduate, with further studies at Stellenbosch and in Grand Rapids, Michigan), Shaun Abrahams (Lay-preaching); Tiny Couper, (Pastoral Student-Trainee), J-J Coetzee, Missionary Trainee.

There are also additional students taking single courses on a semester-to-semester and informal basis. <sup>266</sup>

**Profiles from 1988 - 1998 period:** Marc Blackwell, Jr. (27), married, was one of the first Cape Town students. Having completed the first level course, while studying for a B.A. at the University of Stellenbosch, Marc went on to do post-graduate work in the United States and returned to South Africa in 1996 as a church planting missionary, J-J Coetzee completed his studies and is planning a new Xhosa missionary outreach in the Cape., Llewellyn DeKock is also involved in a new church Planting effort and Michelle Blackwell is serving as an assistant missionary working with a new church planting opportunity and a new Christian school. Tiny Couper, married with three children, has graduated from C.M.I. and is taking steps to pastor a church planted in the early 1990s..

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<sup>266</sup> Archival notes and Informal Minutes of the Church Ministries Institute, Cape Town, 1991-2000.



### **(8.) The Cape Church Ministries Institute Goals:**

The Independent Baptists in the Cape are making every possible effort to provide practical training in administration and 'management theory'<sup>267</sup> for both lay and pastoral leadership. The Independent Baptists see this aspect of the ministry as especially important for churches in a post-modern society.<sup>268</sup>

An additional cooperative effort known as the Cape Leadership Pool is a practical application or model of a "Learning Systems Management" approach for advancing ministries and projects among various Independent and Fundamental churches in the Cape. The students of the Church Ministries Institute are also encouraged to be actively involved in this informal group. Involvement in this type of cooperative group is considered a part of the student's training in understanding contemporary management principles.

The Independent Baptists in the Cape firmly believe that a missionaries success in planting churches is dependent upon strong lay-leaders<sup>269</sup>, church-planters<sup>270</sup>, and local pastors. These leaders must be competently<sup>271</sup> trained. The Cape Independent Baptist

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<sup>267</sup> The Traditional Theory, concentrating on maintaining tradition, The Charismatic Theory, leading to a style that pursues "intuition," The Classical Theory, concentrates on running the organisation, The Human Relations Theory, stress "the leading of groups and interpersonal relationships," The Systems Theory, emphasises relationships between the different parts of an organisation, noting the influence of the parts upon each other and upon the whole. The Learning Theory, focuses on the use of learning groups or teams to formulate management decisions and directions. (Note, Worley, Robert, Change in the Church, A Source of Hope, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1971, 27; Rudge, Peter F., Ministry and Management, London, Tavistock Publications Ltd., 1968, p 21-31.; Lee, Harris W., Theology of Administration, a biblical basis for organising the congregation, Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1981, 28. Singe, Peter M., The Fifth Discippling, The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation, New York, Doubleday, 1990.)

<sup>268</sup> Blackwell, Marc S., "Church Planting Strategy Considerations", Cape Town, Cape Of Good Hope Publications, 1991, (21 pages).

<sup>269</sup> Brann, N., Laitly Mobilized, Grand Rapids, W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company,, 1971, 148.

<sup>270</sup> Greenway, R., S. Guidelines for Urban Church Planting, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1976, 75.

<sup>271</sup> Adams, J. E., More Than Redemption, 171

missionaries and churches are now working together to provide an Elementary, High School and Institute level Christian Education programme that is fully local-church based course. The potential for training South Africans as the future teachers in these various educational programmes is also being considered.

(3.) The Cape Church Ministries Institute tries to use the Socratic educational methodology taught at Potchefstroom University, but still provides a lecture style when it is needed. This methodology combines traditional <sup>272</sup>Bible Institute courses with non-formal<sup>273</sup> methods. Apprenticeships are provided where possible for those who are wanting additional practical<sup>274</sup> experience. The undergraduate curriculum is a five year programme designed to direct the student in the completion of a three-year B.Th. degree. The mixture of non-formal courses, special seminars / workshops, structured apprenticeships and formal courses is offered by a local faculty of Independent Baptist ministers all living in the Cape Town region. The focus on local church ministry, (versus para-church Christian service) has led a number of the young

<sup>272</sup> "Traditional", i.e. the primary use of formal content transferring lectures, students taking detailed notes, writing tests and examinations and reading corresponding textbooks.

<sup>273</sup> Church Ministries Institute, *Non-Formal Teaching Guidelines*, Cape Town, 1996. Acts 9,27-28. First Century Barnabus - a "Master teacher" was pro-active, anticipatory, collaborative and took the "long view" of encountering by modelling. 1. The best forms of Adult Learning have been identified as those, 1.1 Where the Learning is unending, Continuous. 1.2 Where the Learner is anticipating, Critical. 1.3 Where the Learner is participating, Collaborative. 1.4 Where the Learning is pro-active, Experiential. 2. The best goals for Adult Learning are now understood as, 2.1 Those that encourage inductive inquiry and remain tentative. 2.2 Those that lead to progressive planning and accept tension. 2.3 Those that motivate practical modelling and critical testing. 2.4 Those that enhance one's commitment to listening. 2.5 Those that develop skills in learning to learn. Goals, truth, listening, comprehending, inclusiveness, openness, testing, improving, tentativeness, and tension. 2 Timothy 2,1-9 - "In the presence of". 3. The best techniques for Teaching are those that, 3.1 Genuinely communicative, not more facts, theological treatises or theoretical study, but why, and how truth was revealed in Scripture. 3.2 Education by objectives (outcomes), critical, questioning, inquiring, and dialogue based. 3.3 That attends to the problems presented, looks for truth-based solutions and veils obvious or simplistic answers to encourage deeper investigation. 3.4 That are generally inductive, exegetical but remain participatory in nature. 3.5 That evaluate life and future consequences. 4. The best methods for Teaching are those that, 4.1 Clarify issues or ideas. 4.2 Discuss foundational uses. 4.3 Refuse simple answers and look for secondary level exploration. 4.4 Use effective not impressive "key words." 4.5 Looks for principles that govern or governed occurrences. 4.6 Consider how people choose or might act in light of the truth. 4.7 Looks at injurious / positive side effects. 4.8 Considers alternatives.

<sup>274</sup> Ramsay, W.M., *The Education of Christ*, 1902, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 27.

people in the local Cape churches to consider career opportunities among the churches in the Cape region.<sup>275</sup>

The Cape Church Ministries Institute courses include such subjects as Baptist distinctives, pneumatology, eschatology, introduction to Christian doctrine, systematic theology, major and minor prophets, Old Testament history, Old and New Testament book surveys, such as courses in Genesis or the Book of Revelation. Then especially practical courses in family life and ministry, counselling, ecclesiology, hermeneutics, homiletics, dispensationalism, soteriology, apologetics, pastoral epistles, philosophy of ministry and others are offered. The various church and C.M.I. libraries are being linked through the use of computers and select books of quality evangelical and fundamental writers, plus magazines, historical documents and many other selections are available for serious study.

Further, contemporary needs have been recognised by many of the Independent pastors and missionaries. Matters such as Biblical - Pastoral Counselling have also been taught in the Cape and Gauteng Church Ministries Institutes and through special seminars. Training leaders how to deal with the specific emotional and spiritual needs of people is taken more seriously than in the past. Though the logic for this is not usually by liberal clerics, Bible Prophecy is also emphasised among Independent Baptists as a means of encouraging people to have a less short-term outlook on life and to help people understand the dynamics of "literalism" in the Scriptures. Bible Prophecy also provides students with a way of dealing with the falsehoods taught by theological liberalism. Methods of sermon preparation receive emphasis to encourage

students to think more inductively and critically in their Biblical studies. Church History receives added attention as one more building block for the students' growth and understanding of the development of the church and to help them gain perspective or a sense of the context of doctrine and heresy.

The idea of "multiplying yourself through others" is certainly not new, nor is it in any way peculiar to Independent Baptists, either American or South African. On the other hand, there is little doubt that the Independent Baptists have made serious attempts at adhering to simple New Testament concepts and principles. This focus on Biblical evangelism has placed them in a good position to be effective in modern evangelism, and discipleship.<sup>276</sup>

Independent Baptist and Bible church leaders are all in agreement with theologians and missiologists like George W. Peters, who points out that being Biblical is having a "total revelational perspective." The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches of South Africa must be vigilant to maintain doctrine, and improve their commitment to practical ethics – while holding their focus on evangelism and church planting. Peters summarised the matter in a succinct paragraph:

A simple answer is that evangelism; church planting and church growth must find their orientation in the Bible. A return to the principles and practices unfolded in the Book of Acts is the only reliable answer. However, the Book of Acts and the church in Acts cannot be studied in isolation. Revelation is orderly and progressive.

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<sup>275</sup> Blackwell, Devore and Rudolph, "Opportunity Knocks at the Cape, An appeal for Church Planters," Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope Publications, (Pamphlet), 1990.

<sup>276</sup> Moore, W. B., Multiplying Disciples, Colorado Springs, NavPress, 1981.

It is a simple fact that the New Testament follows the Old Testament. It is built on it. It is not the total pyramid of revelation, but without it, the Old Testament would have no summit. The Testaments belong together as the base and the crown belong together. Each has its value and grandeur. Likewise, Acts is preceded by the Gospels and followed by the Epistles with their doctrinal and ethical unfoldings. Therefore, Acts and the church must be seen in a total revelational perspective.<sup>277</sup>

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches of South Africa are committed to Charles H. Spurgeon's "vision" of a "missionary spirit."

My dream is this: I have seen in *vision* a *missionary spirit* ... and the ardour of our first missionary days return to us; I have seen young men eager for the mission field, and old men and fathers sitting in united council to correct mistakes, to devise new methods, or to strengthen old ones, so that by any means the great chariot of Christ might roll onwards, and that his victories might be more rapid.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Peters, G. W., *A Theology of Church Growth*, Grand Rapids, Academic Books, 1981, 25.

<sup>278</sup> Spurgeon, C.H., *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume II, The Full Harvest (1860-1892)*, Edinburgh, Banner of Truth Trust, 1973, 128.

**CHAPTER FOUR:**  
**THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES**  
**OF THIS MOVEMENT.**

Though potentially open to criticism for using "secular" methodology,<sup>1</sup> the modern Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches and their missionary ministries have been without apology in their use of progressive surveys, demographic studies, methodological plans and strategies. Long, medium and short-range targets provide focus for their approach.

**4.1 The Goals of the Movement.**

The need to operate on the basis of carefully considered *goals* is now increasingly accepted among missionaries. The independent fundamentalists are committed to an organisational and administrative paradigm<sup>2</sup> that calls for a balancing and blending of the various systems and human relations theories for management and administration available today.

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<sup>1</sup> Carson, D. A., *The Gagging of God*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, 465, 475.

<sup>2</sup> *The Traditional Theory*: concentrating on maintaining tradition, *The Charismatic Theory*: leading to a style that pursues "intuition," *The Classical Theory*: concentrates on running the organisation, *The Human Relations Theory*: stress "the leading of groups and interpersonal relationships," *The Systems Theory*: emphasizes relationships between the different parts of an organisation, noting the influence of the parts upon each other and upon the whole. (Note: Worley, R., *Change in the Church a Source of Hope*, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1971. Rudge, P.F., *Ministry and Management*, London, Tavistock Publications Ltd., 1968, 21-31; Lee, H. W., *Theology of Administration: a Biblical basis for organizing the congregation*, Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1981, 28.)

Many of the independent fundamentalists view strategic planning as the modern window to a sound missiological approach to ministry.<sup>3</sup> Their outreach is based on carefully applied principles of the New Testament and are operated within the disciplines of sound management theology.<sup>4</sup> Even the most independent minded missionaries within this movement are showing an increased awareness of the value of inter-dependency or teamwork that must operate within the realm of genuine independency. In recent years contemporary team learning<sup>5</sup> skills are being used to open doors to personal ministry mastery, and carefully modelled or tested strategies that ultimately lead to a greater level of shared vision<sup>6</sup> or consensus in mission. Team learning<sup>7</sup> allows for a level of team ministry that establishes systemic plans, priorities and procedures that direct the mission to its end goal or target. Such organisational ministry methods are no less established around the life and example of Christ, a genuine dependency on prayer, the work of the Holy Spirit and ultimately on the revealed Word Of God, the Holy Scriptures.

Any such advanced teamwork and team thinking as suggested by the Learning Ministry Team notion used in Gauteng and Cape Town is clearly asking these new generation of Christian leaders for their personal humility, mutual submission and trust in the Lord and His Word. Before God is credited (or blamed) for our decisions, individual actions, and collective responsibility this commitment to spiritual teamwork checks for honesty of motives, accuracy in interpretation and selflessness

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<sup>3</sup> Interviews, Surveys, and Questionnaires, 1996-2001.

<sup>4</sup> LeTourneau, R. H., *Success without Compromise*, Wheaton, Victor SP Books, 1978, 27-32, 175.

<sup>5</sup> Thurbin, P. J., *Implementing the Learning Organisation*, London, Pitman Publishing, 1994, 42.

<sup>6</sup> Senge, P., ed., *The Dance of Change*, New York, Currency Doubleday Book, 1999, 408-409.

<sup>7</sup> Senge, P., *The Fifth Discipline – The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, New York, Currency Doubleday, 1990, 61-63, 369f.

of spirit. independent fundamentalists are looking to this Christian team<sup>8</sup>

environment to revolutionise their ministries

The Independent Baptists and Bible church movements have at least three *goal areas*<sup>9</sup> for South African religious life, areas where their influence is notably growing.<sup>10</sup>

Their first level of influence is related to their arrival as a relatively new Christian ministry in Southern Africa. This influence could be compared to any other “infusion of new blood,” or “new ideas” as the idiom is popularly stated. Such new blood brings with it, at least for Baptists in general, a new emphasis on ministry or a fresh effort emphasising the needs of a post-modern mentality or society. To accomplish this more effective ministry independent fundamentalists are attempting to be focus on post-modern family-oriented needs. They are placing the highest priority on making family counselling, personal discipleship and multi-level ministry training available to all. The goal of providing greater attention to Biblical counselling and training is to increase the amount of truth content available in an increasingly society suffering with less real content in their spiritual lives.

Their second contribution is linked to an attempt to re-establish a strong and vibrant conservative Baptist influence in South Africa. They envisage an influence not unlike the earlier days of the “Spurgeon men” with many church planters and missionaries

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<sup>8</sup> Bell, C. R., *Managers as Mentors*, San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996 (1998), 11, 15, 27.

<sup>9</sup> These goals are both spiritual and practical.

<sup>10</sup> *Directory of Independent Fundamental Churches and Leaders in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, Kempton Park Bible Church, 1999



being outspoken fundamentalist<sup>11</sup> and dispensationalist.<sup>12</sup> The popular Baptist preacher Earnest Baker, the minister of the Observatory Baptist Church, Cape Town, circa 1926 is an example of the type of ministry these churches hope to restore to South Africa.

The Independent's third level of influence, or their final goal, is one of reviving the Biblical concept of a streamlined and efficient autonomous local church for the New South Africa. Independent Baptist and Bible churches as truly autonomous, i.e. non-union and non-denominational, local churches offer something they believe to be "lost," i.e. no longer emphasised within South African Baptist circles for almost a century.<sup>13</sup>

In summary, they hope to offer: a family-oriented, Bible-believing community church where Christians are seriously schooled in the content of truth, and disciplined in Christ-like lifestyles that will enable average Christians to minister competently to others also.

Like many other evangelical Christians, the Independent Baptists and Bible churches teach the Gospel (Good News) to be the offer<sup>14</sup> of God's forgiveness of man's individual sinfulness through the work of Jesus Christ. This work of Christ is

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<sup>11</sup> Baker, Ernest, The Proof of Christ, London, The Kingsgate Press, 1920, 46

<sup>12</sup> Baker, Earnest, What Does the Second Advent Mean, Worcester, C.P., 1926, 5

<sup>13</sup> Hudson-Reed, S., Together for a Century, The History of the Baptist Union of South Africa, 1877 -1977, Pietermaritzburg, S.A. Baptist Historical Society, 1977, 38. (Note: Includes references to the period prior to the Union's formation and to independent works and viewpoints that have remained for some years after the Union was established in South Africa.)

<sup>14</sup> Torrey, R.A., How to Bring Men to Christ, Chicago, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1893, 14-19.

regarded as his Divine Incarnation, His sinless life on earth, His suffering, death, burial and resurrection as atonement for the sins of the whole world. The individual's personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior by a personal and specific act of prayer and confession is viewed as the act of faith necessary for salvation, i.e. for "being saved." Though there are variations and differences regarding the teaching on the process of grace, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are not in disagreement with other evangelical churches that salvation is personal, by faith alone, by God's grace alone and secured only in the promises of God's Holy Word. The belief that salvation is centered on a prayer of faith where the individual, as a one-time and for life commitment, asks God for forgiveness for one's individual sinfulness, i.e. sin nature, and then repents or turns to Christ by confessing their belief in the atoning death and literal resurrection of Christ. This prayer, asking for forgiveness and salvation, premised on faith and confession of sinfulness and belief in Christ's saving work, is considered essential to obtaining salvation itself.

Though these Independent Baptist and Bible churches are similar to many other evangelical groups, their key goals are quite unique. They are singularly committed to a goal of evangelistic and missionary outreach that is strategically linked to their distinctly independent Baptist teachings and this approach is now a clearly defined plan of Church Planting within the Southern African cultural situation. In their interpretation of the concept of offering a missionary message to the non-believing world, the Independent Baptist and Bible churches are referring to more than offering the *simple* Gospel message and offer a complete and literal Gospel message of Bible-

based truth. Compromise of these fundamental issues is considered totally unacceptable.

Though they do believe salvation to stand alone as an issue of God's Grace and man's faith, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are practically speaking emphasising the Gospel in 'a package together with a number of specific issues. First, the absolute necessity of the individual Christian's commitment to the local church, second the importance of personal separation from immorality and worldly<sup>15</sup> lifestyles, and third, a strong rejection or separation from ecclesiastical compromise<sup>16</sup> - something they interpret in various ways and in regard to various issues.

Their mission of presenting the Gospel includes yet another or fourth issue: a call to believers to return to the 1909 four volume document - The Fundamentals<sup>17</sup> and thus a call to genuine believers to fully accept a literal interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Thus, in summary, their singular goal is to call for conversion to Christ that is linked to a radical change that is referenced around Jesus Christ as Lord, but also established on distinctiveness, doctrinal purity and discipleship. The link to a literal<sup>18</sup> interpretation of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is not optional. Evangelism, though a common denominator of all Christian churches or denominations, is for the Independent Baptists and Bible churches more than simply turning to Christ as Saviour - evangelism includes a discipleship to follow Christ by separating from the

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<sup>15</sup> Scger, P., Contending for the Faith, Cape of Good Hope Ministries, 1994, 22.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>17</sup> Torrey, R.A.; Dixon, A.C. eds., The Fundamentals - A Testimony to the Truth, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1980 (Reprint), [The original four-volume edition issued by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles in 1917.]

compromises of the flesh, of compromises of doctrinal interpretation together with a new loyalty to local churches versus denominationalism.

The Independent Baptist missionary<sup>19</sup> is aiming at conversions that go beyond simple conversion, but seeks to direct his converts to a thorough immersion in Biblical teaching that leads to more than just individual salvation, or personal sanctification. Individual spiritual maturity and leading to a competency for ministry that emphasises the purity<sup>20</sup> of the local church plays an important role in the overall scheme of things. The longer term goal of the Independent Baptist missionary is, then, one of producing sufficient spiritual maturity in their converts and adherents to lead them back to the issue of evangelism, i.e. their own personal evangelistic ministries to their family, their friends and their neighbours.

The purpose of training a strong *indigenous* leadership for these newly planted churches should be clear to the reader. Training is a paramount issue to the Independent missionaries' overall goal of *mission on a local church level*. Individual or personal discipleship, Bible oriented (versus care or fellowship oriented) "growth groups"(cell groups) and special training classes are all used to provide the foundation for a local church based ministry for training local leadership. In some cases, institutional (even American styled) Bible Colleges or Seminary level training programmes have also been developed, but even these institutional efforts have a goal

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<sup>18</sup> Seger, P., *Contending for the Faith*, 16.

<sup>19</sup> Amstutz, H. E., *Church Planter's Manual*, 22, 47, 48,

<sup>20</sup> Pickering, E., *Biblical Separation, The Struggle for a Pure Church*, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1979, 206.

of growing, maturing and focusing believers around local church related missionary outreach.

Though establishing community churches is also a goal. Just as in all Christian groups - the Independent Baptist and Bible churches view the church or congregation as more of a means to an end - not the end in and of itself. Thus, their missionary or evangelistic focus remains paramount! Even personal and corporate worship, though accepted as vital to a healthy congregational life, is viewed as not so much the goal but a by-product of faith. Mutual fellowship and edification, important as they are, are also seen as in the service of furthering an effective walk with Christ - something necessary for having an effective witness<sup>21</sup> to others: family or friends. There is no doubt that the Independent Baptists are truly focused on worldwide proclamation of the gospel.<sup>22</sup> The local churches are regarded as essential - above the kingdom of heaven or Christendom itself. The Independent Baptist theologian, Emery Bancroft<sup>23</sup> explains:

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<sup>21</sup> Acts 1:6, Matthew 28:19-20.

<sup>22</sup> Arnstutz, H. E., *Church Planter's Manual*, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology, Systematic and Biblical*, Second Revised Edition, Grand Rapids, (Baptist Bible College) Zondervan Publishing House, 1976, 281.

There is a great danger of losing sight of the church in the endeavour to emphasize the idea of the kingdom of heaven or Christendom. We are prone to think it a small thing to speak of the church; the kingdom and Christendom seem so large in comparison. We are tempted to distinguish and contrast "churchism," as it is sometimes called, and Christianity, to the disparagement of the former. It is well to remember: (1) Jesus Christ positively identifies Himself with the church (Acts 9:1-5) and not with Christendom; (2) He gave up His life that He might found the church (Eph. 5:25); (3) the apostle Paul sacrificed himself in his endeavours to build up the church, not Christendom (2 Tim. 2:10; 2 Cor. 11:2, 23-28); (4) he speaks of his greatest sin as consisting of persecuting the church of God (1 Cor. 15:9); (5) the supreme business of God in this age is the gathering of the church ("To take out of them [nations] a people for His Name" Acts 15:13-17; See also Ephesians 4:12.

The Church is not synonymous or identical with the kingdom of heaven... or Christendom. The word church literally means a called-out company, and therefore it comprises only those who are truly called out from the world by Christ unto Himself. It is not the aggregate of all churches ... the unity is not external but wholly spiritual and a result of the unifying power of the Holy Spirit. The Church in the individual or local sense may be defined as that smaller company of regenerate persons who, in any given community, unite themselves voluntarily, in accordance with the principles, precepts and purpose of Christ as revealed in the New Testament.

This local emphasis on the church and the role and purpose of its membership encourages separation from other Christian bodies and denominations and is generally interpreted and taught to discourage involvement with para-church groups, inter-denominational bodies or ministries and certainly rules out membership in such bodies as the Baptist World Alliance, The National or World Councils of Churches and other similar bodies. The focus remains on individual spiritual growth and personal witness to non-believers - unity is spiritual not organisational and the goal is simple evangelism and mission!

## 4.2 The Church-planting Approach

Independent Baptists may have as many different approaches as they have churches, but there are certainly some common strategies or core methodological tactics. The first of these is the method of ministering totally as an independent missionary - the *non-team approach*, the second method would be described as the *informal team approach*; then there is the third approach used among the larger American Missionary agencies, the *Field Council Team approach*; and finally, and a more recent strategy is the *Learning Ministry Team approach*.

Many overlapping practical steps are to be found within these strategies and methods. But by giving attention to the common aspects and pointing-out the unique aspects of each approach one can obtain a picture of the overall strategies used by the Independent Baptist missionaries in South Africa.

### A. The non-team approach:

Many Independent Baptists and Bible Church missionary church planters have turned away from any form of logical sequential and systematic approach to Christian issues. These individuals have simply rejected order as described in I Corinthians 14:40, and prefer what they consider a more spiritual way of thinking. Nonetheless, there are those among the Independent Baptists that consider much of this super-spirituality to be little more than mysticism, and only slightly revised for modern consumption. Some Independent Baptists view this super-spirituality as little more than existentialism in the camouflaged with pious platitudes. Individualism, a

recognized strong reality among Independent Baptists, has its strengths and weaknesses and remains an issue of disagreement among them to this day.

Evangelism is usually central to the non-team Independent Fundamental Baptists and Bible church missionary church planters. Evangelism in most cases is interpreted in simpler terms and is more of a step by step process, i.e. John 3:16; the Romans Road: Romans 3:23, 6:23; 10:9-10 or the Simple Plan of Salvation, etc. Converts receive relatively little personal discipleship, though this is not true in every case.

There are Baptist voices protesting this approach but numerous others who defend and practice as though there was no other way to witness. A third generation Independent Baptist, Joseph Stowel comments on this situation:

We must guard that the function of our witness does not jeopardize the Gospel's larger context, or that the Gospel is not eroded by an external context that compromises its essence. Both of these contexts are in jeopardy when we realize that our societal shift has made the Gospel more urgent but at the same time culturally less compelling.

As always, there are some who carry out notch-belt evangelism by seeking to save as many as possible, and like knocking down ducks with a pistol at the county fair, go about sharing the Gospel, sometimes in distorted ways, to attract more converts. In this context there is little thought of integrating them into the body of Christ and discipling them to do all things that He has commanded us. Some churches in particular are guilty of building their ministry around the message of John 3:16, seeking to create an evangelistic



centre that can become the fastest growing church in town. As soon as the hundreds come on decision day, it is tempting to forget the importance of emphasizing the legitimate patterns of discipleship that will take converts past a simple yet helpful understanding of the Gospel. Driven by the urgency of evangelism, their sense of urgency tends to short-circuit the important context of the long-term nature of wooing, winning and then weaning their converts into a whole life experience with Jesus Christ..<sup>24</sup>

One feature that is a certainty found among the “*non-team* styled” Independents and Fundamentalists is the centrality of preaching. Teaching their members to be faithful to the preaching services on Sunday morning and evening and the Wednesday “Prayer Meetings” is strongly emphasised. These preaching hours form the core of the teaching and training. All preaching is clearly evangelistic in nature. Doctrine and ethics, though also included in every sermon, are not the central message. Topical and textual preaching are the two primary homiletical methods used, but exegetical or expository preaching has grown in popularity among the younger pastors. The central and authoritative role of the pastor or the church-planting missionary also influences the training or maturing of new converts. Church discipline tends to be corrective rather than curative and Christian counselling is usually rejected as holding potential for being humanistic. The Bible is taught in an authoritative preaching style method in almost every situation. Though this approach may seem quite unacceptable to many it is highly respected and carefully guarded by others who are convinced it is the New Testament pattern of things.

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<sup>24</sup> Stowell, J. M. Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century, Wheaton, Victor Books, 1994, 50.

Among the Independent Baptists and Bible churches there are two primary attitudes that directly influence church planting: one is the attitude to dominate, drive or control the process and this comes accompanied with many obvious unfortunate effects related to those who are prepared to resist this strong leadership style. The other, less common, attitude is to yield possession of the church planting process. Such partner-leaderships operate by carefully listening to others, modelling values, motivating by affirming and helping others, i.e. mentoring vs. directing. The *non-team* approach is often selected or simply the practical reality of being a solo missionary sent out by a single congregation, a small missionary agency or due to one's personal preference for working alone or inability to work with others.

The independent fundamental Baptists are agreed that the Scriptures teach that the church planter must understand his responsibility and his degree of accountability in the Church Planting process.<sup>25</sup> It is important to Independent Baptists that their methods be established along clear boundaries of Scriptural principles and truth. Of course, the interpretation of these boundaries or principles is not always straightforward and some differences do exist. The common voice of those who have a more ecumenical spirit is to call for a minimising or even a rejecting of any (non-essential) doctrines that might be (or seem to be) divisive in any way. However, the independent fundamental churches view the Scriptures as laying all true divisiveness at the feet of carnality and a lack of knowledge in Doctrine – and not at the feet of pure and strong doctrinal truth. (1 Cor. 3:1-3, and Hebrews 5:11--6:3). These literalist Fundamentalist Bible believers turn to the Word of God as their “only rule for faith

and practice”<sup>26</sup> even if it leads to the accusation of being divisive or unloving!

This tension among these independents and fundamentalists is quite acceptable - to them!

These *non-team* missionaries are nonetheless quite effective - especially in personal evangelism, smaller rural regions and in secluded regions. There are obvious problems related to their ministries, as well. First, there is the pressure of trying to evangelise, disciple and train leadership without others to assist. Second, there are the emotional and psychological pressures of loneliness or isolation a matter especially troubling for the family members of these missionaries. Third, there is a lack of accountability or on-going professional training. Fourth, there is a tendency to pass on an isolationist's attitude to the church being planted, and the national leadership. Finally, one must list the lack of assistance and continuity during times of the missionary's furlough overseas.

To summarise this approach, it is useful to understand that these Independents view a good gospel preacher as also a good doctrinal exhorter. For many Independents, the primary problem in preaching while planting a new church is a problem of oversimplification. To present the Gospel in a sound manner the independent fundamentalists believe the church planter must know the difference between simplistic and simple. Some of these missionaries, though well intended, mistake Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 2:2 "For I determined not to know any thing

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<sup>26</sup> 1 Corinthians 4:1,2 "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries- (primarily areas related to the church in any practical application)-of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Compare: 1 Cor. 3:12-17, Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Pet. 2:4-12, 4:17--5:4.

among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" as a statement indicating that Paul only preached the "plan of salvation." These missionaries then centre their whole preaching and ministry programme on presenting the Gospel - as the salvation<sup>27</sup> message alone. Independent Baptists generally do not over simplify the gospel message, if by that we mean that they have so narrowed-down the content that they will become superficial. On-the-other-hand, there is often a degree of confusion among these Christian leaders as to their interpretation of the inherent simplicity<sup>28</sup> in the message of the New Covenant. The New Covenant, according to 2 Corinthians 3, encourages using great plainness of speech without watering down their overall message.

#### **B. The informal team approach:**

Among Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries there is often found an almost "ad hoc" type of teamwork - unofficially - informally formed out of necessity. There are many advantages to this approach - especially over the non-team approach. Usually the matter of geography plays a key role in this type of teamwork. Independent missionaries often find that there are other missionaries of similar doctrinal persuasion ministering in the same vicinity. Since neither the non-team or informal team spend time on developing involved medium or long term strategies and

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<sup>26</sup> George, T. and D., Baptist Confessions, Covenants and Catechisms, Nashville, Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996, 138, (Also note "The Baptist Faith and Message," 1963).

<sup>27</sup> A proper study of the Scriptures will teach the opposite view of the Gospel Message - it certainly includes the basic salvation message but it includes far more. Acts 20:20 "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you...", Matthew 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." Romans 1:16-17 "For I am no ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ... for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith..." + Romans 16: 25-26

<sup>28</sup> As dispensationalists the Independent Baptist generally teach that under the Old Covenant system a great Veil (2 Cor. 3:13-15) hindered a clear-cut message with a full view, but now under the New Covenant, we have been given such a clear and obvious message of hope..."we (can and should) use great plainness of speech." (See 2 Cor. 3:6-4:6), even Christ's preaching (of necessity) was "veiled" on occasion (Matthew 13:10-17) and his words were in

since relatively few surveys or knowledge of other's plans are included, these informal teams are credited to God's Sovereign Providence more than anything else. Many Independent missionaries would point out that this is as Biblical as any other means.

Such informal teamwork is often quite limited, and possibly nothing more than a matter of fellowship among the family members of missionaries, or an informal cooperation now and then on youth rallies or evangelism efforts. In some cases oversight of each other's ministries during furlough might be included in the scenario. A general observation of this informal styled teamwork impresses one that this is a short-term solution to isolation and as such is only partially successful since the extreme individualism of the respective missionaries is really quite rarely affected. The tendency of these leaders to dominate, drive or control the process often comes accompanied with petty and personal disagreements that eventually interrupt the forward progress of the little informal teamwork they have possibly developed as a part of their missionary ministries.

### **C. The Field Council Team approach:**

Independent Baptists such as<sup>29</sup> the General Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, the Evangelical Baptist Mission, the Grace Ministries related churches and the Biblical Ministries Worldwide Mission encourage their church planters to be team players and listeners. These field councils do realise the potential in team-

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some sense "veiled" throughout (John 16:13); but, our message is to be clearly understandable and plain as the Holy Spirit has unveiled—and even totally removed the veil—for "open preaching". 2 Tim. 4:1-5

<sup>29</sup> Jackson, P. R., The Doctrine and Administration of the Church, Schaumburg, Regular Baptist Press, 1980, 47, 107.

ministries and they encourage their church planters to build team sensitivity toward their churches and co-workers. The missionary agencies with field councils also tend to emphasise the importance of culture awareness and of being people who are sensitive to other co-workers or nationals.<sup>30</sup> Being lords over others or in other words by acting as though the missionary already knows the congregation's every need without first giving themselves to a spirit of listening, or understanding where people are at, is openly discouraged within most of the Field Council missionary groupings. Such domination over the national church is simply not a Christlike ministry - at least not to this group of Independent Baptists.

For those who work within a Field Council and use its approach, the issues of planning, strategy and a clear and contextually<sup>31</sup> communicated message are important. They know that to speed-up progress in obtaining a crowd many methods are available - if that was the real purpose or goal, but this is not their primary goal. Field Councils provide the accountability and balance for faithfully witnessing to the truth. Many Independent Baptists think that some form of impersonal door-to-door or literature distribution or even high-pressure tactics may serve God's purposes for being a witness. Though the Field Council styled mission agencies grant that there is every reason to emphasise sharing the Good News with all who will hear, they remind their fellow Independent Baptist brethren to be careful to remember that sharing the Gospel means to faithfully and fully communicate the truth of that Gospel. There is a clear disagreement between independent fundamentalists as to the proper and honest communication of the truth of the Gospel. When abruptness, rudeness, insensitivity

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<sup>30</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., Orientation Course Notes, Durban, Association of Baptist for World Evangelism, 1987, 5.

etc., are used as a means to give the Gospel, the Field Council team style missionaries warn the others against using a non-communicative atmosphere. References to Peter's advice in 1 Peter 2:20 is often referred to: "For what glory is it, if when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?"

The teams formed through Field Councils for church planting – take time for thorough training. As a part of their planning and strategy – they develop their ministries around local lay leaders who have also been trained thoroughly. The responsibility for further spreading the gospel into each province is then generally given to the national leaders. Congregations in the more urban centres serve as base camps. These church plants operate with a clear strategy and with clear Biblical order and administration (Acts 15, 13:1-5, and 1 Cor. 16) using a well-planned and co-operative strategy. Well trained and fully committed workers - as important as they are for Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church ministries of Church Planting, also open the door to the danger of "professionalising" their approach to ministry to the point that they eliminate perfectly good and able people because they do not fit or come-up-to the highest standards. The complicated organisation in most Field Councils and the often complex administrative details required tend to add to this problem.

To understand the practices and strategies of the Independent Baptists one must study the patterns of the early church planters with an extremely literalist approach to interpretation. For many Independent Baptist and Bible churches, strategy and

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<sup>31</sup> Contextual message: A message that is communicated on a basis of the church planter and preacher's correct

systemic processes are almost like using foreign words or concepts. But for the Field Council styled church planters strategy is essential<sup>32</sup>. Many church planters believe the pattern is already established in God's normal approach to spiritual growth as a sequential and orderly, even progressive, approach sets the standard for church growth too. Not all Independent Baptist recognise the difference between milk and meat<sup>33</sup>, but those linked in the Field Council styled teams tend to appreciate a weaning process as necessary and essential.

To its credit, the Field Council as a form of self-discipline leads these church planters to appreciate the importance of discipline, and self-discipline. Far too many Independent Baptists simply want a quick fix, and fail to focus on the being serious students of the Word of God.

Having a strategy tends to lead the Field Council led church planters away from the short cuts and the quick growth promises of the many fad ideas popular today. Of course, strategy must not be mistaken as a formula set in concrete and the use of good strategy among the Independent Baptist has generally left them versatile and flexible.

One major challenge of the Field Council led churches is their need for greater contact with the national leaders within their own churches. Some Field Councils have responded by forming associations or fellowships. The inter-church and usually regional groups do increase contact with national pastors and leaders but a varying degree of freedom of expression may complicate issues even more than if the Field

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understanding of his community, or potential audience.

<sup>32</sup> Luke 14:28-30

<sup>33</sup> Hebrews 5:11-14 KJ.V.



Council alone existed. The problem that results is due to the sometimes-high level of domination imposed by the American missionaries or at least felt by the national leaders.

Whether or not these associations are really free agents or just religious 'political tools' to further the presuppositions of others with stronger leadership styles is open to debate and is debated among the Independent and Fundamentalist churches - some joining and some refusing to cooperate.

#### **D. The Learning Ministry Team approach:**

The Gauteng and Cape Town regions have greatly benefited by applying a teamwork approach called "A Learning Ministry Team (LMT) Notion." In brief, this teamwork approach is just a notion to learn from one another. Independent Baptist and Bible church missionaries often find it difficult to take and give advice to one another - especially on difficult subjects or in sticky situations. Solving this missions related communication problem is at the heart of this Church Planting methodology.

Under the title of a *Learning Ministry Team Notion*<sup>34</sup> a good number of Gauteng and Cape missionaries have adapted some of the popular approaches used in current management theory known as Learning Organizations. Being careful to avoid aspects that they thought were humanistic, or otherwise unbiblical, they have used a method of cooperatively pursuing or addressing subjects of interest through open dialogue

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<sup>34</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., *A Learning Ministry Team Notion*, Unpublished Notes, 1996.

and attempting to find a consensus that would increase their level of cooperation and effectiveness.

These groups have generally started as ministerial groups with simple goals and expectations. The basic plan is to begin by encouraging one another in the study of the Scriptures, in preparation of sermons or lessons where they could assist each other in the planning stage or possibly the research stage. Their goal for these joint study groups was to learn to work together, respect each other more, and benefit from each other's strengths. The longer-term goal was to encourage a group spirit where on-going adult learning was fostered. Generally, most missionaries do want to grow both spiritually and professionally, but finding a way to accomplish this personal growth or personal professional mastery,<sup>35</sup> within the context of Independent Baptists individualistic mindsets is a difficult undertaking. Learning, working and doing ministry together is simply not natural for these leaders, but the Learning Ministry Team Notion has proved itself effective.

Beyond these informal ministerial Scripture study groups the next step was one of learning to share in one-another's vision. The process is simple, before those involved have time for their ideas to develop<sup>36</sup> on their own and then have to face the necessity of selling them to the others, a number of missionaries, pastors and students, in both Gauteng and the Cape, agreed to bring needs and ideas to a forum they have called a Leadership Pool. This pool was formed on an informal basis agreeing to take potential needs and ideas being presented by those attending and

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<sup>35</sup> Senge, P., *The Fifth Discipline – The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, 69.

mandating smaller study groups called Learning Teams. No formal membership was planned but a simple and open attendance of the quarterly meetings by any and all church leadership levels such as pastors, deacons, missionaries, students or any interested individuals.

At their peak, the Gauteng Leadership Pool was supported by approximately half of the independent fundamental churches in the region and the Cape Leadership Pool supported by at least seventy-five percent of the churches in its region.

The Learning Teams operated by the Gauteng and Cape Leadership Pools were project groups that operated through sharing their research, attempting to harness their creative tensions (arguments do result), and by use of careful investigation and data collection. These Learning Teams tried to test their ideas by using mental models. They also tested and developed the various answers, plans or concepts by encouraging open dialogue<sup>37</sup> over discussion.<sup>38</sup> The Learning Teams, as smaller sub-groups of the Leadership Pool, were mandated or empowered to come to conclusions and develop plans of action. All the attendees of the Leadership Pool agreed to try to cooperate with and to minister through these proposals or plans- at least for a period of two years, when they could be reviewed or revised. The learning teams were designed to disband after their goal or purpose of learning how to minister more effectively is met. Before disbanding, they were expected to present their finding to the Leadership Pool at its next quarterly gathering.

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<sup>36</sup> Bell, C. R., *Managers as Mentors*, 12, 15.

<sup>37</sup> *Dia-logos* is a free-flowing thinking together – an effort to discover insights collectively that are not easily obtained individually

Special consideration to geographic<sup>39</sup> or environmental considerations do make a difference in the long range growth and stability of a ministry and the Learning Teams are especially effective in constructing and modelling solid strategies for church planting. The question of distance or proximity to other Bible preaching churches is also of importance and churches planted without strategies often failed to consider these issues.

The Gauteng and Cape Leadership Pools were primarily formed of Independent Baptists that were convinced that perspective is a most important matter, i.e. the ability to see the bigger picture, and they were convinced that this ability comes naturally to the Learning Team approach to church planting. They approached ministry by looking first at the interrelationships of a situation as opposed to simply recognising a few cause-effect chains. Seeing the bigger picture allowed for continuous processes to be studied, rather than single snapshots. With the Independent Baptist and Bible churches in Gauteng and the Cape focusing their learning around the essential properties of a set of events,<sup>40</sup> they seemed to be able to recognise how they were to move forward in a more efficient way. When these learning teams set out to see this bigger picture, the change in their perspectives has been quite profound. The difference between these independent fundamental Baptists and those in the non-team approach is quite considerable!

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<sup>38</sup> Discussion is an idea rooted in percussion and concussion or a literal heaving of ideas back and forth in a winner takes-all competition.

<sup>39</sup> Geographic considerations include a broad spectrum of variants such as future suburban development plans made by the city or industry. Good strategies are also aware of the "erosion" of the population of a community, especially older areas or sections.

<sup>40</sup> The management principle they are following is stated loosely as follows: the sum of those events are not determined as much by the individual parts as by the process of interactions between those parts.

With the Cape and Gauteng using the Learning Ministry Team notion to develop their ministries, a sound team-management approach resulted. Good team management helped meet the needs of all the voluntary team members. By identifying the skills development needs of those attending the Leadership Pool and serving in the Learning Teams, the personal vision and current goals of these individuals was also enhanced. Their theory of teamwork called for identifying the skill development needs that individuals face concerning teamwork, group communication and personal mastery and sought to answer how these could be addressed and refined. Mastery of these essential elements of Christian service through simple team management methods has clearly advanced the cause of Christ in general, and has had especially good<sup>41</sup> results in developing greater ministry effectiveness both in the Cape and in Gauteng.

One obvious area of personal growth is seen in the development of personal mastery where the Potchefstroom University, together with visiting American lecturers led to developing courses that have been used to provide on-going adult education for those who were interested. This emphasis has led to a good number of the missionaries in the Cape and most of the missionaries in Gauteng going on to do further post-graduate studies.

It is evident that team managing through building “mental models” became more than a matter of theory in the case of the Cape and Gauteng Leadership Pools. These

Leadership Pools and Learning Teams introduced a quite revolutionary approach for providing sound management to cooperative projects for Independent Baptist and Bible church circles. These otherwise loose independent ministries were able to cooperate and assist one another as they learned how to maintain their individuality and yet make collective plans and strategy.

The Cape Leadership Pool found that their Learning Team<sup>43</sup> approach, to be successful as a process, was dependent on their teams learning to recognise their team-member's old attitudes or mental models. Often these old ways of thinking had surfaced in meetings and were discovered to be still only "too alive." The Cape teams recognised the value of a revised or refreshed vision. In 2001 a learning team mandated to rewrite the Cape strategy held a series of meetings that led to some creative learning opportunities and resulted in a thorough re-modelling of their previous strategy. The learning process allowed them to move away from their older, ten year plan,<sup>43</sup> and to "learn themselves into" a new shared direction for the Cape Leadership Pool's next fifteen years of church planting.<sup>44</sup>

In 2002 the Leadership Pool concept gave way to a "Forum Concept" that allowed for further decentralisation of their communications as churches and leaders. The lessons of the Leadership Pool period would now be applied to a simpler approach.

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<sup>41</sup> Cape Leadership Pool Minutes, Cape Town, Cape ABWE, 15-6-1999.

<sup>42</sup> Blackwell, *The Notion of a Learning Ministry Team*, 21-30.

<sup>43</sup> Cape ABWE Ten Year Strategy statement: 1991-2000. "We endeavouring to maximize indigenisation and true team ministry through on-going adult education." "We share a vision of establishing foundational churches, by

Outside of the Gauteng and Cape Leadership Pools, no other similar effort among independent fundamentalists exists at present. The willingness to work in such direct cooperation - without any strings attached is a core concept, but an unusual one for Fundamentalists.

There are traditional associations<sup>45</sup> within South African fundamentalist circles. Such associations or fellowships have structured their memberships to be non-controlling but this approach has had only limited effectiveness, especially outside of pre-existing circles, i.e. where relationships such as shared Bible Colleges, missionary projects or Christian youth camps have produced an affinity.

To find anything like these Learning Team dynamics,<sup>46</sup> among independents and fundamentalists, is unheard of and as such the *LMT notion* is clearly charting new ground. The Cape and Gauteng Leadership Pools both seem quite conscious of the new ground they are breaking. If these self-regulating independent fundamental Baptists can serve as team members and constructively challenge each others' ideas and assumptions, the future (though uncharted) opens doors to a truly South African version of South African fundamentalism.

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training leadership to initiate further 'subsequent' churches. Using 'Foundational' and 'Subsequent' church planting methodology the team is learning to maximize their ministry efforts."

<sup>44</sup> Cape Strategy, 22-8-2001, The Cape Leadership Pool. See Appendix V.

<sup>45</sup> A strong American styled Regular Baptist Association approach is operating successfully in Durban. This approach has a formal membership based on a doctrinal statement and is inclined to be accepted only by that portion of the independent Baptists accustomed to associational styled memberships, i.e. ABWE, EBM already members of the American based General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, USA. (GARBC).

<sup>46</sup> Senge, P., ed., *The Dance of Change*. Such dynamics are able to open-up sufficient communication for imagining needs that often were deeply hidden as ingrained assumptions. Recognising that individuals will generally act according to the mental model that they subconsciously hold, and often will fail to follow the truths they claim to believe the need for open discussion and revision becomes a part of the team process in these Learning Teams.

The need to fully replace the American-styled independent fundamentalism is accepted by the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries. A number of pastors involved in these Gauteng and Cape Leadership Pools, seem to realise that if they can begin seeing their own personal mental models change they can also play a role in creating a shared mental model for other independents. That potential is, no doubt, motivating some of their efforts. The result of shared mental models is the development of a more balanced independent and fundamentalist movement. The Gauteng and Cape Leadership Pools have operated for over five years and believe they have established that learning from one another, contributing to one another's learning leads to a true mutual sharing of vision even acceptable within the extremely independent environment common to their churches. Through discovering and working together, vision that once was only accepted for denominations and unions has been created and shared, and yet without the perceived dangers of memberships and other strictures inherent to denominationalism. As Independent Baptist and Bible churches have been learning to work together to develop a mutual philosophy of ministry, a stronger spiritual unity and direction has resulted.

This Cape Leadership Pool is a clear testimony to the belief that a shared vision is producing a more consistent approach to ministry among those who are cooperating. Where these churches have better identified their core purposes and more clearly identified why they are doing, the things they are doing - it has empowered them to create a single image of the future. The Learning Teams of Gauteng and the Cape are convinced that a shared vision has encouraged them to do a number of things



together out of a more educated and voluntary spirit. This informed voluntary spirit<sup>47</sup> is especially important to the Independent and autonomous local church concept all Independent Baptists hold so dearly.

The Independent Baptist and Bible churches all have individual Biblical philosophies of ministry. They believe these should be a unique and distinct result of genuinely scriptural convictions and a consistent application in each different ministry of their churches. The development of these complex philosophies of ministry has been assisted because of team learning. The Cape and Gauteng applications of team learning are quite similar since they were developed through a series of communications between the two groups. Their styles are different but they both focus on developing the learning ability of the group. Tension among Baptists can be a provocative thing, but the Leadership Pools have learned to use tension in a proactive way, i.e. by reflecting on how they are addressing problems, questioning assumptions, and receiving feedback from their team and from their results.

Many missionaries in the Cape and Gauteng share involvement in the Church Ministries Institute. The use of non-formal and Socratic discussions in that paradigm also operates to a large degree on these same assumptions and most likely played a large part in cross-pollinating these new ideas. Their team-learned philosophies of ministry have enabled them - though remaining truly Independent - to define and evaluate many aspects of their ministries while encouraging and complementing each other but still avoiding the competition that has often divided them further.

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<sup>47</sup> Hobbs, H., The Baptist Faith and Message, Nashville, Convention Press, 1971, 141.

In the Cape, a simple strategy focused on the planting of *subsequent works* has surfaced from the studies of the Learning Teams. In this situation, the American Missionary Church Planters take a back seat to the South African student pastors or apprentice pastors. In this plan, a well-established church may give families from its own membership, money and resources in leadership to establish the new church. This new *subsequent work* may be located many kilometres from the *Foundational* congregation. The implementation of this plan is made easy by starting a Bible class in the home of an interested family. A Sunday school may be started in a public building, or a full schedule of services may be held and announced through local newspapers. Personnel from the sponsor church may also assist in the project.

The detailed process in planting a new church varies greatly from missionary to missionary within independent fundamental circles but there are some common principles that reveal the core approach. The following representation reflects the *Learning Team* approach common to many of the new church planting works found among the Independent Baptists in the Cape Province.

The primary mandate for Independent Baptist and Bible churches has always been Matthew 28:19-20 "Go ye therefore, and teach (make disciples) of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The roots of Independent Baptist Church Planting methodology are to be found in such

Scriptures as: A. Romans 1:13-17. Preaching the Word of God. B. 1 Cor. 11:1.

By example. C. Acts 20:19-20. Humble service with practical teaching.<sup>48</sup>

**E. Basic methodology for Church Planting includes the following principles:**

- (1.) Community contacts are established via surveys, and door-to-door visitation.

The church planter and his team develop a study or survey to determine the potential of a particular area under consideration. Help for this survey or door-to-door visitation may come from sister churches in other nearby areas. The Church Planter usually creates a final report summarising the collected and assimilated data, with the necessary maps to conclude the survey. The purpose of this information is to find the responsive areas. Carson<sup>49</sup> and others have complained that this use of marketing methodology marginalizes God and the value of prayer. While ignoring such criticisms, the independent fundamentalists have used this process since the middle of the twentieth century.

The Church Planter focuses on establishing or building relationships with the new contacts. As the young congregation develops, the church planter will train workers according to their abilities. Administrative, practical helpers (printers, typists, crèche and those trained in specialities) and, of course, people prepared to carry on the outreach by using their abilities in communication, service and care. The whole congregation is encouraged to pray believing that God will direct more workers into

<sup>48</sup> Blackwell, M. S., *The Need, Opportunity, and Challenge*, Cape Town, Church Ministries Institute, 1993, 8-10.

<sup>49</sup> Carson, D.A., *The Gagging of God*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

the 'harvest'. Often nearby areas have sister churches willing to loan the new church their lay or full-time leaders for a period.

Independent Fundamental Baptist church planters generally try to identify apathetic people, believing these types make-up the majority of those who are uncommitted and are not attending a church at present. The church planter's patient and loving fellowship and leadership often turns these outsiders into growing Christians. A good number of the people involved in forming a new congregation though not regular church attendees, often for many years, usually have some background in a Protestant church or at least, have some knowledge of the Christian religion. Leading these people back to Christ, as their Lord and Savior, is often linked to offering them Biblical training that is able to rebuild their faith. For those not truly saved this process of Bible study opens opportunities for God's grace to be activated in their lives.

Church Planting calls for continually training workers using your own life and ministry's responsibilities as a basis for sharing. Start by inviting others to under-study you in your performance of a certain task or certain tasks. Plan to explain the whys and the wherefores of your actions. Observe. Determine if they are showing aptitude. When possible, use teams and teamwork to train both individuals and other teams. A training programme must be expandable - as your ministry grows. Expect to train others to train others.

Mix formal educational methods with your more personal involvement approach. Include a schedule of reading and outside study. Homework that leads to discussion and practical application is of great value. Set a goal of creating a Training Team of men and women who can collectively recreate or reproduce your ministry skills and the essential ministry skills of other church related ministries in others. When you train workers, as much as is possible and as soon as is possible, train them to be Team Oriented Workers. This will include training them to work with others. Co-operation, communication and consideration are essential themes for team ministry.<sup>50</sup>

Group meetings or cell groups are used to encourage the growth process. A home Bible study, using the church planter's home or another available home, often is used a beginning point and meets on a weeknight or even Sunday night. These multiply and many groups are formed on an informal Bible study and discussion format. As attendance increases, these groups are divided to allow for different venues. At the very beginning, the church planter clearly sets out the goal of establishing a new church in the area, though attendance does not obligate them to these future plans. Sunday mornings are often developed as a type of house church. Using homes especially in the early months provides a good opportunity for warm communication and a closeness of spirit.

Moving from a home to another facility is important especially for Sunday morning worship services. Independent Baptists often share facilities with other sister churches, or use such facilities as a school hall, community room, library, crèche, bank building or other public building. The venue is very important to moving the church toward establishing itself on a community level. Most Independent Baptist church planters move their new work, as quickly as possible, to a public location.

For both the Field Council and Team Learning approaches to church planting the key to building strong congregational leadership is a commitment to discipling others. By discipling new converts on a one-on-one basis these churches build a personalised ministry and they build an effective team of co-workers. Unlike the *Non-team* and the *Informal Team* approaches, the *Learning Team* church planter tries not to do, or control everything himself! It is essential that they focus on individual training throughout the length of their ministry period - not just at the beginning stages! It is also most important to train new converts in the concepts of "Relationship Building,"<sup>51</sup> "Bridge Building"<sup>52</sup> or "Service-Oriented"<sup>53</sup> evangelism.

Independent Baptist and Bible church planters place a great emphasis on regular pastoral visits. These visits are repeatedly made in the form of discipleship classes (when possible) to all who show an interest in this new ministry. It is common to encourage other opportunities for informal get-togethers, such as picnics to build-up Christian fellowship between new families. These church planters consider good strategy to include developing their church along specific pre-schedule plans - often with quite specific goals. They realise they will not always meet those goals or deadlines, but they are considered nonetheless essential. Special events for outreach and evangelism, ladies programmes, children's ministries, youth programmes and camps are all planned and timed carefully. Children's Home Bible Clubs and Youth Ministries are often central features of these young churches.

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<sup>50</sup> Blackwell, M. S. Sr., *A Biblical Church Planting Process*, Cape Town, Church Ministries Institute, 1989.

<sup>51</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., *A First Century Journal of Church Planting: Relationship Evangelism, Expanding our Impact Sharing Christ's love with Muslims*, CMI Series No. 1-4, Cape Town, Cape Church Ministries Institute, 1997.

(3.) Organising a Newly Planted Independent Baptist or Bible church usually follows this pattern:

(a) Long before any type of organisation is seriously considered the church planters begin involving their people in leadership. They usually do not have a membership role, but they have an informal prayer or phone list that indicated who have some measure of serious interest in the new church and its ministries.

(b.) An informal group works together with the specific church planting team to help with obvious and practical areas, for example: preparing the buildings for worship. In a short time, a committee is formed into a Financial Committee to handle the collecting and counting of the church's offerings and to prepare the new work's budget.

(c.) In the Learning Team styled church an unofficial lay council often plays a key role in the church's early decision making processes, though the goal is as pure a congregational government as possible. As the church grows clearly written job descriptions for the leaders of youth, children and other ministries are provided. Periodic Business Meetings (even if they are unofficial) develop a sense of willingness and faithfulness to support the new ministry. Educating the new church members in an understanding of the difference in a Missionary Church Planter and a Regular Pastor is important. Pre-training for potential Deacons is important before officially organising or forming the new church. A draft of the new church's Constitution and By-laws should be prepared by a select committee and is often directed by the church

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<sup>52</sup> McDonald, B. W., *Bridge Evangelism*, ABWE Insight Series, Harrisburg, Association of Baptist for World Evangelism, 1984, 44.

<sup>53</sup> Amstutz, H.E. *The Church Planters Manual*, Harrisburg, Association of Baptist for World Evangelism, 1985, 36.

planting missionary. A permanent set of records, minutes and other financial and bookkeeping responsibilities is developed as soon as is reasonably possible.

(d.) Baptist Distinctives and other matters of special concern, such as, personal and ecclesiastical separation, receive regular teaching and reviewing throughout the life of the new church. Issues related to compromise, ecumenicalism and the local churches responsibility to discipline errant church members are given by instruction from the Scriptures. These churches' rather unique doctrinal position as dispensationally<sup>54</sup> oriented churches, with an emphasis on pre-millennial and pre-tribulational eschatology, receives regular teaching and clarification.

#### **4.3 The Expansion in Southern Africa.**

Expansion and growth throughout Southern Africa in general and South Africa in particular has been steady. In the larger cities exponentially increasing along a growth curve<sup>55</sup> that may well prove to be a major surprise for those who suggest this movement may succumb to or be stifled by the forces of post-modernism that admittedly are advancing throughout Africa and the whole world. The strategy for the expansion has been a simple two-fold approach: city and rural, with the cities getting the majority of the attention in the first fifteen years. The first city was Johannesburg, then Durban and then Cape Town with Port Elizabeth coming much later. Smaller rural cities were also targeted and then the more out of the way villages or dorps have been included.

<sup>54</sup> Ryrie, C. C., *Dispensationalism Today*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1973, 210.

<sup>55</sup> Informal reports indicate that more Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries were recruited in the year 1999 than were to be found throughout Southern Africa in the period between 1975-1980. Attendance



There have been dozens of rural missionary ministries that have been built around both the tribal areas and languages. Missionaries using national Christians who are employed to serve as translators have primarily carried out most of these tasks. These ministries have grown only sporadically since few of the American missionaries have been willing or able to learn the African languages and then reinforce the Independent Baptist and Bible church model within the cultures themselves. One missionary explained that it was all quite logical to him: "By using a national to translate I train or teach him through my preaching."<sup>56</sup> Of course, it has also been admitted a number of times that missionaries using this method have no real idea as to the quality of communication being attained or even the actual standard of theological content being expressed through these translators.

The expansion of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches has been primarily an evangelistic<sup>57</sup> expansion. Evangelism, as herein defined, refers to an individual deciding to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the individual's personal Lord and Savior.<sup>58</sup> This decision is a decision of the will and is linked to a humble prayer asking for forgiveness of one's sin.<sup>59</sup> Of course, there are various interpretation as to the degree of Sovereignty and Free will actual involved, but most of these churches would seek to balance the two issues related to the responsibility of God and man.

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growth in the years between 1995 and 1998 was also greater than the total membership throughout the region between 1975-1980.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with an Independent Baptist American Missionary that will remain anonymous, 1999.

<sup>57</sup> Coleman, R. E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Old Tappan, F. H. Revell Co., 1973, 11, and Braun, N., *Laity Mobilized*, Grand Rapids, W.E. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971, "Every Church a Church Planter", 20.

<sup>58</sup> Bancroft, E. H., *Christian Theology: Systematic and Biblical*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1980, 211-275.

<sup>59</sup> Sin refers to sinfulness or depravity of one's nature, and individual sins manifesting themselves to the conscience.

Regular Baptist Professor Earle Griffith, made a valuable contribution when he explained that:

The church of Jesus Christ is not under sealed order. It's mission, course of action and designs are common property. A divine dictum uttered two millennia ago still stands unaltered: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. Military and political circles have used the phrase "global strategy." That is very old terminology to the ambassadors of the King of Kings. The invasion of the nations with that sweet blessed story of the Christ who came from glory is the solemn obligation of every Christian and local church. We must "go, let go, and help go." This work would be worth the supreme effort of angels, but it is entrusted to redeemed souls. ... We have a gospel that knows nothing of geographic, racial, religious or time boundaries. I doubt it is possible for a church to decline or die if it accepts wholeheartedly Acts 1:8 as its working platform. Love for Christ accompanied by love for those for whom He died are the hallmarks of every company (local church) of saints worthy of the name. A simple definition of a local church: It is a society of believers immersed on a credible confession of faith, having New Testament officers; self-governing polity; maintaining the ordinances; voluntarily banded together for worship, fellowship, work and the worldwide propagation of the gospel.<sup>60</sup>

The fact that aggressive evangelism leads to the re-baptism of all those baptised as babies and all who were baptised to obtain regeneration clearly separates this type of evangelism from different forms of 're-commitment, re-dedication or one of the Charismatic baptisms or experiences of the Spirit. The issue of personal repentance as a God produced requirement either before, with or after conversion is often argued within these various churches, but though this divides many of them from open cooperation it does not have the strength to rule out their commonness.

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<sup>60</sup> Griffith, E.G., Dr. The Pastor as God's Minister, Regular Baptist Press, Schaumburg, 1977, 87

Some of the expansion has been at the level of additions and conversions<sup>61</sup> that many would consider a form of proselytising. Such so-called proselytes may come from other Baptist groupings such as the Free Baptists or the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, but this has been a relatively small number since in most cases the Independents, though disagreeing on various issues, view other Baptists as distant cousins or at least a friend and certainly not a foe. There are also any number of instances of open cooperation between the Independents and other Baptists.

On the other hand, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are admittedly aggressive, in an evangelistic sense, toward the Catholic church, most of the main denominations, and all of the cults and syncretic or pseudo-Christian groups. The goal of the independent fundamentalists is to see people come to a personal and saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, something they believe is not possible among the Catholic churches and cults. They also have serious question about the conversion of many in the main denominations where liberal theology has led people to trust in their good works or in some Reformed churches where an Old Testament styled Covenant relationship with God replaces what the fundamentalists see as a New Covenant personal and saving relationship with Christ, as Lord and Saviour.

The independent fundamentalists carefully train their lay evangelists to deal with issues such as: (1.) the authority of the Roman Catholic church, its Tradition and its seven sacraments as means to grace; (2.) the perceived errors among the different Reformed Churches and especially their doctrines dealing with the covenant of

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<sup>61</sup> Allen, R, Missionary Methods: St Paul or Ours?, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1960, 18-32.

salvation, the baptism of babies, and their allegorical interpretation of prophetic Scriptures; (3.) In the case of the cults, the denial of the deity of Jesus Christ, the failure to treat the Scriptures as authoritative and the existential and Hindu or New Age influences are all openly attacked. Since these churches view ecumenism as anti-Christ rapprochement between churches is quite rare or even non-existent in many cases.

The Southern Africa growth and expansion among the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches is corroborated by an unofficial directory<sup>62</sup> and on the research<sup>63</sup> carried out for this thesis. There are a number of other congregations not included due to their being new or informal cell groups, branch efforts, preaching points, Sunday Schools or young outreach efforts. These figures are, then, an absolute minimum representation and they are somewhat subjective, especially as some figures are simply estimated on average attendances and observation.

**(1.) Total Independent (organised) Congregations. = 107**

RSA Independent Baptist & Bible Congregations. = 95

Bordering Countries Independent Baptist & Bible  
Congregations. =12

**(2.) Total Memberships RSA & Bordering - Affiliated:  
10,000 to 15,000. (Estimated)**

RSA Independent Baptist & Bible Membership: 8675

Bordering Countries Membership: 1300

**(3.) Total Number of Ordained Ministers: (Pastors and  
Missionaries) = 133**

**(4.) The 1998-99 South African Provincial Data:**

<sup>62</sup> The Directory of Independent Fundamental Church and Leaders in Southern Africa, Kempton Park Bible Church Publication, 1999.

<sup>63</sup> These research figures were provided for use in the S.A. Christian Handbook for 1999.

**(4.1) Cape Province:** (Eastern, North & Western) Total  
Congregations. 15

Members: 1425

Affiliated: 1650

Number of Ministers: Pastors, Church Planters, Missionaries: 23

**(4.2) Gauteng Province:** Total Congregations. 36

Members: 3600

Affiliated: 5700

Number of Ministers: Pastors, Church Planters, Missionaries: 42

**(4.3) Kwa-Zulu-Natal Province:** Total Congregations. 30

Members: 2750

Affiliated: 3400

Number of Ministers: Pastors, Church Planters, Missionaries: 32

**(4.4) Northern Province & Mpumalanga:**

Total Congregations. 14

Members: 900

Affiliated: 1700

Number of Ministers: Pastors, Church Planters, Missionaries: 19

5. The figures for the areas<sup>64</sup> "beyond the borders" of the Republic of South Africa, have been estimated using the best available and most conservative criteria. Many of the congregations in these beyond the borders regions are not normally organised but the figure of 12 congregations and 1300 members with another estimated 1500 in affiliation represents an extremely low estimate. Some of the information received would indicate that including the rural and tribal preaching points (only organised congregations are listed) where genuine Independent Baptist and Bible church related congregational life exists could increase the totals by three times the figures presented in this report. It is obvious that an averaged annual increase in the number of congregations, the lay-leadership (non-ordained), the membership and especially the affiliated numbers would also be proportionately much larger.

#### 4.4 The Emerging Theological Perspectives.

Change may not seem like the correct word to use in connection with such a conservative group of Christians, but change must be the term that describes any church that wants to have an effective ministry ... into the future. Independents may become more or less independent. The definition of independent may change. The very usefulness of a term such as independent and/or fundamental may well come under a rightful challenge. Theologically, Baptist try their best not to change but to say that one's perspectives does not change is to pretend that one's life can live inside a proverbial time warp. Perspectives emerge and though churches may well be slow to recognise the changes in their perspectives, the process of change will eventually take place. Douglas McLachlan has recently reminded fundamentalists that there is a need for a review and obviously some change would be expected as well...

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<sup>64</sup> Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique

... the emerging generation of young fundamentalists ... are inheriting an ecclesiastical world which needs fixing. My generation has managed to leave more than a little litter on the theological landscape, and ... I am praying that this new generation of fundamentalists will become a repair generation too. In doing this it is important ... that we operate from a specific set of presuppositions:

1. Our critique is a self critique ... 2. Our approach is neither a reaction to nor a rebellion against Fundamentalism ... 3. Our goal is to be constructive, not destructive... 4. Our strategy is to be transparent and honest about our problems...<sup>65</sup>

But the question comes as to the basis for these changes - will they be Biblically or socially driven? Fundamentalists consider the tenants of Post-modernism to be: (1.) Nothing is absolutely sure. (2.) Nothing is absolutely wrong. (3.) Every individual's lifestyle deserves acceptance. (4.) One's lifestyle choices should be interpreted on the basis of the individual's own subjective standards. (5.) The ethical and moral aspects of our lives are simply fatalistically controlled thus no one is personally guilty or responsible. (6.) Cultures are ethically and morally neutral.<sup>66</sup> In an anti-standards and anti-church environment like this the church - any church - independent fundamental or not, faces some serious challenges!

#### **A. The emergence of a stronger Calvinistic influence.**

The early Independent Fundamentalist Baptist churches were quite anti-Calvinistic and this direction continued until the early 1980's when additional missionaries arrived with various levels of Calvinistic influence. Issues such as the "lordship issue,"<sup>67</sup> dispensationalism and the correct methodologies for Biblical evangelism are all

<sup>65</sup> McLachlan, D. R., Reclaiming Authentic Fundamentalism, Independence, American Association of Christian Schools, 1993, Chapter One.

<sup>66</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., Dialogue Motivators, Cape Town, The Church Ministries Institute, 1999.

<sup>67</sup> Martonec, L., Biblical Answers to Lordship Salvation, Gauteng, Calvary Baptist Theological College, 1998.

rooted in arguments led by the more Calvinistic churches. With further influence from missionaries from the Baptist Bible College and Seminary of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania and the California based Master's Seminary this change in the theological scenery has taken another step along the road away from anti-Calvinism.

### **B. The increased loss of interest in dispensationalism.**

The once influential dispensational, pre-tribulational, and pre-millennial position found dominant in the early Afrikaans Baptiste Kerk, and also quite popular in the Baptist Union merely eroded over the passing of time. In any discussion of the problems facing the Independent Fundamental Baptists or the Independent Fundamental Bible churches, one must ask if this same erosion will once again take place ... in our own ranks. One should also ask if it really matters if some similar erosion is allowed to go unchecked.<sup>68</sup> There are signs of an erosion taking place<sup>69</sup>, with fewer classes or courses teaching the subject and more of the newer textbooks ignoring or choosing to go in another direction altogether.

The real issue is not simply a question of Biblical dispensationalism but the effect any erosion will have on Biblical literalism, upon which dispensationalism, but more importantly - Fundamentalism stands. Dispensationalism has its roots in a literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of the Scriptures and it seeks to provide a unified system for Biblical interpretation. John Nelson Darby<sup>70</sup>(1800-1882) is credited for

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<sup>68</sup> Campbell, D. K and Townsend, Jeffrey L., eds., A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus, Chicago, Moody Press, 1992, 10.

<sup>69</sup> Though J. MacArthur maintains a dispensational position, it is a "simplified" interpretation of dispensationalism which is acceptable only to those of a strong Calvinist and Puritan position and far from the Independent Baptists.

<sup>70</sup> Pickering, H., Chief Men Among the Brethren, Neptune, Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1986, 99.



contributing to dispensationalism a systematic scheme for doing Bible interpretation from a consistently literalist hermeneutic. The Biblical and historic setting for dispensationalism should include the important texts such as 2 Samuel 7, Isaiah 32, Daniel 9:24-27, Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:36, Colossians 1:26, I Corinthians 12:13; and beyond Darby the key contributors to dispensational thought should include men such as C.I. Scofield (1843-1921), and Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-1952). The effect these two men have had on some of the early pastors and missionaries of the Baptist Union of South Africa and more certainly on all the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches in South Africa - has been profound. In South Africa this influence was further strengthened through Clarence Larkin's End Times charts and Charles C. Ryrie's books<sup>71</sup> on prophecy and Cape Town's Earnest Baker, who also wrote, preached and played a pivotal role in the early 1900's in this country. The previous Dallas Theological Seminary president, John Walvoord points out the issue at the heart of this teaching:

As Darby's doctrine developed, the dichotomy between Israel and the church became paramount. He wrote of the unity of believers in the body of Christ who are joined to the Head by the Holy Spirit. He saw the messianic kingdom postponed during the time of the church and he placed the rapture of the church before the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy.<sup>72</sup>

The doctrine of a future Millennium naturally stems from interpreting prophecy in the literal or normal sense. A corollary to premillennialism is the doctrine of dispensationalism.... The distinction between God's future program for Israel and His present program for the church is one of the essential ingredients in Premillennialism. Consistent Premillennialism also involves the belief that the rapture of the church is immanent, that it will occur before the tribulation ....

<sup>71</sup> Ryrie, C. C., *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, 1953, 41-53.

<sup>72</sup> Bass, Clarence B., *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishers, 1960, 128.

The pre-tribulational rapture was usually accepted by those who interpreted the Scriptures literally and distinguished God's program for Israel from His program for the church.<sup>73</sup>

One must ask how an erosion of these truths would affect the Independent Fundamental Baptist or the Bible churches in South Africa. Would the programme for the church change? Would their Matthew 28:19-20 mandates also change? If a mid-tribulational rapture or post-tribulational rapture replaced the pre-tribulational position among South Africa's Independent churches would this not change the overall direction of these churches? The mission of the church is to focus on missionary outreach to invite all<sup>74</sup> to come to Christ, but the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel depends on the church not focusing inward - but outward. This focus is greatly disturbed when the imminent return of Christ is no longer the church's highest hope and clearest motivation for missionary service and ministry.

In Charles C. Ryrie's articles Update on Dispensationalism, he argues against the recent changes by those identified as progressive dispensationalists. Ryrie explains that ...

In reality Christ was identified as the Davidic king before His birth (Luke 1:31-33), but He will not be inaugurated as Davidic king until He returns.... these points are clear: the Davidic kingdom for Israel was genuinely offered by our Lord at His first coming; that offer and His credentials were authenticated by signs and wonders; that offer was refused; the announcement of the church, not the inauguration of the kingdom, was made (Matt. 16:18); and Peter's references on the Day of Pentecost to our Lord's fulfilling David's

<sup>73</sup> Walvoord, J. F., A Torch of Great Significance, Dallas, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1984, 5-6.

<sup>74</sup> Peters, G. W., A Theology of Church Growth, Grand Rapids, Academic Books, 1981, 206, 240.

promises were to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is both Lord (God) and Christ (Messiah), not, as some new dispensationalists teach, that he began His reign on David's throne i.e., "the Father's right hand" in heaven (Acts 2:36).<sup>75</sup>

Fundamentalists in South Africa consider the strong influences of Covenant Theology and Charismatic "Praise and Worship" trends as confusing to Christians and as misleading. This is especially so when the Biblical concept of Kingdom, (along with its soteriological, and eschatological message) is under consideration. Fundamentalists believe these beliefs have weakened the South African church. Fundamentalist Christians warn their congregations that most popular South African theology seems to be little more than a "maze" to most parishioners! Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches believe it will make a major difference if South Africans were exposed to a sound Biblical concept of theological dispensationalism.

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches, like all churches, want to show Christian love and graciousness, but their fundamentalist mindset would ask: "at what cost?" Fundamentalists recognise that South African Christians need to be given a good reason, i.e. a hope for spiritual success and growth, if they are to return to the study of their Bibles. The Fundamentalists believe the answer to providing this hopefulness is found in dispensational theology. Though Fundamentalists will be thought of as "judgmental" for taking this position it is clear that the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches do agree with Ryrie when he points out an issue that Independents in South Africa will continually need to consider:

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<sup>75</sup> Willis, W.R., and Master, J.R. eds., Issues in Dispensationalism. Chicago, Moody Press, 1994, 23.

If rapprochement refers to a 'state of having cordial relations,' then I, for one (and there are many others) have always had such a relationship with believers I have known who have held to differing theological viewpoints (including covenant amillennialists, errantists, Pentecostals, Roman Catholics, Arminians, and Lordship salvationists). But if rapprochement means 'conformity' or 'accord' applied to theology, then there simply will not be rapprochement between various theological viewpoints as long as we are here on earth.<sup>76</sup>

Rapprochement - if it leads to conformity or theological accord in the larger context of South Africa will certainly change matters beyond anything the early founders, missionaries and pastors of Independent and Fundamentalist churches could have imagined.

### C. The emergence of the MacArthur "Lordship" Issue.<sup>77</sup>

The question of "easy believism" or "grace alone" has recently become a matter of some controversy among some of the Independent Baptist and Bible churches. As the teaching of John MacArthur Jr. has found converts and acceptance on the one hand, it has also led others to absolute rejection. The provocative nature of this debate has increased. The issue, itself, is focused around the question of the superficial salvation response<sup>78</sup> i.e. an enthusiastic response to the Gospel without any understanding of the actual significance of discipleship - a proclamation of the Gospel without the hard demand to take up one's cross and follow Christ,<sup>79</sup> - and then a need

<sup>76</sup> Willis, W.R., and Master, J.R. General Editors, Issues in Dispensationalism, Chicago, Moody Press, 1994, 24

<sup>77</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr., The Gospel According to Jesus, Grand Rapids, Academie Books, 1988.

<sup>78</sup> MacArthur, The Gospel According to Jesus, 123.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 123, 127.

to more carefully define the Gospel so as to broadcast the seed of the unadulterated gospel. This alone would not make such an intense argument among the independent fundamentalists but underlying this emphasis there are two other issues: anti-dispensationalism and five-point Calvinism.

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches generally are not anti-dispensational, nor are they generally five-point<sup>80</sup> Calvinists, but in every city in South Africa there are some independent fundamentalist missionaries and pastors who are not fully committed to dispensationalism, and there are many who are quite strong in their acceptance of Calvinism to one or another degree - thus the recent and varied degree of growing controversy!

#### **D. The materialization of a church-based approach to Christian education:**

The Baptists in general and Independent Baptists in particular consider education to be a doctrine and responsibility of their local churches. Over eighty-five years ago Dr. Edgar Mullins summarised the issue of education ... for Baptists, at least - in the following words:

It is unusual to refer to education as a doctrine; there is ample warrant in the New Testament for such reference. In the great commission, Jesus couples the duty of teaching with the duty of preaching. The teaching and preaching therein enjoined are co-ordinate and equal parts of the great task of Christ's people. The academy, the college, the university, indeed all forms of organisation for teaching the truth, all institutions for the diffusion of knowledge are the direct and logical outcome of the work of evangelisation. The Christian Life involves a particular

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<sup>80</sup> Meeter, H. H., *The Basic Ideas of Calvinism*, Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids International Publications, 1960. The Five Points of Calvinism: TULIP, T.- Total Depravity; U.-Unconditional Election; L.-Limited Atonement; I.- Irresistible Grace; P. Perseverance of the Saints.

view of the world and of God as its providential Ruler and Christianity in its doctrine of regeneration lays the foundation for education.<sup>81</sup>

The mission statement for a Christian school ministering to children and young people should be based on the belief that parents are a child's first teachers. The Independent Baptist and Bible churches believe that God gives parents the primary right and responsibility for their own children's training. The Christian school, as understood by these Independents, is limited to fulfilling a desire to aid parents in their God-given mandate by offering a high-quality or academically excellent education that is rooted in a Biblical worldview. The Christian school should desire to challenge their students to develop Christ-likeness that is genuinely founded upon personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Christian education is not necessarily in conflict with education by the state. Indeed, they mutually supplement each other. The public school system is necessary, but Christian ideals and the Christian type of civilization are dependent upon education under Christian auspices<sup>82</sup>.

### **E. Church-Based Leadership Training**

Training Leadership for their local churches has proved to be a major challenge for the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and this is especially true for South Africa. Church-based leadership training is at the heart of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Church ministries. This church based approach is a development that is both theological and practical in perspective. The Church Ministries Institutes of Cape Town and Johannesburg serve as good examples of these developments. These Bible

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<sup>81</sup> Mullins, E.Y., Baptist Beliefs, Chicago, Baptist World Publishing Company, 1912, 76.

colleges offer the church-based concept since their goal is to achieve a comprehensive training of future pastors, missionary church planters, church elders, deacons, teachers, and youth workers. These Bible College programmes offer quite a comprehensive range of courses leading to a Certificate of Church Ministry. Because the CMI programme has been accredited through a cooperative effort with Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, a student may also obtain a BA in Theology from Potchefstroom University upon completion of the necessary courses.

The goal of this unique approach is to balance scholarship with personal discipleship and practical ministry experiences in local churches. The courses are open to men and women, and couples training for specific ministries may choose to study together. Comprehensive leadership training should focus on developing a Christian in three key areas: biblical knowledge, godly character and ministry skills. These courses are meeting those criteria by developing Christian leaders with biblical knowledge by providing rigorous academic coursework coupled with non-formal classroom instruction which is designed both to teach the student what to think and how to think. Matters relating to God's Word, the Christian faith, ethics, human relations and the Christian life all receive special attention. In this atmosphere the Independent Baptist and Bible church pastor is being trained to a high level of competency in the hope that the future national leaders will one day take over the full control of these institutions - as well as the churches.

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<sup>82</sup> Mullins, E.Y., Baptist Beliefs, 76.

Godly character is developed by placing a full-time student under the discipleship and mentorship of a pastor or church planter who pours his experience and philosophies of ministry into the student throughout the duration of the programme. Ministry skills are developed by providing the student with numerous ministry experiences under the supervision of the pastor, church planter or those engaged in targeted areas of church ministry.

#### **4.5 The Problems Facing the Independent Baptists.**

Having a well thought-out and planned methodology is one of the strengths of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. Yet, methodology and planning must include learning opportunities, review or re-assessment. If these churches are guilty in any one area it may well be that “being committed learners” is their greatest area of down-fall. Where we fail to re-assess and revise we confess our unwillingness to learn. Often their methodologies were imported, modified to one or another degree, but then simply left without any regular review. As problems arose, and issues developed insufficient response and change took place. Some missionaries may well be content just mirroring their own personal cultural backgrounds and experience, others happily copy their supporting churches and some loyally continue trying to “clone” or “franchise” the product. Cross-cultural, personality or obviously sinful attitudes or habits are realities, realities – problems or not – that God in His wisdom, Sovereignty and Providence has allowed His church to face, or often to try to speak to, or even to resolve.

##### **A. The King James Version Controversy.**



As discussed earlier, Fundamentalists have fought hard against the Liberal attacks against the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. On occasion, this debate has been taken even further and the reliability of a specific text – over other texts or versions has been debated.

There is division (polemical) within the independent fundamentalist movement: the question of the reliability of certain texts or document sources and the importance of the Textus Receptus was first raised among the Independent Baptist and Bible churches when missionary Jack Moorman compiled a booklet he titled: Forever Settled.<sup>83</sup>

The argument over what kind of a Bible to trust had consumed a great deal of the time and energy of a number of Independent missionaries. An example of the type and degree of argument is seen in Moorman's summary regarding God's providential protection of the Old Testament Scriptures:

Yes the battle between God and Satan has raged over His Holy Word; there have been many pretenders; some streams of textual transmissions have become seriously corrupted. But, in carefully pondering the facts and evidence as given above, the student can clearly see that God has been faithful to His promise: the Old Testament has been preserved through the Masoretic Hebrew text.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Moorman, J., Forever Settled: A Survey of the Documents and History of the Bible, Johannesburg, Gethsemane Bible College, 1985, Introduction.

<sup>84</sup> Moorman, J., Forever Settled, 36.

This type of argument, and similar issues of debate regarding the New Testament, is still dividing Christians and churches in America today! Regarding the formation of the New Testament canon, Moorman writes:

There is a deep and sacred mystery in the formation of the Written Word on earth just as there had been in the incarnation and development of the Living Word. Thus, the Holy Spirit guided the early Christians to gather the individual New Testament books into one New Testament canon and to reject all non-canonical books.<sup>85</sup>

Such revision or rewriting of the history of the formation of the canon reduces the issue to totally emotional criteria ...

...the Holy Spirit operating in their hearts... gradually leading them, by common consent to reject false readings and to preserve the true.<sup>86</sup>

What of South Africa? Will the independent fundamentalists take this issue as a truly South African issue or consider it an import from America - one possibly better to return to the sender?

#### **B. The Issue of a Post-Modern Culture:**

There remains confusion over liturgics, worship and contextualisation within the independent fundamentalist movement. The question of maintaining (and revising) our congregational worship styles for our contemporary world is a major issue in our

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 60.

day.<sup>87</sup> Worship, once God oriented or focused is increasingly man centered.

Christians are increasingly looking for a balm in Gilead. They want their nerves soothed, their needs met and their lives distracted or entertained.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand the primary purpose of Christian music is not the preservation of heritage either - as important as that is! The *world of sacred music* is a confusing one. There are many voices giving conflicting messages. Several circumstances that are unique to this period of church history directly contribute to this confusion. The first and perhaps the most significant is that sacred music today is big business.<sup>89</sup>

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches have traditionally believed the "Worship & Praise Music" or "Scripture Choruses" and "User Friendly Churches" are all an effort to make the church and its message relevant, at least, according to some proponents of these changes.<sup>90</sup> These Fundamentalist churches consider Christianity to be yielding to the influences of post-modern thinking. This post-modernism is opposed by Fundamentalists for allowing everything to be viewed as relative - with no absolutes exist - i.e. nothing is absolutely right and nothing is absolutely wrong.<sup>91</sup>

The Independent and Fundamentalist churches teach that Christianity has traditionally taught that we are to accept others - as the creation of God, but we were

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<sup>87</sup> Dawn, M. J., *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down, A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture*, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995. 45, 87, 89.

<sup>88</sup> Anderson, D. E., *Reformation and Revival Journal: Carol Stream, A Quarterly Journal for Church Leadership*, Published by Reformation and Revival Ministries, Inc., Volume 4, Number 4, Fall 1995, 13.

<sup>89</sup> Sweatt, D. M., *Church Music: Sense and Nonsense*, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, Inc., 1981, 3.

<sup>90</sup> Wolf, G. L., *Music of the Bible in Christian Perspective*, Salem, Schmal Publishing Co., 1996, 22

<sup>91</sup> Walls, D. F., *No Place for Truth or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993, 5, 7, and 51.

never told, not at least until post-modernism made its influence known, that we now must also be accepting of every individual's ideas, philosophies and lifestyles.<sup>92</sup>

Though Christianity's sense of urgency to preach the Gospel may entice many to use cultural contexts in the presentation of the Gospel, this is viewed by the fundamentalist Christians as ultimately and finally lead to the erosion of the Gospel,<sup>93</sup> and the ensuing principles of righteousness to which converts are called in order to grow through the process of discipleship. Independent fundamentalists repeatedly warn through their preaching and teaching that the Gospel really can take no endorsement outside of that which is fully and completely consistent with the principles of righteousness.

Fundamentalists warn that Christians dare not threaten conservative theology or allow discipleship in righteousness to be compromised no matter how alluring the endorsements from broader constituencies might seem to be. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are quite adamant in their rejection any acceptability of the Charismatic movement. These Fundamentalist churches openly oppose all influence on South African religious life from the Charismatic movement.<sup>94</sup> The issue is doctrinal, regarding teachings that Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches consider to be Charismatic error in Biblical interpretation. The issue is also doctrinal in the sense that it speaks to the matter of worship, regarding methodologies that the independent fundamentalists consider compromise with the world ... in music, arts (dance) and numerous others modernisations of worship styles.

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<sup>92</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., "Dialogue Motivators," Cape Town, 1999, The Church Ministries Institute.

Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are generally quite outspoken about their view that today's generation may prefer that we worship the immanent God who is *Immanuel God with us*, and the earlier generations may have preferred worshipping the transcendent<sup>95</sup> Lord who is enthroned above mankind, but one cannot reasonably attempt doing both in the name of a "balanced meal."

The Independent Baptist and Bible churches are learning that their society expects a level of genuine leadership that indicates that these churches are actually offering something distinct and of value to their search after God.

### C. Future Identity:

In questioning the relevancy (strategically) of the independent fundamentalist movement in South Africa one should recognise that whatever else Fundamentalism is, it is a literalist reaction to theological liberalism and hermeneutical (allegorical) interpretation. Since Fundamentalism is a reaction to something that originated in Europe and gained a measure of popularity in America, the question as to its relevancy to South Africa has been questioned. The matter is further complicated by the fact that Fundamentalism is also a missiological and evangelistic reaction to the popular missionary methodology known as the "social Gospel".

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<sup>93</sup> Dawn, M. J., *A Royal "Waste" of Time*, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999, 333-344.

<sup>94</sup> Stowell, J. M. *Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century*, Wheaton, Victor Books, 1994, 51.

<sup>95</sup> Wiersbe, W. W., *Real Worship*, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2000, 185.

If the Independent Baptist and Bible churches are to settle the issue of their South African identity and of their future ability to contribute to the needs of a budding New South Africa, their own emergence as a new 21<sup>st</sup> century South African Christian movement must be settled. As long as the churches in this movement allow the issue of identity and purpose to be little more than a reaction against one or other set of religious issues, its future and real value is questionable.

As long as this movement is unsuccessful in utilising its character as an independent church and fails to accomplish things not possible by the bigger denominational groups, the value of the movement - in real terms -- as a Christian ministry will be debated.

#### **D. Racism and the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches.**

Issues such as forgiveness,<sup>96</sup> human rights racial reconciliation and the ethics of race relations have not been give sufficient priority by the churches of this movement.

The possibly causes for these weaknesses should include:

- (1.) The problems characteristic of strong autonomous church governments,<sup>97</sup>
- (2.) The failure to recognise the purpose of God's providential<sup>98</sup> workings,
- (3.) Compromise regarding the Bible's teaching regarding racism, and
- (4.) The New Testament teaching on a church that is free from all class distinctions.

<sup>96</sup> Tutu, Desmond Mpilo, *No Future without Forgiveness*, Johannesburg, Rider, 1999, 219.

<sup>97</sup> Kretschmar, L., Msiza, P., and Nthane, J., eds., *Being a Baptist in South Africa Today*, (Third Winter School Of Theology), Brzamfontein, Baptist Convention College, 1997, 34-36.

The American Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches have always held the famed missionary to Africa, David Livingstone, above all other African missionaries. He has been held as a “hero” figure of missionary work and for his explorations, as a figure of great Christian courage. Above all else, Livingstone has been acclaimed as a great opponent of the evils of slavery and racial hatred.

Livingstone’s life-long battle against the slave trade, something he called the “open sore of Africa” together with his travels and missionary work were featured lessons and stories told and re-told in every Independent Baptist and Bible church Sunday school in America.

**(1) The failure to recognise the purpose of God’s providential<sup>99</sup> workings,**

When one recognises that all the independent fundamental missionaries now serving in South Africa have a deep devotional heritage and knowledge in relation to Livingstone’s work, it is quite surprising to see the varied degrees of racialism still to be found within this movement. Equally amazing is how anyone so appreciative of Livingstone as a warrior against racial inequity could fail to see the parallels in Africa today.

The doctrinal view of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches is compellingly committed to the presupposition that God works providentially<sup>100</sup> in history and His activity is designed around providing gracious help to those who face

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<sup>98</sup> Panosian, E. M.; Fisher, D. A.; Sidwell, M., eds., *The Providence of God in History*, Greenville, Bob Jones University Press, 1996, 37-38.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-38.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

the onslaughts of evil. There is no doubt that the horrors of the nineteenth century slave trade led to the courageous actions of David Livingstone – matters that are understood as being providentially used of God as “ointment” for healing Africa’s “open sore” of slavery.

Equally important for the twenty-first century is the realisation that the racial unrest of the twentieth century and the resultant awakening of many to their ethical responsibilities must also be recognised as matters that are being providentially directed and used of God to bring the church to face God’s will for their own times. In other words, the doctrine of Providence teaches that God’s Sovereign control and intervention in history are realities that provide a context or framework for the Christian’s lifework and ministry and are not chance occurrences. It is in this light, that the independent fundamentalists do not appear to be found in an especially “good light.” If they honour Livingstone, the enemy of slavery and human indignity, they too, must be and do no less themselves.

It is also reasonable to point out that independent fundamentalists rooted in American ideological and political conservatism may need to give even more careful consideration to their “blind side,” i.e. to their potential for hiding their own prejudices behind their political causes. If the independent fundamentalists show a willingness to show Christian care and concern for the human needs of others, especially those who are the victims of the evils of injustice, many more will listen to other things they have to say or to contribute. To be seen to ignore a needy world is



to ask others to “brand” you as one lacking compassion, the most obvious characteristic of Christ and those who claim to be his followers.

**(2.) The problems characteristic of a strong autonomous church government,<sup>101</sup>**

All Christians want their witness and testimony of God’s love to be helpful and effectual for those that suffer humanities offences. If the Independent Fundamental Baptists in Southern Africa want to be able to reach past their earlier racial attitudes and stereotypes they must find the individual character and congregational courage to address the issue of the *offence of Christ’s cross*.<sup>102</sup> The “offence” is that which Christ suffered on man’s behalf – but especially *this* offence must be recognised as that which resulted from both the individual’s sins and mankind’s collective sin. It is more than cognitive awareness of the horrors of mankind’s sinfulness. It is personal, inner and costly. Leaving one’s personal egotisms and cultural pride at His cross is essential. Only as these churches face the real South Africa with its sin and brutality will their lives be effectively used of God amongst a people or society that suffers from the effects of such offensiveness - sin against God Himself, sin within but sin that also is more than evident on the outside, as well.<sup>103</sup>

The independent fundamentalists must determine to what degree their churches should be known for their hatred of sin – in all of its manifestations or forms. Only

<sup>101</sup> Kretschmar, L., Msiza, P., and Nthane, J., eds., *Being a Baptist in South Africa Today*, (Third Winter School Of Theology), Braamfontein, Baptist Convention College, 1997, 34-36.

<sup>102</sup> Smeaton, George, *The Apostles Doctrine of the Atonement*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1957, 144, 164, 176, 185-187, and 236.

<sup>103</sup> Adams Jay. E., *The War Within*, Eugene, Harvest House Publishers, 1989, 11, 33, 54.

as Christians see that all sin, racialism included, is truly a horrible offence, an offence against God – an offence of the very cross of Christ, will they determine to fight it.

### **(3.) Compromise regarding the Bible's teaching regarding racism.**

The “down grading”<sup>104</sup> of the Bible by liberals, neo-orthodox and neo-evangelicals led to the great fundamentalist debates at the end of the nineteenth century. These debates ultimately led to a public separation of many of America's churches and denominations. In this climate fundamentalism was born to “defend the faith” and this they have done, but not without making mistakes. One mistake was to hold to error along with truth just because “it was what our fore-fathers believed.” Another issue “over-looked” in the midst of all these truly weighty battles was an important issue for independent fundamentalists. It was the New Covenant's mandate for a culture-free, a class-free and a prejudice-free church.<sup>105</sup>

If independent fundamentalists hope to evangelise South Africa more effectively they must understand the world from a truly Biblical position - not just a historically fundamentalist or possibly prejudiced basis! The Fundamental Baptists, as hermeneutical literalist, must show that they interpret the Bible factually and objectively. The facts are that the New Covenant's teaching of a culture-free, class-

<sup>104</sup> Murray, Iain, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, 153.

<sup>105</sup> Culture-free. Ephesians 3: 2,6, <sup>2</sup>If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Class-free. Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Prejudice-free. Hebrews 10:14-16 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. <sup>15</sup>Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, <sup>16</sup>This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

free and prejudice-free church teaches much more than just the removal of the class distinctions between Jew and Gentile within the church, it also removes any and all attempts to justify racism, bigotry or bias.

The fact that some independent fundamentalists continue efforts to justify racism only obscures the light of the Gospel.<sup>106</sup> Racism has resulted in horrendous injustices, exploitation and the degradation of millions of people ... for whom Christ died'.<sup>107</sup> These that suffer must not be overlooked with impunity.

**(4.) The New Testament teaching on a church that is free from all class distinctions.**

In the past, when fundamentalists were criticized for racism or prejudice they fell prey of the temptation to use the Word of God deceitfully,<sup>108</sup> i.e. to use God's Word to argue ones way out of a predicament. Many independent fundamentalists churches oppose racism in all its forms; while others oppose it to a particular degree and some, regretfully, continue attempting to defend the indefensible.

The churches that have openly condemned racism are churches that are making real efforts to move from ministries that were racially divided to churches that are truly caring and committed to all people. Many of these churches were already constitutionally organised as multi-racial congregations but were not effective or

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<sup>106</sup> 2 Cor. 4:2-6

<sup>107</sup> Hofmeyr, J.W., and Millard, J.A., Froneman, C.JJ, History of the Church in South Africa. A Document and Source Book, 1991, Pretoria, University of South Africa, 336

<sup>108</sup> "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully..." 2 Cor. 4:2 KJV

seriously committed to multi-racial ministries. More often than not, they were people who had left racial doctrine behind but were not yet effectively bridging the culture gaps left from days gone by. One independent fundamental Baptist seminary provided the following suggestions<sup>109</sup> for overcoming racism or the failures to bridge the culture gaps in independent fundamental churches. Many churches have already instituted many of these practices and many more are moving in some of the directions outlined in this listing of cross-cultural ministry possibilities. In order for the church to respond Biblically in a cross-cultural setting professors Glenn and Smallman suggest that the churches should:

- Be sure to find philosophical and doctrinal agreement among our church leaders, then the church leadership should teach, preach and clearly proclaim the truth regarding racism and the error being taught or practiced in our society. Both preaching and encouraging serious prayer regarding our spiritual and practical attitudes should be emphasised.
- Decide how they are going to disciple new cross-cultural members for empowerment in leadership positions in our churches.
- Genuinely confront our culture in a way that we reach it on all levels. By direct confrontation through "support groups," by assisting prisoners, encouraging cultural focus groups, assisting learning-disabled and other disabled children and adults, caring for shut-ins, giving added focus to the specific needs of teens and singles groups, etc.
- We must freely communicate with many races and many cultures so that are all blending into a homogenous social fabric. Such effort obviously defies simple analysis.
- Promote preaching styles and focus on issues that this complexity demands from our teaching, i.e. that it be more than (informing) teaching, and our preaching more than (exhorting) preaching. We must know not only our message but also the lifestyle of those we seek to influence.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Glenn, W.E. and Smallman, W.H. Gen. Ed., Missions in a New Millennium, Grand Rapids, Kregel, 2000, 393-405. (Condensed.)

<sup>110</sup> Glenn, and Smallman, Missions in a New Millennium, 403.

- Acknowledge and welcome diversity of culture in various ways. Some churches simply ignore or overlook cultural differences. We need to look for Biblically acceptable ways to learn about, adopt some of the nuances of our target cultures, and appreciate the expression of the rest.<sup>111</sup>
- The need is not to adopt one culture over another, but to understand how not to alienate each other by imposing our culture on others. We must learn our community and its challenges. We must concentrate on Biblical Reconciliation and Discipleship.<sup>112</sup>
- As new members of a “heavenly citizenship” we need to find the Biblical standards to standardize or regulate our personal, family and congregational life and worship styles. Focusing on adapting to cultures is not as central as responding to the challenges of all of our cultures, society and sin sick world.<sup>113</sup>
- Respond to social issues such as poverty, racial and class conflict, disease, broken families, abortion, crime and drugs. Through Christian ministries and Biblical Counselling we are able to address the confusion over ‘human dignity’ and powerlessness in dealing with legal systems, and family conflict. Attention to health, personal safety or security, education, skill training and the dilemma of unemployment is essential

There are, of course, many others attempting to supply solutions to humanities racial problems – but these are solutions<sup>114</sup> that clearly exclude God and His Word! These are the so-called “social experiments,” -- the efforts at “social engineering,” -- the attempts at “purifying the races” or just someone, or some isolated group trying to protect their own culture, ego or identity. The world’s answers to life’s problems usually include inhumanities, or somehow deprive others of their God-given dignity and liberty.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 408.

<sup>112</sup> Glenny, and Smallman, *Missions in a New Millennium*, 408-409.

<sup>113</sup> Modified.

<sup>114</sup> In February of 1960 the British Prime Minister, Harrold Macmillan, gave his famous “Winds of Change” speech on African international policy. Many in Africa were calling for an ‘Africa for the Africans.’ In South Africa, Macmillan’s “winds” turned into a mighty whirlwind! The Independent Fundamentalists have often tried to avoid the winds, deny the whirlwind and preferring to focus on the saving work of Christ. Mennen, W. G., *African for the Africans*, Grand Rapids, W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969, 36.

On the other side of the chasm there are churches<sup>115</sup> that defend racism and that attempt using a theological rationale for apartheid or segregation. Their rationale stands, first of all, on the belief that there is a God-sanctioned separation of the races. Then secondly, by assuming that the church or 'Christian society' in general is mandated to defend this separation of the races. It is in this sense, that independent fundamentalists are viewed as guilty of using the Word of God deceitfully,<sup>116</sup> i.e. of employing it to defend the arguments of prejudice and racism.

One of their favourite arguments used to defend racism is based on Genesis 9:18,<sup>117</sup> "*And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.*" This Bible passage is mistakenly interpreted<sup>118</sup> as the "prophetic curse on Canaan" by using verse 25, *And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall be unto his brethren. ...*

Many different denominations or churches, the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches included, have a long history of proclaiming that Ham's sin and the related curse of servitude on his son, Canaan, had an everlasting effect on all his descendants. This meant, in practical terms, that the natives of Africa should always

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<sup>115</sup> The Dutch Reformed Church was cited in this book, but scrutiny clearly indicates the guilt for apartheid and segregation some how infects every church, denomination and religion in Southern Africa, if not the world. (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk), Ref. Tutu, D.M., *No Future Without Forgiveness*, London, Rider Press, 1999, 145.

<sup>116</sup> Glenn, W.E. and Smallman, W.H. Gen. Ed., *Missions in a New Millennium*, Grand Rapids, Kregel, 2000, 393-401; and 2 Corinthians 4:2.

<sup>117</sup> Also see Genesis 10:6, 15-19.

<sup>118</sup> Morris, Henry M., *The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1976, 231-244.

be - as Bishop Tutu puts it - that they be put "properly in their place"<sup>119</sup> (i.e. *Apartheid*). Of course, many churches condemned *Apartheid* as a heresy, and many Independent Baptist and Bible churches were among those who rejected this social concept. On the other hand, other Christians, (independent fundamentalists among this group) continued harassing and declaring those who questioned *Apartheid* to be "heretics."<sup>120</sup> Some Christians have acknowledged their errors, even apologizing handsomely, only to continue living out an *Apartheid* form of existence, i.e. living out a practical lie.<sup>121</sup>

One, otherwise excellent book, written by an Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church writer -- though fully committed to exposing the evils of racism -- gave two examples of religions that made racist statements.<sup>122</sup> The two examples were those of Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses; but, no mention or confession was forthcoming to admit to the obvious fact, that many fundamentalists have been the central figures in teaching these same false doctrines. If independent fundamentalist Christians and churches are not willing to judge themselves - and confess their sins, they leave the Lord no choice other than to punish<sup>123</sup> or possibly withdraw His blessings and even His fellowship<sup>124</sup> from them.

<sup>119</sup> Tutu, D. M., No Future Without Forgiveness, 145.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>121</sup> Speaking personally, and as an Independent Fundamental Baptist, this reality has certainly been a real challenge -- if not crisis -- to try to solve in my own life and ministry.

<sup>122</sup> Ham, Wieland, Batten, One Blood: The Biblical Answer to Racism, Green Forest, Master Books, 1999, 100.

<sup>123</sup> I Cor. 11:28 *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. ...<sup>28</sup>For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. <sup>29</sup>For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. <sup>30</sup>But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

<sup>124</sup> 1 John 1:6 *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. <sup>7</sup>But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. <sup>8</sup>If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Fundamentalists have, generally speaking, failed to warn their congregations regarding the racial misinterpretation of the Canaan passage, equally important ... they have often failed to publicly communicate the genuine remorse one would expect for having taught error, or of being guilty of less than a Christlike attitude. Happily, this is not true in every case and many Independent, Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches and pastors are most vocal about their opposition to all forms of racism and each generation seems to be becoming clearer than the one before.

It is important that the balanced Biblical position is outlined as it would most generally be taught among non-racist independent fundamentalists in South Africa today. They teach that any "honest" Biblical exegesis clearly teaches that the curse of Canaan has nothing whatsoever to do with skin colour.<sup>125</sup> Instead, most would explain that these passages need to be seen literally and thus must be applied to its original message, i.e. a spiritual warning regarding the evil of alcoholic drink, and a warning to parents that their children's sins do effect the family unit and for many generations to come. Some independent fundamentalists still need to face the fact that the word *race* is not a Biblical term and the term *interracial marriage* does not<sup>126</sup> violate even one of the principles of God's Word.<sup>127</sup> This fact is understood by independent fundamentalists today, more than ever before. Arthur Custance explains the issue more fully:

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<sup>125</sup> Ham; Wieland; Batten, *One Blood*, 103.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>127</sup> Note: The marriage ban on the Israelites, had to do with protecting tribal inheritances -Number 36:6, and protecting them spiritually from serving other gods: Deut. 7: 3 *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.* Hermeneutically this ban can not be applied to the individual Christian during the 'Dispensation of the Church'. This does not mean that believers should not separate from unbelievers, but only that separation can not be based on a discrimination between people groups or colour.



When the ark grounded, there were eight people alive in the world and no more. Landing somewhere in the highlands north of Mesopotamia, they began to spread as they multiplied, though retaining their language, (at first) and for some time a homogeneous cultural tradition.

The initial family pattern set by the existence in the party of three sons and their wives, gave rise in the course of time to three distinct families of man who, according to their patriarchal lineage, may be appropriately termed Japhethites, Hamites and Shemites.<sup>128</sup>

In modern terminology, the Biblical patriarchal lineage would be represented by the Indo-Europeans (Caucasoids), the Mongoloid and Negroid peoples and the Semites (Hebrews, Arabs and some more ancient branches of the family such as the Assyrians, etc.).<sup>129</sup>

Many South African independent fundamentalists recognise the need to publicly declare these facts and openly declare: "that from the family of Noah have sprung *all* the peoples of the world,"<sup>130</sup> – but all are not fully ready to debate every opponent of this "heated issue" – not as yet. But for most South African independent fundamentalists there are no races -- no colour-barriers, no genetics or even Biblically defined divisions that truly or rightfully should be allowed to separate us.

Another problem within Christianity is the concept of "Helping God to protect His plan." Whether one looks at Colonialism, Aryanism, Nationalism or any of Apartheid's sister socio-political concepts, the idea of helping to *protect God's plan*<sup>131</sup> – i.e. the Christian maintaining that he is cooperating with a grand and divine plan for

<sup>128</sup> Custance, Arthur C., *Noah's Three Sons*, Volume I: The Doorway Papers, 1975, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 248-262. Custance, while trying to avoid stereotyping humanity or implying that every individual example supports his viewpoint, recognizes God's providential working in giving the world a basis for social potential. He points to the technological inventiveness of the Hamitic people, the Semitic inclination to religion and the Japhetic philosophical contribution.

<sup>129</sup> Custance, Arthur C., *Genesis and Early Man*, Volume II: The Doorway Papers, 1975, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 35.

<sup>130</sup> Custance, *Genesis and Early Man*, 56.

<sup>131</sup> The Verse used to describe God's Plan: *And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.* Acts 17:26

racially dividing the world, i.e. *Determining ... the bounds of their habitation*. This argument and these Bible verses will be used, (out of their proper context) by some, to hide behind. In the name of helping God, or of upholding God's, so-called, established plan for humankind -- many social, religious and political thinkers developed and continuously modified various social theories or versions of *Segregation* or *Apartheid*.

Regretfully, some independent fundamental Baptists taught one or more of the versions of Apartheid that gained such popularity in the mid twentieth century. One of these ideas held that the various "races" were technically equal but should not be allowed to merge. These theorists felt that each "race" should develop separately, and their goal was to divide black from whites.<sup>132</sup>

Another, even more extreme version of Apartheid theory, claimed not only that the "races" are distinct from one another but that all the white race is fundamentally superior to all others, especially to the Africans. Many believed that it was the destiny of non-white people to serve the whites and that nonwhites were not capable of governing themselves.

Building on the assumption that, as Christian people, they should somehow actively defend God's plan for the control of society, i.e. the *bounds of their habitation* - everything from demigods to simply naïve people have been given a 'voice' and an 'ear.' Some of the recent efforts to help God have led to some most dismaying

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<sup>132</sup> Tutu, D. M., *No Future Without Forgiveness*, 144-147.

efforts. The independent fundamental churches have often become pre-occupied with their own national economic problems, politics and cultural traditions. The result is a type of blind nationalism filled with emotional messages of blood and soil and that as often as not replace the Word of God. Christ honouring Biblical worship, genuine care one for the other and a genuine love for the lost souls for whom Christ died disappears and a church is left standing ... “poised between two crosses, wanting to be loyal to both results.”<sup>133</sup>

Regrettably, the church in South Africa, with the independent fundamentalists included, were much like the church in pre-World War II Germany, that fell far short of living up to its true high calling and failed to understand the *cross* of selfishness and hate and the cross of God’s love can never - tolerate each other. The church in America today, including churches that are Fundamentalist, are late in learning that they cannot stand between the cross of hatred and the cross of God’s love.

To further complicate the whole issue, other Christians<sup>134</sup> decided that Nimrod<sup>135</sup> having taken the leadership for creating a centralised global government – had done so to possibly better serve Satan’s plan against the Messiah. According to this view, the church must also fight all forms of globally centralised government. They would explain that God stepped into this Old Testament internationalism and potential globalism and rendered their prideful and humanistic actions null and void. They teach that Christians today, at least those who are political conservatives, must be

<sup>133</sup> Tutu, D. M., *No Future Without Forgiveness*, 76.

<sup>134</sup> Morris, Henry M., *The Genesis Record*, 1976, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, p 268-269.

<sup>135</sup> Genesis 11:1 *Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. .... (9) Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.*

involved in opposing any similar directions by modern governments or international bodies.

Misinterpreting Genesis 11:1-9 some Bible teachers have even taught that the Lord's *judgment* against the 'Tower of Babel' and against the pride of humanity was designed to do far more than confuse languages or just scatter the peoples abroad. These teachers have concluded that the judgment at Babel included the creation of racial barriers i.e. genetic differences, skin colour and that this had a direct effect on marriage. Further, some are convinced that the purpose of Babel was to create nationhood (or even racially based nations). This is then considered to be "God's plan" for the control of society, i.e. the bounds of their habitation.

There are a number of Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible church missionaries who preach that anything similar to<sup>136</sup> the "One World Government"<sup>137</sup> referred to in the Book of Revelation, such as the United Nations must be opposed, since, to them, this is a matter of defending the racial barriers and bounds.

Conservative and truly fundamentalist Christians may find many reasons for disagreeing with the United Nations ... but using the misinterpretation of Scripture to defend God's created racial barriers or bounds is certainly not one of them. Most Independent Baptists do not believe they are called to help God by supporting, or opposing, one or another social order. They point to Augustine and Calvin both of whom dreamed and even attempted great social plans in God's name, but none of

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., Ham; Waveland; Batten, *One Blood*, 110. (Note: For many, the United Nations should be opposed since it encourages globalism and is a reversal of the judgment at Babel. Replies to this revision are found in Deuteronomy 32:8; II Chronicle 20:6, Isaiah 40:15; 46:9-11.)

which fully succeeded. Independent Baptists are far more focused on the message of reconciling all men to Him – something they see accomplished through the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Many younger generation <sup>138</sup> Independent fundamental Baptists would focus on and refer to Acts 17: 26 to explain their view of God's plan: *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him...!* Babel was not a curse, to this younger generation, but a plan --and the creation of a number of races was never a part of the plan. The results of nationhood and geo-political boundaries was to bring man, in the providence of God, to a place of submission and humility unlike the pride of Babel.

Those independent fundamental Baptists committed to opposing racism point out that <sup>139</sup> - the “*seeking, feeling after and finding*” process is now available to all men - in that they are now divided by their confusion of language into nations and through this agency of culture God has placed mankind in a position, where He by physical judgment, spiritual conviction and through His Word will convict and draw them to Himself. Now, since Babel, man though blind “haply, might feel after God.”

The historic Anabaptists doctrinal distinctive of ‘Soul Liberty’<sup>140</sup> [a doctrine that has lost much ground among Independent Baptists] speaks to the issue of all men and

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<sup>137</sup> Walvoord, John F., *Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1990, 149, 162, 177. (Also See Revelation 6-19; [9, 13], Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel 9, Matthew 24:1-16).

<sup>138</sup> *Interviews, Survey and Questionnaires*, 1999-2000.

<sup>139</sup> Isaiah 55: 6; 65:1; Jeremiah 29:13-14.

<sup>140</sup> “The competency of the soul is affirmed—that is, in justification by faith and personal obedience.”(64) The competency [*or liberty*] of the soul is denied and violated when “all souls do not have an equal right to direct access to God.”(73).Ref. Mullins, E.Y., *The Axioms of Religion*, Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1908.

each man being individually responsible before God. One's personal and individual ability and responsibility to approach God, to have sufficient competency from God and to remain personally accountable before God all provide the hope for those who would "*seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him...*" These younger independent fundamentalists believe humanity can search for Him and can reach Him, but like the older fundamentalists they too believe this can only be accomplished by His Word, His grace and faith alone! Neither racial, national or political issues have anything to do with one's salvation. They believe God alone saves but He saves all who come.

The younger generation of independent fundamental Baptists are quick to point out that evolution is the creator of modern racial theory. They hold regular seminars in their churches and in Christian and public schools teaching against Darwinian evolution, and the many other forms of evolutionary theory. They point out that evolutionary theory is inherently racist in philosophy. They point to such evidence as the subtitle for Darwin's The Origin of Species. His subtitle was "The Preservation of the Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life."

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are generally but not completely committed to anti-racism. The concepts of inferior and superior human beings are exposed as racist in most congregations. Slavery, apartheid, segregation, and all the other theories of superiority are all castigated as evil and satanic and these false teaching are identified as born from one source: evolutionary doctrine. The various theories of evolution were always viewed as heresy by all Independent

Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches. Now, the racist implications are also being recognized and the independent fundamental churches are “turning to a new page.”

Christians may not rally and find common ground on every subject “under the sun,” but on the subject of eliminating racism the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches of Southern Africa now understand that there can be no acceptable reason given for doing anything less than totally rejecting racism at every level.

#### **E. Inter-dependency among the Independent Baptist and Bible churches.**

The recent lessons regarding team ministry that have been experienced and learned through the Gauteng and Cape *Learning Ministry Team*<sup>141</sup> approaches assure us that unity need not be organizationally restraining to be spiritually real. The issue of the degree of independence the Independents<sup>142</sup> will need to maintain remains open to discussion. Many of the second and third generation of the Independents have forgotten the original reason for the independence they inherited. The original reason for ecclesiastical independence was to maintain the autonomy of the local churches. Congregational autonomy is something that is threatened by membership within large denominations, or so many believe. Contextually some of those long forgotten arguments, on the other side of the Atlantic ocean, may now seem totally irrelevant to South African Baptists and Bible churches and their leaders. In the America of 1963, Baptists were in open disagreement on this issue of cooperation within their own

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<sup>141</sup> Appendix III. The Cape's Leadership Pool: Guidelines for learning to minister through teams.

<sup>142</sup> The term Independent is also referred to as 'congregationalism' in South Africa - especially among those of the English Baptist tradition or those within the Baptist Union of South Africa. (Note: Mogashoa, Humphrey Moroka, *Studia Historica Ecclesiastica*, June 1999, South African Baptist Congregationalism taking shape: the role of race gender, money and power in the formative decade of the South African Baptist history - 1877-1886.

ranks. Noel Smith, an independent fundamental Baptist author and educator, summarized the issue and context of that day:

This brochure is concerned with the arrogant Southern Baptist Convention ecclesiasticism that is making void the spirit and letter of the Convention's own constitution, not to mention the spirit and letter of the Word of God, with its newly-invented "customs and practices of 'Missionary' Baptist churches."<sup>143</sup>

It is quite possible that the current South African Independents and Fundamentalists may feel it is time to ask if the same reasons or if any sufficient reasons remain for maintaining their current degree of independence. The reasons for the independence would most certainly be different. Those that promoted these current levels of independence were Americans and the time period was over the past thirty or more years and the cultural distance was an ocean away. The context of independency needs to be reviewed and the issues that effect modern living should be given the most careful consideration by the independent churches. Non-denominationalism, congregationalism and volunteerism depend on providing vibrancy or excitement in relation to the truth.

In the 1970's there was a good degree of courtesy, communication and cooperation between the early independent fundamentalists and the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.<sup>144</sup> The independent missionaries became aware of some differences that were more than superficial or cultural. Eventually, there was less and less contact and cooperation. Some of the independents were vocally disapproving and others just

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<sup>143</sup> Smith, Noel, The End of the Independence of Southern Baptist Convention Churches, Second Edition, Springfield: Baptist Bible Tribune Publication, 1963, v.

<sup>144</sup> The Independent Fundamentalist missionaries were asked to fill empty pulpits, serve as interim pastors or to help struggling works. (e.g. Calvary Baptist Church, Mabelreign, Salisbury and Bez Valley, and Sunny Ridge in Johannesburg) and were invited guest and guest speakers at various Central and South African Baptist meetings, fraternals and organizations (e.g. the Annual Treverton Conference (1976-1977), Deacon's Seminars in Natal Baptist Association churches in 1977, Assemblies of the Central and South African churches.)



withdrew quietly, but the independent's doctrine of separation was in one or the other way being enacted.

In the last twenty years some of those who complained about the Independent Baptists have left the Baptist Union themselves. Those ministers that left the Baptist Union of Southern Africa usually did so due to their theological shift from a Baptist to a Charismatic position, but certainly not to join the ranks of the Independents. The degree of division between these ex-Baptist Charismatics, the Southern African Baptist Union and the even less conservative Baptist Convention continues to this day. To provide further context and to outline the issues surrounding independency and fundamentalism, a letter written twenty years ago serves as an example of the tensions and division between the independent fundamentalists and the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.

Under its official letterhead<sup>145</sup> the letter reads as follows:

**THE BAPTIST UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA**

48 Geoffrey Street, Roodepoort, Transvaal, 1725  
P.O. Box 1085, Roodepoort, 1725 Telephone 766-1066/7/8

1981.06.19

Addressed to:

**PASTORS AND CHURCH SECRETARIES**

**INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS**

A number of pastors and churches have expressed concern at the activities and presence of Independent Baptists operating in close proximity and in some cases in opposition to churches in membership with the Baptist Union.

Their name suggests, and rightly so, that they operate independently of any structure or denomination, they even operate independently of each other and not always in fellowship with each other!

The Executive has instructed me to acquaint you with something of their attitudes and activities.

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<sup>145</sup> Letter: The original on file, Blackwell, Marc S., 1981.

They have little or no sympathy with the Baptist Union or with Baptist Union churches. This, for possibly five reasons which I have established personally from contact with them.

1. The Baptist Union's tolerance of the Renewal Movement<sup>146</sup> on one hand and the Reformed Movement on the other.
2. The Baptist Union's theological training institutions are not "fundamental" because they allow students exposure to more liberal interpretations and emphases, encouraged by the lecturers!
3. The Baptist Union does not insist on the Premillennial - dispensational view of Eschatology for its preachers.
4. The Baptist Union's emphasis on a "conservative" point of view rather than a "fundamental" point of view.
5. The Baptist Union's membership with the Baptist World Alliance - an organization that caters for all shades of Baptists, including Baptists from the Soviet Union.

I enclose a copy of an article from "The Message"<sup>147</sup> which came into my possession recently and I share it with you only to show something of the attitude of the Independent Baptists to Baptists other than their own! Pardon the lines of emphasis, these are not mine!

Fraternally yours,

Signed.

TREVOR M. SWART

General Secretary

President: Rev. R.G. Mathie, Vice President: Dr. C.W. Parnell, General Secretary: Rev. T.M. Swart, Treasurer: Mr. C.W. Hill.

When I received my copy of the General Secretary's letter I telephoned his office to express my thanks for his just and candid assessment of the situation. Since the issues that divide the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches were so accurately and succinctly addressed by the General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa the letter is a useful document for anyone re-assessing independency versus union membership.

<sup>146</sup> Independent Baptists refer to the "Renewal Movement" as the "Charismatic Movement."

<sup>147</sup> Hopewell, W. J. Jr., *The Message: ABWE's New Field South Africa*, Cherry Hill, The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, Vol. 41, No. 7, January/February, 1981. The offending quotations from the article dealing with ABWE missionary agency's church planting survey: "Though some sound mission agencies work in South Africa, we saw vast areas in large cities without a fundamental witness." "Six gospel-barren areas await God's servants."

**Conclusion:**

The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches are, as has been shown, a relatively small Christian grouping. The fact is, since they are so very independent they should not be thought of as a normal grouping, but as a loosely knit movement of separate congregations with certain common views of their origins and their distinctive doctrines. Their obvious independence, even from each other, makes the somewhat high level of interdependence here in Southern Africa an anomaly and certainly distinguishes them from many of their parent or sister churches in the United States.

The fact of these churches good growth or expansion in Southern Africa speaks of an acceptance by many Southern African people groups of this new arrival to the shores of Africa. Their existence as a fundamentalist, even evangelical, Baptist Christian group should be accepted by other Christians. This thesis has sought to make this acceptance more possible by providing background information in origins and doctrine and to chronicle their leadership and congregational development with some attention to their overseas sponsors.

The future of this movement will depend on their commitment to the Gospel message and to the people and problems of Southern Africa. Admittedly, their missionary vision and perspectives are not in keeping with the Ecumenical Christian world, but they must address the same problems even if their answers are different or seemingly peculiar. The spiritual and social challenges of Southern African may

provide trials and tests for this young movement. Their success may provide lessons that can assist others. Their failures may serve as warnings.

This thesis has made the first known attempt at introducing, explaining and providing some chronicle of the development of the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches in Southern Africa. The current generation should review the rationale and reasoning of those that lived in the earlier time period of this movement, then they must consider the relevancy of the issues for them today. The churches of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa and the Baptist Convention both continue to have disagreements with the Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches.

Though this division remains, there is nonetheless a few local level situations where some cooperation between the independent fundamentalists and the other Baptist churches exists in informal ways. The facts of the matter are clear, the Independent Fundamental Baptists and the other Baptists of Southern Africa have not entered into any useful dialogue, but to everyone's credit these churches have remained focused on their own ministries and have not entered into criticism and argumentation. Some feel a critical dialogue would be useful to allow all concerned to better understand one another. The likelihood of any such forum arising at this time seems remote, but not entirely out of the question.

The facts are clear that as an examination of the principles, polity and historical roots of Independent Fundamental Baptist churches in Southern Africa this thesis has

clarified that from their emergence the Independent Baptists have had very little to do with other Baptists and thus have a truly separate history of their own.

The issues that often come to mind when reading this history could include some of the following thoughts or questions and these could serve as a basis for some future doctrinal dialogue or continued study:

- How what some call “divisiveness,” or “separation,” can be a doctrine.
- To what degree the Independent’s literal hermeneutic has inconsistencies.
- What the difference is between isolation and congregational independence.
- In what sense does literalism lead to a rejection of Charismatic doctrines.
- Why these churches view denominationalism as either evil or detrimental.
- On what basis local congregational autonomy is a Biblical concept or right.
- What social responsibilities are considered Biblical or non-Biblical.
- In what sense can social and political ethics be resolved through evangelism.
- What role does historical theory hold for influencing future ministry.
- Does a claim of holding to historical Anabaptist doctrinal distinctives conflict with the claim of being Dispensationalist or Fundamentalist.
- How one copes with the seeming “over simplification” of Independent Baptist thought in matters of history, theology and ethics.
- What is the difference in the Unions’ cooperation and the Independents’ style of cooperation.

Many of the Independent Baptist and Bible churches claim a commitment to: 1. Offering a fresh evangelistic effort in meeting the spiritual needs of a post-modern society, 2. Re-establishing a vibrant conservatism and 3. Reviving the Biblical concepts of autonomous local churches, along with other Baptist distinctives. Like other evangelicals, offering the simple Gospel message remains a paramount importance to these churches. The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible Churches of Southern Africa remain fully independent, yet various forms and types of inter-dependency is finding more acceptance or is being appreciated more by the newer generation of independents.

Though they are an extremely small group, I believe this thesis has established that the Independent Fundamental Baptists deserve to be recognized among those that are Baptists in Southern Africa. Any potential for useful communication among Baptists or others might be found by considering the goals of the various churches and by asking: "How can the various types of Baptists maintain their distinctive beliefs, reach their goals and bring glory to God?"

## APPENDIX I.

### THE CHURCH PLANTERS.

#### A Chronology:

#### The Independent Missionaries.

(Annotated, Abbreviated and Biographical)

##### *Previous to 1974:*

**Davis, Jack**, (Qual-Ind. Bap.). 1967-1971, A.E.F., Africa Evangelical Fellowship, Port Shepstone, Natal, South Africa. (later to join *World-wide and European Fellowship, which was amalgamated with Biblical Ministries Worldwide, 1985.*)

**Davis, Frank and Betty**, Malawi, Rhodesia, (1971-74) A.E.F., African Evangelical Fellowship. (1974 joined *Missionaries for Christ International* which became part of **WEF – BMW**). Moved to South Africa 1979.)

**Geiners, Jim**, T.E.A.M. – The Evangelical Alliance Mission, 1973-74, Rhodesia (Then in 1974-77 left T.E.A.M. to serve under *Missionaries for Christ International, WEF – BMW*)

**Hunter, Bill and Elsie**, AEF, Natal, (later to join **WEF – BMW**), RSA.

**Hix, Jim & Evelyn**, AEF, Richards Bay, Natal (later to join **WEF – BMW** as missionaries to Nova Scotia)

**Repke, Bob and Rhoda**, TEAM, Rhodesia, (1971-74), to form *Missionaries for Christ* (1975-79), which became **WEF – BMW**)

**1974:**

**Blackwell, Sr.,** Marc S., The survey trip to Southern Africa.

**Moorman, Jack, BIMI,** Ministered at Valley Baptist 1973 (Bez Valley) Also Associated with Trevor Bell, Doug Statler Sengen Wells. Moved to Brackenhurst Baptist 1973-75; (75-85 England); 86-87 Returned to South African ministry. [Note: Brackenhurst started in 1972 by Jason Van den Heuwel. His son, Gary, would return from Bible College in the USA to serve as an Assistant Pastor of the work in 1995.]

**McGuinness, Kevin and Terri, No Agency,** started full-time ministry at Central Baptist Church, (CABU) Salisbury.

**1975:**

**Blackwell, Sr.,** Marc S. and Judie, **IFM,** planted the Baptist Bible Church of Chisipite, Harare, Zimbabwe (Salisbury, Rhodesia). [The Blackwells also served the Mabelreign Baptist Church as Interim Pastor for nine months during 1975.] Ministered in Rhodesia, Zimbabwe, 1975-1979.

**1976:**

**McGuinness, Kevin and Terri, No Agency,** in 1976 they planted, and in 1977 constituted, the Hillside Baptist Church, Harare, Zimbabwe (Salisbury, Rhodesia). They currently serve an independent Baptist congregation in New Jersey, USA.

**Carmichael, Basil & Robin** (Hennie Jakobs), Kebler Park Baptist.

**Isabel, David,** Extreme independents, holding to the belief that the local independent Baptist church is the "bride of Christ" (old USA Landmarkism), **B.I.O.M.**, also note Richard Vick, another missionary who was earlier a missionary to Ethiopia of Baptist International Overseas Mission., but promoted the extreme independency viewpoint.

**Pepper, Ennis and Becky, IND.,** June to Dec, 1976 - Local Church - Independent at Kempton Park, Van Riebeck Park Baptist under David Isabel, now Jim Dockety -SA. Pepper left and returned in 1986 as a BBFI missionary church planter.

**Wilson, Tom and Marilyn, B.M.W.** July 1976, planted the New Castle Bible Church, Natal. The church constituted in 1984. (Marilyn had lived in Natal as a young person during 1967-71 when her parents, and Mrs. Jack Davis served as a missionary in Port Shepstone with AEF) The Davises moved to Benoni and ministered there from 1985 to 1997. Bill & Joy Baxter assisted for a number of years.



**1977:**

**Blackwell, Sr.**, Marc S. and Judie., Their church plant, the Baptist Bible Church of Chisipite, was the first independent Baptist Church to be constituted in Southern Africa since 1877.

**Grings**, Mark and Wyla, **IFM**, Leondale, Community Bible Church, first Sunday AM Service. (S.S. 1976) - Trans World Radio to Zaire (Congo). Co-workers, Leonard Schmidt, Mike Nelson, Robert Marsh.

**McCrum**, Roger, planted Croydon Baptist Church. The work was opened by Alan and Marion Mercer who handed the ministry over to Roger McCrum when he left for Piedmont Bible College in America.

**Seger**, Paul and Joan, **B.M.W.** January 1977, New Castle Bible Church, Natal.

**1978:**

**Hoblits**, Charles, (**B.I.M.I.**) established Hillbrow Baptist Church

**Pherson**, Kit, a student at Bob Jones University has come as our first "missionary apprentice" and had an excellent ministry among the Baptiste Bible Church youth and church family. Harare, Zimbabwe (Salisbury, Rhodesia).

**Tyner**, John and Gale, (**BIMI**). Organised the Kibler Park Baptist Church.

**1979:**

**Davis**, Frank and Betty, planted Kempton Park Bible Church **WEF/BMW**.

**Hoblitz**, Charles, **IND.**, Central Johannesburg

**1980:**

**Blackwell, Sr.**, Marc S. and Judie, now of **ABWE**, planted the Community Baptist Church of Westville-North, Durban, Natal.

**Johnson**, Bob. Independent Baptist, established a Zulu work.

**Moeller**, Rick and Sherry, **BBF**, Centreville, Virginia, USA. Ministries in Johannesburg - Randberg, and Calvary, New Castle.

**Seger**, Paul & Joan, **WEF (BMW)** took oversight of the Kempton Park Bible Church which had been planted by Frank Davis.

**1981:**

**Bains**, Joel, (**BIMI**) planted Calvary Baptist, Ferndale and other subsequent works.

**Blanton**, Jeff and Judy, **BBF**, Upington, Bible Baptist Church.

**Van den Berghs**, **IND**, join with Brackenhurst Baptist to branch the Freeway Park Baptist Church, they would later move to Southwest Africa (Namibia).

**1982:**

**Baxter**, Bill and Joy, **WEF**, **BMW** arrive to minister in Richards Bay.

**Jackson**, John and Penny, **EBM**, arrive and minister initially in Johannesburg.

**Marshfield**, Dale and Karen, **ABWE**, arrived in Durban in June 1982 to serve in a team ministry with the Blackwells at Community Baptist Church of Westville-North, Natal.

**Ubank**, Ken. **IND.**, Established a Zulu congregation at Mafeking.

**1983:**

**Davis**, Henry, using a unique *team approach* with **Church Ministries Institute** and Community Baptist Church of Westville-North, pastoral student Henry Davis; and **ABWE** church planters Marc S. Blackwell, Sr., and Dale Marshfield team-planted the Grace Baptist Church of Queensboro, Natal.

**Hoblitz**, Charles, Supportive Church Planting ministry in Lennasia.

**Schladenhauffen**, Mark and Sue, **BBF**, Kokstad.

**1984:**

**Moodley**, George, **IND**, led the Reservoir Hills Baptist Church to reorganise as an Independent Baptist congregation.

**Pollock**, George and Kathy. **BBF**, 1984-86. The Pollocks were members of the American congregation planted and pastored in America by church planting missionary, Marc Blackwell, Sr.. They graduated from the Baptist Bible College, Springfield and they also served as church planting missionaries in Colombia, South America. They came to Durban to pursue an evangelistic and church planting ministry within the Indian community. They withdrew from missionary work due to reasons of health. (Source: E. Pepper, 1998)

**1985:**

**Clark**, Carl and Bonnie, **BBF**, ( Kim, Dena, and Debin-*deceased*); Bible Baptist Church, Cascades, Pietermaritzburg. Ministering with Sean Marshall (South African ) Local Church Bible Institute trained .\*

**Meyer\***, Steven and Pam, The Clarks also started an Indian Congregation, Northdale, Pietermaritzburg which is now overseen by the Meyers, Steve (**ABWE** Map), and Pam (Brown - SA), of **Mission to Forgotten Peoples**, Trinity Baptist Church and Bible College (Founder, Dr. Bob Gray), Jacksonville, Florida, U.S.A.

**Wilson**, Tom and Marilyn, **BMW**, arrive in greater Johannesburg to plant the Benoni Bible Church.

**Marshfield**, Dale and Karen, **ABWE**, planted the Fellowship Baptist Church of Glen Anil, Durban, Natal.

**1986:**

**McClures**, H. and Mrs., **ABWE**, arrived in January of 1986. The McClures served as Interim during Dale and Karen Marshfield's furlough in 1987 and then served with the Marshfields in a team ministry at the Fellowship Baptist Church, Durban North, Natal.

**Mingo**, Don and Kathy; **B.B.F.I.**, Donnie, Daniel; Dennis. Ladysmith, Natal, KwaZulu Natal. 4 = Metawani, Ezeakeni,, Saint Chad, Bible Baptist. July 1986.

**Pepper**, Ennis B. Jr. and Becky, **B.B.F.I.** relocated in Durban, Natal to plant a new congregation in Durban North the site of his own conversion many years before. Arrived March 12 to later plant the Northcoast Baptist Church, Virginia Primary School, KZ-Natal.

**Andersons, the Rudolphs and the Gelinas** arrived by the middle of 1986, to serve as church planters under **ABWE**.

**1987:**

**Baxter**, Bill and Joy, join Wilsons at Benoni Bible Church, **BMW**.

**Heathcote**, Alan and Deanna, **BMW**, arrive in Johannesburg.

**Hopewell**, Dr Bill and Ruth, retired Administrators of **ABWE** committed to spending two six-month terms of service in the Cape.

**Mondon**, Richard, (his wife, Anne), **IND**, was called as the first pastor of the Community Baptist Church of Westville-North, and it became the first autonomous independent Baptist congregation planted by **ABWE** missionaries in South Africa. August 2nd.

**Morris**, David and family, **ABWE**, arrived in Durban to begin a church planting ministry.

**Entwistle**, Bob, began his ministry with the 1987 **ABWE** Map Team and became the first "short-term" **ABWE** missionary to South Africa.

**Schladenhauffen**, Mark and Sue, **BBF**, Queenstown.

**Rudolph**, Dave and Julie, **ABWE**, to Durbanville to plant new church.

**1988:**

**Grant, John** , Brackenhurst Baptist Church, 1988-1990

**Hopewell, Dr. and Mrs. William**, (previously the Africa Administrators for **ABWE**) - then served in retirement in a short-term ministry through ABWE to minister in education and assist church planting ministries.

**Devore, Dave and Anita** as **ABWE**, church planters.

**Seeger, Paul and Joan**, **BMW**, to plant Sandton Bible Church, Gauteng.

**1989:**

**Blackwells, Marc and Judie**, **ABWE**, relocate to Bellville, Cape Province to plant a new Afrikaans speaking church.

**Doyle, Doug and John** , New South Baptist Church, 1990-1993.

**Smith, Don** , **WEF-BMW**, Maddadeni Bible Church. Zulu speaking.

**Switzer, Rex and Ginnie**, **B.B.F.I.**, to plant the Faith Baptist Church, Blue Downs, Cape Town.

**1990:**

**Baxter, Bill and Joy**, **WEF-BMW** - involved in the planting of the Brakpan Bible Church.

**Smith, Don & Couper, Alex**, **WEF-BMW**, Maddadeni Bible Church. Zulu speaking, Co-pastored 1990-1993, Pastor Alex Couper 1993-present.

**1991:**

**Moeller, Brent & Sheila**, **B.B.F.I.** Ministry to Zulu in Ladysmith, Natal. Early focus music and education, children - Micah, Karaissa, entered church life in Kwa-Zulu Natal through oversight of BBF works in Ezakheni (Lady Smith) and Matiwane (L.S.); then started a preaching point in Bergville - Greenpoint. Then New Castle Osizweni Bible Baptist Church was planted by Rick Moeller. Then Durban starting 1st., Cato Manor (Mayville) Bible Baptist Church; Amaoti Bible Baptist Church

(preaching points in "Palestine" and "Russia" two districts. Plans for a future Bible College and Orphanage (Kato Manor).

**Schladenhauffen**, Mark and Sue, **BBF**, Pietermaritzburg, Mpumulelo, church planting.

**1992:**

**Chapmon**, Dennis and Joanna, **BMW**, the current missionary-pastor of Sandton Bible Church.

**Moeller**, Brent & Sheila, **B.B.F.I** Ministry to Zulu in Newcastle, Natal.

**1993:**

Couper, Alex, Independent National Missionary, Madadeni Bible Church. Zulu speaking, 1993 to present.

Hattingh, Brahm, Grace Fellowship, Pretoria, began holding services in September 1993 under the direction of Mr. Hattingh. (See: James, 1995)

Matthews, Bruce, Naturina - 1993; Calvary College 95-98 and Ministry - 1994-1997 Pastorates.

Mercer, Alan and Marion, Hazyview, (Eastern Transvaal) Mpumalanga.

Van Zutphen, Gavin and Leigh Ann, Faith Baptist, Port Elizabeth.

Van Meter, Doug, Brackenhurst Baptist Church with assistance from Steve Miller 1994 - Kansas City Baptist Temple; Gary van den Heuvel - 1995; Dan Crichton - 1997.

**1994:**

**Moeller**, Brent & Sheila, **B.B.F.I** 1994 to present, Cato Manor/Mayville, and Amawodana, Amawoti, Durban, KZ-Natal

**1995:**

**James**, Joel assumed pastoral duties of *Grace Fellowship* in February 1995.

**Heathcote**, Alan G., and Deanna, BMW,

**Verwey, Dean; 93-96. Faith Baptist Church, Krugersdorp, ( A merger with Tom Wilmot's, Grace Baptist.). Christian School (ACE).**

**1996:**

**Blanton, Jeff and Judy, BBF, Uppington. Moved ministry to Cape Town.**

**Thomson, Steve (M. Div.) & Julie (BS), Natal – ABWE, arrived in South Africa in March**

**1997:**

**Hayden, Gene and Jeannie, Assistant Missionaries, ABWE, Cape Town.**

**1998:**

**Ngomane, Godfrey, and Martha; Mashamba ( with Bruce Matthews)**

**Thomson. Steve and Julie, accepted the pastoral call of Community Baptist Church, Westville, Natal in October.**

**1999:**

**Blackwell, Marc and Nancy, ABWE, Cape Town. Using the Cape Leadership Pool Learning Team, survey, developed strategy and formed an Afrikaans ministry and team for a new congregation to be started in Blue Downs using existing facilities of Community Baptist Church.**

**Moeller, Brent & Sheila, B.B.F.I. 1999 to present, Cato Manor/Mayville, new location in Amawodana, and continuing at Amawoti, in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal**

**Otto, Bill and Bonnie, Assistant Missionaries, ABWE, assisting in the Community Baptist Church, Cape Town.**

**2000:**

**Cropsey, Dave and Nancy, ABWE, Cape Town. Good Hope Christian School and assisting church planting.**

**McFadden, Julie, ABWE, Cape Town. Good Hope Christian School teacher and church planting assistant.**

**Perkins, Rod and Sara, EBM, Cape Town. Orphanage ministry and church planting.**

**Wolf, Tom and Nancy, ABWE, Cape Town. Church planting ministry.**

**APPENDIX II.**

**THE GENERAL CHRONOLOGY**

**OF**

**THE CONGREGATIONS.**

A General Chronology: Representing congregations or other ministries, or projects in each region where Independent Baptists and Bible church missionaries have focused their church planting ministries.

(Annotated, Abbreviated and Biographical)

**1974:**

**Brackenhurst Baptist Church** was started as a Sunday School (1972) by a Christian layman, and missionary Jack Moorman, **BIML**, led the church planting effort. (Moorman also ministered in England from 1975-1985, and returned to South Africa and Brackenhurst during 1986 and 1987).

**1975:**

**Baptist Bible Church, Chisipiti, Harare, (Salisbury).** Planted by. Marc S. and Judie Blackwell, Sr., under the auspices of **IFM**. The pastors: Stuart Waugh, Don Maitland, Chris and Joyce Goppert, and Nick Burtenshaw.

**Hillside Baptist Church, Hillside, Harare** (Salisbury). Planted by Kevin and Terri McGuiness, **No Agency**, and constituted in 1977. In October 1979, Mike Rutter, a businessman from Bulawayo, was called to pastor the church. When he left, due to medical problems, he was succeeded by Ray Pountney. When Ray left the church in 1989, it merged with Chisipiti Baptist Bible Church, currently pastored by Nick Burtonshaw. Originally this work was a branch of the Central Baptist Church, a member of the Central African Baptist Union. The church was nonetheless established in the doctrine and ministry style of an independent Baptist congregation.

**1976:**

**New Castle Bible Church** planted in Natal by Tom and Marilyn Wilson, July 1976, **WEF, BMW**. Planted by Tom Wilson 1978-9; also pastored by a team of Tom Wilson & Paul Seger; then Frank Davis, Bill Hunter, Dave Davis; Don Smith {interim}, Dennis Emerton, Alex Couper {interim through 1999} and now pastoring to the present time.

**1977:**

**Community Bible Church, Leondale, Johannesburg** (Gauteng), was planted by Mark and Wyla Grings who had arrived in 1976 from Zaire (Congo) ministering under the auspices of **IFM**.

**New Castle Bible Church**, co-pastored by Tom Wilson and Paul and Seger, 1977-1980; and co-pastored by Frank Davis **WEF, BMW**. with Tom Wilson (1980) **WEF, BMW**; Interims: Bill Hunter **WEF, BMW**., David Davis **WEF, BMW**., Don Smith **WEF, BMW**., and pastor, D. Emerton. Currently pastored by Alex Coupar



**1978:**

**Baptist Bible Church**, Chisipite, Salisbury (Harare). Property was purchased, and our first independent Baptist "missionary apprentice," Kit Pherson, was the first college/ seminary student serving as a "missionary apprentice" for a limited number of months of training and ministry.

**1979:**

**Kempton Park Bible Church** was started by Frank Davis of *WEF, BMW*.

**1980:**

**Kempton Park Bible Church**, (Gauteng) which had been planted by Frank Davis was now placed under the oversight of church planting missionaries, Paul and Joan Seger.

**Church Ministries Institute**, Natal. Established by Marc S. Blackwell, Sr., *ABWE* and Stuart Waugh, *IFM*.

**1981:**

**Freeway Park Baptist Church**, Boksburg, planted in 1981 as a *branch work* of Brackenhurst Baptist Church.

**Community Baptist Church** Westville-North, Natal, planted by Marc and Judie Blackwell from the time of their arrival in Durban in January of 1981. Later assisted by Dale Marshfield, then pastored by Richard Mondon, Rob Elkington and currently led by *ABWE* missionary Steve Thomson.

**Gethsemane Bible College**, Johannesburg: established by Jack Moorman, Lou Finney, Roger McCrum, Joel Baines, W. Saint-John, John Tyner, Paul Seger, and Mark Grings. This was a non-accredited, traditional American styled Bible college built to a great degree around the styles of Moody Bible College and the curriculum of Tennessee Temple Bible College, USA.

**1982:**

**New Germany Baptist Church**, Durban, planted by Stuart and Lavern Waugh, *IFM*.

**Richards Bay Bible Church** was planted by the Baxters, Bill and his wife Joy and their two children. He now pastors in the United States.

**1983:**

**Grace Baptist Church**, Queensboro, Durban, Natal, Planted as a branch of Community Baptist Church of Westville-North using a unique *team approach* with *Church Ministries Institute* student Henry Davis; and *ABWE* church planters Marc S. Blackwell, Sr., and Dale Marshfield. Opening service in May.

CMI – The Church Ministries Institute, 1983 - Johannesburg, *WEF*, *BMW*. Peter Thomas, Dennis Emerton, Barry Springhall, Alex Couper, Alex Cerf, Chris Lambert, Shaun Cerf, Peter Englebrecht, Daniel Warren. Part-time lay preacher/evangelist students: Brian Gouws, Dave Gough, Robert Warren, and Lee Gates, and others.

**1984:**

**Reservoir Hills Baptist Church** was reconstituted by Pastor George Moodley and became an Independent Baptist congregation. In June 1984 the ABWE Field Council passed a resolution stating that “everything possible would be done to encourage and form an ABWE church-planting ministry among the ... Indians living in South Africa.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, South African Field Council of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism.

**1985:**

**Clark, Carl and Bonnie, BBF, Bible Baptist Church, Cascades, Pietermaritzburg.**

**1986:**

**Fellowship Baptist Church, KZ-Natal, adds the McClure family to their church planting staff.**

**North Coast Baptist Church, planted by Ennis Pepper.**

**1987:**

**ABWE's All-Africa Meeting** was held in Togo, ABWE South Africa was represented by Dick Gelina.

**Whitefield Park, Natal** team church planting ministry was begun by the ABWE Morris and Gelina families.

**1988:**

**Gauteng, Sandton.** The Sandton Bible Church planted by Paul Seger.

**Westville, Natal.** The Community Baptist Church called Richard Mondon as its first South African national pastor. (*Following ABWE Church Planter, Marc S. Blackwell Sr.*)

**Durbanville, Cape Province:** The Everglen Baptist Church, early Bible studies and foundations

**1989:**

**Cape Town, Malibu Village, Community Baptist Church, church planter, Dave Devore, ABWE-Cape.**

**Johannesburg**, The Calvary Bible College was established.

**New Castle, KZ-Natal**, Maddadeni Bible Church planted by **BMW** missionary Don Smith.1989; co-pastored by Don Smith & Alex Couper - 1990-1993; Missionary - Pastor Alex Couper 1993-present. The church has one Deacon Thomas Mduli who is training for the ministry. The roots of this work are in its start as a small group of believers originally developed by the missionaries of the Evangelical Bible Church, **TEAM**.

**1990:**

**Brakpan**, Baxter, Bill and Joy, **BMW**, begin planting this congregation.

**Durbanville**, Blackwell's begin Tygerberg Baptiste Gemeente. Joined later by the Crane family to form a Church Planting Team.

**1991:**

**Westville Natal Community Baptist Church** called Rob Elkington as its second South African national pastor, following Rev Richard Mondon.

**1992:**

**Kempton Park**, Kempton Park Bible Church called its first South African pastor, Peter Thomas (1992 – present).

**Sandton Bible Church**, Dennis Chapmon, **BMW**, the current missionary-pastor since May of 1992.

**1993:**

**Grace Fellowship**, Pretoria, began holding services in September 1993.

**1994:**

**Newlands Bible Church, Cape Town,** Mark Christopher, ABWE, Pastor-  
Church Planting the congregation from 1998. The congregation started in  
November(1994).

**1995:**

**Primrose, Gauteng,** James, Joel. Assumed the preaching and pastoral  
duties of Grace Fellowship in February 1995

**1996:**

**Richards Bay, KZ-Natal:** Calvary Baptist Church formed a church planting  
team with ABWE's and Mrs. Dick Gelina and the newly arrived and Mrs.  
Steve Thomson also of ABWE.

**1997:**

**Cape Town,** Community Baptist Church, invites Marc and Nancy Blackwell,  
Jr. to serve as interim-pastor during the Devore's furlough.

**1998:**

**Westville, KZ-Natal** calls church planters and Mrs. Steve Thomson of  
ABWE to lead the work back to a self-sufficient status.

**1999:**

**New Germany, KZ-Natal,** Johnson, Ben, serves in a Zulu speaking church  
near New Germany, Kwa-Zulu, Natal.

**2000:**

**Cape Town**, Blue Downs Baptist Church, planted by Marc Blackwell, Jr. and his wife Nancy through an effort of the Cape Learning Ministry Team and A.B.W.E. Afrikaans Church Planting Team's cooperative effort. This Afrikaanse speaking ministry meets in the facilities of Community Baptist Church an English speaking work planted by Dave and Anita Devore, A.B.W.E.

## APPENDIX III.

### THE CAPE'S LEADERSHIP POOL

#### GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING TO MINISTER THROUGH TEAMS.<sup>1</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION:

Cooperation among independent Baptists may be accomplished in a number of different ways. Some of these options include forming formal *fellowships of churches*, *associations* linked to missionary agencies, or *ad hoc* groups of churches may just decide to work together on a specific project. The *Cape Leadership Pool* is none of the above, but is an informal "learning" effort seeking to develop useful projects that are sponsored by, or of interest to, a number of regionally related independent Baptist churches.

**1.) THE METHOD:** A *notion* to learn together. The thought that we would be willing to cooperate with others in a learning exercise or that we would entrust others to work on a project or problem on our behalf is a fairly complicated thought! Most of us are convinced that we can just take "matters in hand" ourselves and accomplish more! Most of us believe we can use our time better if we are pro-actively "in charge" of a project, than if we worked through some sort of committee or group. The Biblical teaching on Christian submission and on seeking counsel from others is often by-

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<sup>1</sup> Blackwell, M. S., Sr., Team Ministry: Its Methods, Means and Manner, Cape Town, CMI, 1998.

passed – due to “practical reasons,” time constraints or other not-so-obvious expediencies. Most of us do not want to give-up our “say,” on a matter, nor our control over our own projects ... or ideas!

The “Learning Ministry Team notion<sup>2</sup>” is a voluntary decision (or notion) to work with and through others. Some of the obvious goals include: ... (a.) improving my own effectiveness, or that of my church by benefiting from learning with others; (b.) working with others in developing specific yet truly shared vision; (c.) testing ideas by building Biblically based models before enacting these ideas; (d.) by considering both the causes and effects, or the systemic fundamentals, of a matter before putting that idea or plan into effect and (e.) by encouraging plans and projects from the perspective of developing the best possible team dynamics.

**2.) THE MEANS:** The so-called “Leadership Pool” is nothing more than a series of quarterly informal gatherings of interested lay-men and lay-women, pastors, deacons, missionaries and Bible college students. There is no membership list but the individual’s attendance at the quarterly Saturday afternoon meetings establishes their church’s or their individual level of interest.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: For those interested in *using team learning* as a tool for ministry or as a spiritual and practical matter for adult learning and ministry management, the eight page booklet A Notion is also available and includes an helpful Bibliography, as well.



### **THE THREE-FOLD PROGRAMME:**

The Leadership Pool meetings are organized around three half-hour sessions: 1<sup>st</sup> someone presents a practical talk on how we can improve our procedures for learning together 2<sup>nd</sup> then the current Learning Teams give their interim progress reports or their final reports with recommendations and outcome statements summarizing their efforts, 3<sup>rd</sup> finally, those attending the Leadership Pool are invited to suggest any future projects they believe need development or problems needing solutions. Should their suggestion find a majority support, the matter is then re-worded in the form of a "mandate," and the facilitator announces a team will be formed to pursue the matter further.

### **THE FACILITATOR:**

The Leadership Pool meetings are led by an elected facilitator. The facilitator chairs the four meetings for one year, prepares an agenda for each quarterly gathering, notifies the new Learning Team of the names of any who have volunteered to serve on the new team, and also sends out reminders of the next quarterly meeting's date and time.

**3.) THE MANNER:** Learning Teams are formed of volunteers from those who are currently attending the quarterly Leadership Pool meetings. These teams are "empowered" by all those individuals or churches

cooperating through the Leadership Pool to learn how best to develop, operate or accomplish a given project.

#### **A LEARNING TEAM'S MANDATE:**

The simple goal, the end goal, and the shared goal. The Leadership Pool forms a briefly worded statement of purpose or *mandate* for the new Learning Team. At the first meeting of the new Learning Team, the first half hour is used to accomplish a simple goal: clarifying any confusion about the terms used in the *mandate*. The Learning Team now discusses the practical tasks they face if they are to successfully learn how to solve or better pursue the end goal of their specific project. Learning to share in a goal with others is a result of the learning process itself. It is a by-product, of sorts, but is nonetheless vital.

#### **A LEARNING TEAM'S SCHEDULE:**

The agenda, the length of a team's meetings. The specific learning team begins operating together by discussing the types or styles of agendas they prefer in light of the task before them: i.e. reports from sub-groups (analysis of data gathered on a subject), interviews of especially qualified or interested guests, open discussions or small sub-group think tanks, etc. etc.. Then they plan how long each meeting should last, i.e. 1.5 hour; and try to estimate how many total meetings or months may be needed for their team to accomplish its' task. After their final report they disband.

**A LEARNING TEAM'S ORDER:**

The team facilitator, secretary, minutes and reports. At their first meeting the team needs to select from its own ranks a facilitator and secretary.

Prayer needs to be honoured and not viewed as a formality in the agenda.

The team will need to learn to cooperate and think as a unit—as a team.

Mutual respect, patience, consideration and confidentiality among the teams members is essential if communication is to remain open and free flowing.

The need to listen carefully, to compromise when possible, and to always remain honest – speaking the truth in love – is absolutely essential for the team's learning dynamics!

The facilitator's tasks include: developing a flexible agenda for the meetings, encouraging clarity of thought, and helping the team find consensus on issues or disputes. Though tension is encouraged and accepted as essential in any learning process, we nonetheless believe true learning comes from Christlike humility and honest attention to Biblical truth.

The secretary keeps no minutes of the Learning Team's individual sessions. Free expression requires an absence of unnecessary constraints. Individuals may keep personal, though unofficial, notes for their own private use. The Secretary only records the statements all have agreed upon. The Secretary will eventually form these *consensus responses* into a report which, once

approved by the specific Learning Team, will be presented to the Leadership Pool at a future quarterly meeting.

**A LEARNING TEAM'S VISION:**

The use of others to learn "for me" or on the behalf of our church. Sharing in the Vision of a specific Learning Team's findings calls for those who attend and who are cooperating through the Leadership Pool to do more than just give the Learning Team's report "the benefit of the doubt." Sharing in the vision of others requires our prayer, trust and truly whole-hearted cooperation. Those cooperating through the Leadership pool commit themselves and their church to support every possible effort that will lead toward a specific Learning Team's outcomes being successfully implemented. After a two-year effort, with lessons learned or problems encountered, the mandate expires and a review or revision may well be called for.

## APPENDIX IV.

### INTERVIEWS, SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRES

INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGH THE AUTHOR'S OWN  
PERSONAL INTERVIEWS AND THROUGH WRITTEN  
QUESTIONNAIRES. BETWEEN 1996-2002.

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#### Questionnaire

Dear Fellow Pastors, and Church Planters:

I am writing to request your assistance as I seek to collect some basic information on the historical theological moorings of the independent fundamental churches in Southern Africa. I am aware that all of you are busy but I believe your time invested will be a help to your ministry as well as being of assistance to me.

I want to write a general history on independent fundamental churches which will be a help to all of us in explaining who we are and what different groups and types of independent fundamentalists are ministering here in South Africa. I also want to provide a chronicle of the Independent and Fundamental Baptist and Bible church congregations, and in some cases information on their development and growth. Then I hope to provide some insight into our various church planting goals and methodologies. The thesis is about our doctrinal backgrounds and history in Southern Africa.

The type of information I am seeking is as follows:

A brief (100 to 500 word) chronological history of your ministry. Possibly this could be done by writing a paragraph on each growth period in your church's history. This could be every three or five years, for example.

A listing of the name of the founding church planter of your congregation/s; together with a listing of each successive pastor and if possible years of ministry (i.e. 1985-1991).

*{It would also be a help to have any additional details regarding these missionaries or pastors, (a) such as birth dates (and possible date deceased), (b.) their home church and/ or sponsoring church or missionary agency, (c.) names of wife and children, or (d.) other especially interesting details: education, special ministries, etc.}*

3. You may like to write some personal notes regarding your own call to your particular ministry, some aspect of doctrine or ministry style that you feel reflects an emphasis in your ministry or church planting effort. You may want to mention the person who lead you to the Lord, or refer to someone who played an important role in your life.

4. Finally can I suggest that you might list any missionaries your church supports. It would also be a help if you know the name and/or address (or details) of any missionaries or pastors who served in Southern Africa in earlier years.

I would like to express my personal thanks for your taking the time to work on this information... and for sending it to me as soon as is practically possible. Feel free to use Internet, Fax or regular post.

Yours in Christ,

Marc S. Blackwell, Sr.

### Interviews.

Interviews were held over a period of five years beginning in 1998. These interviews were primarily focused on informal conversations regarding the individual pastor or missionaries' viewpoints on doctrine, historiography, methodology and strategy.

### Survey.

Information was gathered using a broad approach to research. The Questionnaires were analysed for leads to other issues of interest or importance. The Interviews led to gathering information that would add to the overall picture of the education of the pastors or missionaries, the development of their churches and the problems they faced. The value of the various appended lists is found in their uniqueness, in that they provide information not found in any other source.

## APPENDIX V.

### The Cape Strategy:

#### Team Church Planting.

The Cape Strategy Learning Ministry team was mandated to develop a ten to fifteen year strategic plan for church planting and for involvement of *related ministries*<sup>1</sup> in the Cape Peninsula. Every effort to learn from the previous and current ministry plans of the existing area ministries was made. This document reflects the combined efforts of over twenty-five Bible-believing Christian leaders over a period of some three months. Many sources and resources, i.e. such as the '*Masterplanning Arrow*,'<sup>2</sup> contributed to the writing of this regional strategy statement.

The quintessential element in our Cape Masterplan is teamwork. Various types of teams have been envisioned, but each team is focused on Church Planting. The role of every team member should contribute to the overall goal. We propose four primary variations in team structure. We recognise - within each team - the valuable contributions that different ministry abilities and leadership roles will make.<sup>3</sup> These team structures *or profiles* must be carefully formed.

The formation of each team is the core issue in our strategy. Team-building<sup>4</sup> must be carefully crafted with prayer, purpose oriented communication, with mutual sharing, consensus management and with spiritual unity at the heart of the process of *profiling* the various teams. The Team's formation, as a "Learning Team"<sup>5</sup> may be initially announced through the Leadership Pool<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note the Core and Related Objectives document.

<sup>2</sup> The *Masterplan Arrow* and related materials and books.

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to our Manpower Planning Chart and the related descriptions and definitions in the attached glossary.

<sup>4</sup> See procedures for Team-Building in "Forming Teams" by ds. Marc S. Blackwell, Sr. and see Minutes of 13-8-01.

<sup>5</sup> The Cape Leadership Pool with its Learning Ministry Team concept is a notion to minister together on a fully voluntary level. See the various articles outlining the "Learning Ministry Team Notion."

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quarterly meetings. As "Learning Teams" they will pursue the various stages that lead to team organization – as follows:

A Team Facilitator<sup>7</sup> will direct the early development of the team. Potential team members may approach the team facilitator for date and venue when the specific team *formation meetings* will meet. Such *formation meetings* will consider the future team's *criteria*, i.e. the filters,<sup>8</sup> through which the individual's compatibility within the team can be established.

Once teams are formed around consensus ministry philosophies, shared interests and individual compatibilities they will begin the process of developing their team strategies using the Masterplaning Arrow<sup>9</sup> in greater detail. This process will allow the specific Learning Team to identify<sup>10</sup> their core team concerns: 1. Target areas, 2. Biblical methodologies, 3. Localised applications, i.e. area, language, people groups, economic level, etc. 4. Specific goals, and 5. 'Time-lines.'

The Masterplaning Arrow should now be complete. The Team would now move forward into ministry.

We encourage Christian workers involved in *Related Ministries*<sup>11</sup> to give as much of their ministry time and abilities to these Church Planting teams at whatever level is practical for their individual situation.

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<sup>6</sup> Some local churches may prefer to independently direct this process themselves, though "branch works" may also look to the Cape Leadership Pool as a vehicle for learning, developing strategies and methodologies.

<sup>7</sup> This individual's ministry role is identified by the Manpower Planning Chart as a Church Planter and is either a recognised missionary from overseas or a recognised South African leader.

<sup>8</sup> Those considering establishing membership in a team must do so with a spirit of genuine cooperation with the team's final decision making processes. For example: should a team decide to work in one area or another – those joining the team will need to demonstrate their cooperation by their willingness to relocate to that area if the need to do so is an essential issue to the team.

[3b] See Masterplaning notes and minutes from the Strategy learning team.

<sup>9</sup> See listing of the Masterplaning Arrow stages: CD-R.

<sup>10</sup> See Related sub-committee documents on the "How To's"

<sup>11</sup> See Glossary for this and other terms used in this document.



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## THE HISTORY OF THE INDEPENDENT FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

### Summary.

**Origins:** This thesis explains the doctrinal distinctives that have had an important part in developing the Independent and Fundamental aspects of a segment of the greater worldwide Baptist family. The role of these distinctives in motivating the historical development of these churches in Southern Africa is also considered.

**Fundamentalism:** The Independent Fundamental Baptist Church movement in Southern Africa is a unique and highly issue oriented part of Christianity. The issues that motivated the American and British branch of Fundamentalism receive attention and then the issues driving Christian fundamentalism in Southern Africa are also discussed.

**Leadership:** The Independent Fundamental Baptist and Bible churches' doctrinal distinctives and their focused missionary motivation explain more than theological perspectives. Distinctives and missionary focus clarify the character of its leadership and the impetus for this movement's advancement in Southern African. Of course, understanding the overseas sponsors and organisations also adds parts to the puzzle. Though it is quite a young movement, the current and potential influence of the Independent Fundamental movement on South African society receives attention.

**Methodology:** The missionary church-planting approach of the Independent Fundamental Baptists serves as a key to understanding and appreciating this loose grouping of churches. By providing a chronicle of an un-chronicled segment of the Christian community in South Africa an important contribution is being made. The profile of a cross-section of its leaders, and of some of the congregations, allows their methodology to be better understood.

By providing an analysis of the goals, expansion and emerging theological perspectives behind the Independent Fundamentalist's missionary efforts, this thesis contributes to the historical record of Southern African Christianity. By clarifying the variations within their doctrinal and missiological thought, one is no longer tempted to place all "independents" into a single grouping, i.e., "the Independent Fundamental Baptist church," something impossible to do. The word "independent" will have its simplest dictionary meaning returned to the minds of those who refer to this religious group. Though they are an extremely small group, this thesis establishes reasons for recognising the Independent Fundamental Baptists within the ranks of those called Baptists in Southern Africa.

**The thesis key word list follows:**

1. Independent Baptists
2. Fundamentalists
3. Bible churches.
4. Church Planting.
5. Missionaries.
6. Baptist Distinctives.
7. Discipleship.
8. Evangelism.
9. Leadership Training.
10. Separation.

I declare that THE HISTORY OF THE INDEPENDENT  
FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA  
is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have  
been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Rev. Marc S. Blackwell, Sr.