



THE BAPTISTS
 KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED IN FORMING A BAPTIST IDENTITY

VOLUME TWO
 BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

TOMNETTLES




MENTOR





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Dedication

To my mother, Ellen Clyde East Nettles
and my mother-in-law, Sarah Jewel Wells Roebuck,
whose lives probably never will be put on display in a book like this
but whose unwavering faith makes a worthy legacy for the devotion,
labors, and suffering described here.

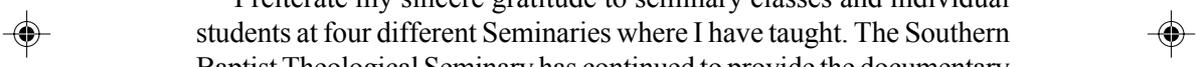




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When this book on Baptist identity was first proposed, it was envisioned as a single volume. The size of the manuscript made it necessary to divide it into three parts. As in volume one, I thank Christian Focus Publications for leaving the project whole and sharing my burden for its usefulness. With an appreciation that increases through the years, I thank the Christian gentleman, pastor, friend, and editor Malcolm Maclean for his part. Many additions, in light of the tri-fold division, have been necessary in order to maintain coherence in the progress of the historical argument. He has been magnanimous in accepting, inserting, altering, and at times suggesting even more content in order to achieve this goal.

An outside reader, anonymous to me, has read the manuscript carefully and has made several helpful suggestions. The book is more readable because of his help. Errors and difficulties that remain are all my responsibility.



I reiterate my sincere gratitude to seminary classes and individual students at four different Seminaries where I have taught. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has continued to provide the documentary resources necessary for making the work as helpful and accurate as possible. It also has provided an atmosphere of historical and theological commitment congenial to such a book.

Again, my son, Robert has provided the sketches of many persons discussed in these pages. His willingness and talent are a blessing to his father.

With increased appreciation, admiration, and love I thank Margaret, Christian wife, for support and continued investment of energy to make the labor of writing possible.

To the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Christ Himself our redeemer, advocate, righteousness, propitiation, and the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles and has undergirded all those that believe their words with the mysterious and glorious strength of perseverance, I give all praise. It is by His grace that we can say we share like precious faith with Roger Williams, Isaac Backus, Ann Judson, Gerhard Oncken, and Gottfried Alf, plus a myriad of others. Without the grace of God in their lives, such a book as this could never have been conceived.

Timeline

Chronologically Parallel Events in the larger ecclesiastical world or the political arena are indented and put in bold

1630 – Migration of Puritans to the New World begins because of the oppression and persecution under Archbishop Laud

- 1636 – Roger Williams banished from Massachusetts Bay
- 1638 – Roger Williams established the first Baptist church in America in Providence Rhode Island
- 1640 – John Clarke established the second Baptist church in America in Newport, Rhode Island

1640 – The Puritan Revolt in England against Charles I

- 1644 – Roger Williams wrote *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution*
- 1644 – Particular Baptists in England adopted the First London Confession

1649 – Charles I beheaded in England

- 1651 – John Clarke and Obadiah Holmes arrested in Massachusetts Bay
- 1651 – John Clarke wrote *Ille News From New England* and accompanied Roger Williams to England to seek a new charter from Oliver Cromwell

1660 – The Restoration of the English Monarchy under Charles II; beginning of the legislative acts known as the Clarendon Code oppressive to Protestant dissenters

- 1665 – Thomas Gould, after 10 years of harassment from the state patronized Congregational church, established the First Baptist Church of Boston
- 1682 – William Screven founded a Baptist Church in Kittery, Maine

1688 – The Glorious Revolution and the enthronement of William and Mary

1689 – The Act of Toleration

- 1689 – English Particular Baptists make a public endorsement of the Second London Confession
- 1696 – Baptist Church in Kittery, Maine, moved to Charleston, South Carolina

1703 – Birth of Jonathan Edwards

- 1707 – Philadelphia Association established



Timeline

11

1738 ff– George Whitefield’s Grand Itinerancy from Georgia to New England

1745 – Shubal Stearns converted

1746 – Edwards publishes *Religious Affections*

1750 – Oliver Hart became pastor of First Baptist Church, Charleston

1751 – Shubal Stearns became Baptist

1754 – John Gano ordained as a Baptist minister

1755 – Shubal Stearns along with seven other families established Sandy Creek Baptist Church

1755 – Richard Furman born

1756 – Isaac Backus became a Baptist

1758 – Death of Jonathan Edwards

1758 – Sandy Creek Association established

1770 – the Boston Massacre; English troops fired into a crowd of boys and killed five persons.

1770 – Sandy Creek Association divided into three

1771 – Richard Furman converted and began preaching

1772 – George Liele, founder of the first Black Baptist church, converted

1773 – Boston Tea Party; Colonists threw a shipload of British East India Tea into Boston harbor

1774 – John Leland converted and began preaching

1775 – Battle of Breed’s [Bunker] Hill; George III rejects the ‘Olive Branch Petition’ and sends 20,000 extra troops to subdue the colonists

1776 – The American colonies declare their independence of England; Revolutionary War begins

1777 – John Leland arrived in Virginia

1779 – Isaac Backus proposed a bill of Rights for Massachusetts

1780 – Oliver Hart left Charleston to avoid arrest by the British Army

1781 – Cornwallis Surrenders to Washington at Yorktown

1783 – John Taylor begins Baptist work in Kentucky

1783 – Treaty of Paris ending Revolutionary War signed in September

1786 – Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom enacted in Virginia

1787 – Richard Furman became pastor of First Baptist Church, Charleston

1788 – John Gano moved to Kentucky

1792 – William Carey goes to India as a missionary

- 1800 – Gerhard Oncken born in Germany
- 1802 – Daniel Parker converted and baptized; Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society formed
- 1806 – Ann Hasseltine [Judson] converted
- 1807 – Lott Cary, slave, then free man, then missionary, converted
- 1808 – Adoniram Judson converted
- 1808 – James and Robert Haldane become Baptist
- 1811 – Gilbert Beebe, Primitive Baptist leader, baptized

1812 – Beginning of War of 1812 between England and the United States

- 1812 – Ann and Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice sailed for India under the auspices of the Congregationalist mission society; a few months later they became Baptists
- 1812 – Alexander Campbell was baptized by immersion
- 1813 – Luther Rice returned to America to rally Baptists in the cause of missions

1814 – Napoleon defeated; British now able to concentrate military power against United States

- 1814 – General Missionary Convention [Triennial Convention] established

1815 [January] – Battle of New Orleans fought after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, guaranteeing its ratification to end the War of 1812

- 1816 – Robert Haldane goes to Geneva
- 1820 – Daniel Parker's *Public Address to the Baptist Society*; also John Taylor's *Thoughts on Missions*
- 1823 – Gerhard Oncken becomes agent for the Continental Society, a missionary organization
- 1826 – Basil Manly became pastor of First Baptist Church, Charleston
- 1827 – Kehukee Association becomes Anti-mission Society
- 1830 – Appotomax Association in Virginia withdraws from churches that followed the teachings of Alexander Campbell; Many other Baptist Associations follow suit
- 1834 – Gerhard Oncken and six others baptized near Hamburg by Barnas Sears, an American Baptist
- 1845 – Southern Baptist Convention separates from Baptists in the North
- 1850 – John A. Broadus graduated from the University of Virginia and began pastorate at Charlottesville Baptist Church; also served as tutor in Latin and Greek
- 1854 – James P. Boyce delivered address, *Three Changes in Theological Institutions*



Timeline

13

- 1858 – Lottie Moon converted under the ministry of John A. Broadus in Charlottesville
- 1858 – In November, Wilhelm Weist baptized Gottfried Alf in Poland
- 1859 – The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary established in Greenville, South Carolina, with four faculty members: J. P. Boyce, John A. Broadus, Basil Manly, Jr., and William Williams
- 1861 – American Civil War begins by Confederate action against Union forces occupying Fort Sumter in Georgia, April 11-13**
- 1861 – The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary dismisses
- 1863 – the first Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention established
- 1865 – American Civil War ends in a series of surrenders from April 6-May 29**
- 1866 – The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary begins classes again
- 1869 – C. H. Toy became Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at the Seminary
- 1873 – Lottie Moon went to China where she spent the rest of her life [1912]







Foreword



Volume One contended that Baptist identity consists of four leading ideas that intertwine with each other: Orthodoxy, Evangelicalism, conscientious confessionalism, and ecclesiological separateness, that is, a theologically integrated ecclesiology. None of them is complete without the others. Orthodoxy Theology and Christology form the foundation for all other aspects of Christian belief. Evangelicalism has no real existence apart from Orthodoxy, and Orthodoxy finds its most compelling and complete application in Evangelicalism. The work of Christ, the operations of the Spirit, and the genuineness and purity of Christian experience call for individual as well as corporate expressions of faith. Baptists have expressed this in requiring personal narratives of the experience of grace, baptism of the believer only on the basis of such an expression, and conscientiously shared common witness to the truths of the Bible in a confession of faith. This corporate witness to a shared faith and the desire for Christian growth and purity in the body drives the essentials of a Baptist view of the church. Thus, a theologically integrated ecclesiology gives rise to several distinctive Baptist doctrines.



Baptist identity includes a much broader spectrum of doctrines than Baptist distinctives. This is important to remember. Even though many other Christian groups share a large number of doctrines with Baptists, these are none the less essential elements of Baptist identity. Baptist distinctives, those views that cause Baptists to differ from, and thus remain separate from, other Christian denominations, must be maintained. Loss of these would mean a compromise of the regulative principle of biblical authority as well as a loss of a consistent application of the other areas of theology. On the other hand, Baptists must not define themselves too narrowly by forgetting that their distinctives have no meaning if abstracted from the fountain of truth and life, that is, Scripture and the gracious workings of the triune God.

Thus Volume One sought to develop this concept of Baptist identity through the biographies and thoughts of influential pastors and theologians from the early seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century. As given in prospect, Volume Two continues that story but expands the geographical setting. Volume Two tells the story of Baptist



beginnings and development in America. They shared the views of their English brethren, but were able to be instrumental in the new world in the achievement of separation of church and state and liberty of conscience. The pioneer spirit combined with the movement of God's Spirit in the first Great Awakening to produce massive growth of Baptists in New England, in the Middle Colonies, and particularly in the South. The relation between Separate Baptists and Regular Baptists is studied, dispelling the myth of their supposed theological incompatibility. The influence of the Philadelphia Association, the Charleston Association, and the Sandy Creek Association, through their outstanding pastors, combined with the missionary movement to give a period of powerful unity to Baptists. The giant step forward from church autonomy to associational development, and then to a more broadly conceived denominational life, was not without significant growing pains. The Anti-Mission-Society movement, the Campbellite movement, and the separation of Baptists in the South from the national missionary societies, incited by the issue of abolition of slavery, created tension and division but also opened a new commitment to missions, theological education, and church expansion in the southern reaches of the country. Varying, but pervasively held, views of racism compromised the southern conscience for more than a century following this insidious conflict. The moving and inspiring contributions of Ann Judson and Lottie Moon complement the work of William Carey. Growth of Baptists on a global scale came, not only from the missionary organizations of the English Baptists, American Baptists, and Southern Baptists, but from energetic, devoted, and visionary pastors such as the Haldanes of Scotland and Gerhard Oncken of Germany. Still, the Baptist vision remained unified and coherent—truth drove them into all the world with the message of truth.

This story begins by gathering together the witness of Baptists in Britain and America for the expression of an important Baptist distinctive, liberty of conscience, with the political and ecclesiastical implications of that dearly held doctrine.