

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH - LESSON 7

INSTITUTIONAL AND COOPERATION CONTROVERSY

(Third Major Apostasy)

INTRODUCTION:

The church grew and developed in the 1920's and the depression years of the thirties. The Census of Religious Bodies for 1926 reported more than 433,000 members.

- a. The Gospel spread geographically.
- b. Grew institutionally and educationally: para-church organizations were growing and prospering.
 - (1) Colleges: David Lipscomb; Harding. George Pepperdine; Abilene Christian; Feed-Hardeman.
 - (2) Orphanages: Tennessee Orphan Home (1909); Potter Orphanage - Bowling Green, (1914); Boles Home (Quinlan, Texas 1927); Tipton (Tipton, Ok. 1928).
- c. New Technologies: Radio and infant airline.
 - (1) Religious programming was common place (KRLD, Dallas, Texas - Roy Cogdill and W.L.Oliphant).
- d. Time of significant harmony.
- e. Debates: Hardeman and Boswell Debate (1923); Hardeman and Bogard; Brewer and Lindsay; Foy E. Wallace and J. Frank Norris, etc.
- f. Denominational people would attend Gospel Meetings.
- g. Larger and more expensive buildings; the more affluent middle-class membership; number of full-time preachers; increasing emphasis on "Christian Education" and "Missionary" efforts.

I. PROBLEMS - 1930'S

A. The Premillennial Problem:

1. The church went through heated and hard-fought battles in the 1930's and 40's. Controversy had subsided by 1945.
2. Boll spear-headed Premillennialism in the church.
 - a) Preached for Portland Avenue church in Louisville, Ky.
 - b) Associate Editor of the Gospel Review, along with Jesse P. Sewell and Joe Warlick.
 - c) Removed as front page editor of the Gospel Advocate, December 9, 1915, because of premillennial teaching.

- d) Had an exchange with F.W. Smith in 1915; gave a series of lessons at the Peak and Main church in Dallas, Texas, in 1924.

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- 3. The first split was in the Highland church in Louisville, Ky. (1920).
 - a) Jorgenson was the preacher.
 - b) Pushed by Jorgenson and Don Carlos Janes, forty-one members left and formed the Bardstown Rd. church.
- 4. From 1930-1956 was a period of debate and division. H. Leo Boles had a written debate with Boll. R.L. Whiteside and C.R. Nichol reviewed Boll's position and was put in booklet form entitled, "Christ and His Kingdom."
- 5. Foy E. Wallace took the lead in waging the battle against Premillennialism.
 - a) Was editor of Gospel Advocate from 1930-1934. Debated Charles M. Neal in Winchester, Ky., Jan. 1933.
 - b) Published Gospel Guardian in 1935 for the purpose of fighting premillennialism.
 - c) Began Bible Banner in 1938. Published it for eleven years. Ended in April 1949 (105 issues). Controversy had pretty well subsided by 1945.

B. Institutional and Cooperation Problems - 1950's

- 1. A hint of a future problem: in 1938, Abilene Christian College lectures: "The church that does not have A.C.C. in its budget has the wrong preacher" (G.C. Brewer). Ten years later this controversy would be revived by Hardeman and others who wanted financial support for colleges from church treasuries.
- 2. A great interest in evangelism: cooperative works in Italy, Germany, Japan, overseen by churches in Texas and Tennessee.
- 3. Proliferation of institutional orphanages (Grown from 5 to more than 30).
- 4. Growth of enrollment in colleges.
- 5. Historical precedent for centralized support in evangelism: Hardeman Tabernacle Meetings of twenties and thirties. "Houston Music Hall" Meetings (Norhill church oversaw funds). Foy E. Wallace preached lessons which were transcribed and published as "God's Prophetic Word" and "Bulwarks Of The Faith." Luther Blackmon and Roy E.

Cogdill were the local preachers. Later Cogdill, Blackmon, Yater Tant and others withdrew their support from such efforts.

6. In the early 1950's the Fifth and Highland church in Abilene, Texas began the Herald of Truth radio program, whereby many churches sent

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a portion of their funds to the elders at Fifth and Highland to enable them to preach the Gospel on national radio.

- a) Principles which promoted Herald Of Truth:
 - (1) The need of a brotherhood organization through which the churches might cooperate to convert the world.
 - (2) Many congregations together can accomplish more than churches acting independently.
- b) Defended on basis of expediency:
 - (1) No pattern given to churches to guide them in preaching the gospel.
 - (2) Just a method. "Our radio work (program) is but one method of preaching the gospel to people" (E.R. Harper, Gospel Guardian, July 29, 1954)
- c) Free to use own judgment and wisdom in getting the job done. Not to do the work of other churches or dictate to others, but would not allow other churches to dictate to them because it was their work and must maintain autonomy.
- d) Attitude toward objectors:
 - (1) Goodpasture, December 9, 1955, in an article in Gospel Advocate, suggested the "Yellow tag of quarantine." Urging churches to refrain from using any preacher who opposed centralized control and church support of human institutions.
 - (a) "I trust you will not consider me presumptuous if I suggest that perhaps the writers of the Gospel Advocate might wisely spearhead a movement to quarantine those preachers who today are sowing discord among the brotherhood and thus prevent division."

C. Conflict:

1. Papers: Banner/Guardian; Preceptor (1951); Searching The Scriptures; Truth Magazine. On the other side: Gospel Advocate; Firm Foundation; Spiritual Sword. Local bulletins were abundant.
2. Debates: Holt-Totty (Indianapolis, Oct. 1954); Woods-Porter (Jan. 1956); Harper/Tant (Lufkin, April 1955 and Abilene, Nov. 1955);

Cogdill/Woods (Birmingham, Nov.1957); Wallace/Holt (Florence, Alabama, Dec. 1959).

3. "Yellow Tag Of Quarantine", Gospel Advocate; B.C. Goodpasture, 1955). The result:
 - a) Meetings canceled
 - b) Preachers fired
 - c) Loss of support

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- d) Some churches gave a pittance to escape being marked.
- e) Law suites. Having to leave church buildings.

D. The Issues:

1. Church contributions to human institutions.
2. Sponsoring church arrangement (cooperation).
3. Church benevolence to aliens (non-Christians).

A PARALLEL

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Organization of Churches
Activate Church Universal
"Bible doesn't tell us how."
Pooling of Resources
No Pattern
Expedient
Many churches acting together
Can accomplish more than acting independently.

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