

## **BAPTIST HISTORY CELEBRATION**

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### **“LANDMARK WRITINGS”**

(Breakout Session 2,B)

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to this survey of Landmark writings, which also provides a brief introduction to Landmark history and doctrinal distinctives. As a movement, Landmarkism emerged from the religious competition and schisms on the American southwestern frontier, especially Kentucky and Tennessee, in the early nineteenth century. JAMES ROBINSON GRAVES (1820-1893), JAMES MADISON PENDLETON (1811-1891) and AMOS COOPER DAYTON (1813-1865)--the “Great Triumvirate”--consolidated earlier Baptist doctrines and practices into an ecclesiological system, which claimed that Baptists were the only “true church”. They insisted that only Baptists descended from the New Testament church organized by Jesus and the Apostles. [Other groups like the Primitives and Disciples made similar claims.] J. R. Graves initiated the Landmark movement about the middle of the nineteenth century and remained its principal advocate until his death in 1893.

By the early twentieth century, Landmarkers began to separate from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) over issues of representation, centralization and, especially, “Gospel Missions”. BENJAMIN MARCUS BOGARD (1868-1951), SAMUEL HOWARD FORD, JOHN NEWTON HALL, JOSEPH A. SCARBORO and others led in the organization of state and national Landmark associations. The General Association (national) was organized in 1905 at Texarkana, and reorganized in 1924 as the American Baptist Association (ABA). Soon personality clashes and differences over organizational philosophy and representation (messenger qualifications) resulted in another schism. In 1950 at Little Rock GERALD D. KELLAR, D. N. JACKSON, JOHN W. DUGGAR and others separated from the ABA and led in the organization of the North American Baptist Association (NABA), which was renamed the Baptist Missionary Association of America (BMAA) in 1969.

All of the individuals cited above have published Landmark literature. Our survey begins with a contemporary writer, ROBERT ASHCRAFT (b. 1934). Ashcraft completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree at East Texas State University in 1968. He has served as a member of the ABA History and Archives Committee since its organization in 1974, and as chair of the Arkansas state association History and Archives Committee since 1987. Of his eight books, we are primarily interested in the last three he has written:

- *History of the American Baptist Association* (ABA Baptist School Committee, 2000).
- *Landmarkism Revisited* (Ashcraft Publications, 2003).

- *Contending for the Faith: An Updated History of the Baptists* (ABA Baptist Sunday School Committee, 2006). This volume is an update of John T. Christian, *History of the Baptists*, (1922 & 1926), combined with extensive quotations from Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists* (1887) and others.

Ashcraft writes as an archivist. His work consists largely of lengthy quotations from earlier Landmark writers, set in a historical framework, with occasional interpretive comments. As such, he presents a wealth of material from earlier writers and documents significant people and events, but offers little that is new or original. It is largely from Ashcraft's historical framework in *Landmarkism Revisited* and *History of the American Baptist Association* (hereafter, cited as *History of ABA*) that we have organized this bibliographic study of Landmark writings, under the following headings:

- The Frontier Setting and Early Development of Landmarkism
- Basic Landmark Doctrines and Practices
- Advocates of Landmark Associations

## **I. THE FRONTIER SETTING AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT**

Following the American Revolution and the blazing of the "Wilderness Road" by Daniel Boone, Americans poured across the Alleghenies--an estimated 200,000 between 1775-1795--into the Old Southwest (Kentucky, Tennessee and beyond). This migration included Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists ("Regulars" and "Separates") and others. Baptists came as individuals, as "colonies" from churches, and as whole churches (e.g., "Craig's church" from Upper Spotsylvania, VA to Gilbert's Creek, KY, 1781). Ashcraft estimates that a third of Virginia Baptists migrated to Kentucky (*Landmarkism Revisited*, chapter 3).

1. *The Frontier Revival*: The revival grew out of the Second Great Awakening and, in Kentucky, began with a camp meeting, led by James McGready (Presbyterian) in 1800. The revival "spread like wildfire," with Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians participating together in evangelistic camp meetings, revival services and "union" Sunday schools. Acceptance of baptism by other churches ("alien baptism) and "open" communion became more common (*Landmarkism Revisited*, pp. 7,83; *Contending for the Faith*, pp. 575-80, 609). Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians all grew rapidly.

In this ecumenical environment, however, some began to fear that Baptists were losing their "distinctive identity." Soon, three highly competitive restoration movements emerged from Baptists ranks, each claiming to be the "true church"; these movements resulted in devastating schisms among Missionary Baptists.

2. *Primitive Baptists*: The first reaction came from Primitive Baptists (also called "Old School Baptists", "Old Regular Baptists" and, by their adversaries, "Seed Baptists" or "Hardshells"). This group wanted to return to the strict Calvinism of older Particular Baptists. Primitives reacted to the organized mission work of the new Triennial Convention (1814). On the frontier, Primitives were inspired by Daniel Parker (*View on the Two Seeds: Taken from Genesis*, 1826). Parker emphasized Calvinist doctrines of "limited atonement"

and “double predestination”; he vehemently opposed the Arminian evangelism (“free will”) of the frontier revival and the co-mingling of religious groups. Others referred to Primitive Baptists as “anti-missionary” (and “anti-effort”) because of their rejection of missions, evangelism, education, Sunday schools, religious societies and paid ministers. To distinguish themselves from the Primitives, Regular and Separate Baptists identified themselves as “missionary” Baptists. During the strongest years of the Primitive movement (ca. 1835-1842), many missionary Baptist churches split or defected to the Primitives. (Sometimes whole associations converted to Primitive Baptist.)

3. *The “Reform” Movement of Alexander Campbell:* A second schism among Baptists resulted from the Campbell “Reform” movement. When Alexander Campbell came from Scotland to America in 1809, he was still a Presbyterian. A few years later, however, he assisted his father, Thomas, in organizing the Brush Run Church, on the basis of believers baptism by immersion. The church affiliated with the Redstone Baptist Association in Pennsylvania. For the next twenty years Campbell was identified as a Baptist. By 1832, however, his views on “baptismal regeneration” were rejected by many Baptist leaders in Ohio and Kentucky.

In that year Campbell and his followers united with followers of Barton W. Stone (Presbyterian “restorationist”) and organized the Disciples of Christ. Like the Primitives, Campbell sought the “restoration” of primitive Christianity. Unlike the Primitives, Campbell was aggressively evangelistic, highly competitive and very critical of those who differed with him. His goal was to end denominationalism and to unite all Christians in his new movement, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ashcraft estimates that nearly half the Baptist churches in Kentucky, and almost as many in western Tennessee either joined the Campbellites or were split by the movement, including the First Baptist Churches of Louisville, KY and Nashville, TN. ( Ashcraft discusses the Primitive and the Campbell movements in *Landmarkism Revisited*, pp. 83-102; and *Contending for the Faith*, pp. 575-90).

4. *The Emergence of the Landmark Movement:* Landmarkism, the third movement, arose in opposition to both the lost Baptist distinctives in the earlier ecumenical climate and the later competitive challenges of Primitives, Disciples and Methodists. The initiator of this protest movement among missionary Baptists was J. R. Graves.

J. R. Graves was raised in Vermont by his Congregationalist mother (his father died when Graves was an infant). He joined a Baptist church at age 15 and, in the early 1840s, he was ordained a minister in Ohio. Here, with his pastor, he “entered fiercely into the struggle with Campbellism” (Robert A. Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974, p. 208).

In 1845 (the year the SBC was organized) Graves moved to Nashville, TN., “a stronghold of Methodist and Disciple leadership” (Ibid.) When he joined First Baptist, a church which previously lost its pastor, its property and most of its members to Campbellism, the stage was set for the rise of the Landmark movement! H. Leon McBeth observed: “Landmarkism...reached its greatest strength in the Southwest, where intense

denominational rivalries prevailed among Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Disciples” (*The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987, p. 447). Ashcraft described the emergence of Landmarkism as follows:

“Faced with the leaven of ecumenical, or union meetings and Sunday schools, the Hardshell and Campbellite threats and growing tendencies toward centralization ... Drs. J. R. Graves, J. M. Pendleton, and A. C. Dayton forged a fighting faith. They begged no mercy and gave no quarter in their battles to reestablish the Baptist Landmarks which they felt were in danger of being removed....They put ‘iron’ into the blood of the anemic Baptists. (*History of ABA*, p. 35)

The “Great Triumvirate” of Graves, Pendleton and Dayton produced the foundational literature and doctrine of the Landmark movement. Much of their writing appeared first in Baptist periodicals, such as the *Tennessee Baptist*, edited by Graves, 1848-1893, the most widely read Baptist paper in the Southwest. The following is a list of their most influential writings. Though not in full agreement on all things, recurring themes in these works reflect the intense denominational competition in the Southwest; the Landmark rejection of alien baptism, open communion, pulpit affiliation and the recognition of non-Baptists as true churches or Gospel ministers; and the Landmark affirmation that local, visible, independent Baptist churches are the only “true Churches.”

#### 5. *Early Landmark Writings, 1850-1892:*

1851 Graves: “Cotton Grove Resolutions”

First published by Graves in “The War Began” *Tennessee Baptist* (Nov 23, 1859) as a list of questions known as “Queries”. Adopted at the Cotton Grove, TN meeting called by Graves, Jun 24, 1851. The Resolutions rejected alien baptism and recognition of non-Baptists as “true churches”(Cf. *Landmarkism Revisited*, p. 105).

1854 Pendleton: *An Old Landmark Reset*

Republished by Graves as an argument against recognizing non-Baptists as true churches or ministers; rejected inviting non-Baptists into Baptist pulpits (=recognition).

1855 Orchard, G. H.: *A Concise History of Baptists* (London, 1838)

Republished by Graves with his “Introductory Essay” in 1855 to document Landmark views on Baptist “chain” of “succession” from Jerusalem through dissenters like Novatianists, Donatists, Paulicians, Waldenses, and Anabaptists (Mennonites), etc.(Succession views vary).

1856 Dayton: *Theodosia Earnest: Or, Heroine of Faith*

A novel reflecting Dayton’s path to Landmark views.

- 1858 Dayton: *Pedobaptist and Campbellite Immersions*  
A critique of Methodist and Disciples false baptism.
- 1867 Pendleton: *Church Manual* (Includes New Hampshire Conf.)  
Leading manual in Southwest; reflects Landmark views.
- 1880 Graves: *Old Landmarkism: What Is It?*  
“The definitive publication” of Landmarkism (*Landmarkism Revisited*, p. 179). Graves defines Landmarkism; the “true church” of Christ (Baptist) and its authority, rights, ordinances; he rejects alien immersion, open communion, affiliation with non-Baptists.
- 1887? Graves: *The New Great Iron Wheel* (Anti-Methodist polemic.)

## **II. BASIC LANDMARK DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES**

### **Early Landmarkism**

#### **Ministry and "Non-Pulpit Affiliation"**

1. *The Cotton Grove Meeting.*--For the five years preceding the famous Cotton Grove meeting, Graves had argued against "the question of the validity of alien immersions, and the propriety of Baptists recognizing by any act, ecclesiastical or ministerial, Pedobaptist societies or preachers as churches and ministers of Christ." The purpose of Landmarkism was to arrest such loose practices which tended to compromise Baptists. At the meeting in Cotton Grove (1851), Graves wanted to erect some standards by which one might evaluate churches, ministers, and Christians.
2. *An Old Landmark Reset.*-- Pendleton contributed much to this discussion also. He argued from a priori premises which he assumed without question and often stated interrogatively. He asserted that "a refusal to recognize non-Baptist ministers by exchanging pulpits with them or accepting their sacramental (ordination) acts" was an original landmark of Baptists.
3. *Inter-Dependence of Church and Ministry.*--According to Wamble, Graves and his followers "made church and ministry inter-dependent: a true church (Baptist) cannot exist outside a true church." Since Landmarkers viewed only Baptist churches as true, they would accept only Baptist ministers as true ministers.
4. *"High Church Party."*--Wamble has concluded that this view tended toward a "high church" and that Graves consequently tried to off-set such a tendency by advocating that "a minister may perform an ecclesiastical act only upon the specific authority and in the presence of his congregation."

#### **Baptism and "Anti-Alien Immersion"**

1. *Importance of Valid Baptism.*--Valid baptism was the major emphasis of early Landmarker ecclesiology. As Pendleton said, "Our refusal to commune with Pedobaptists grows out of the fact that they are unbaptized, and out of the church." Baptism, therefore, authenticates both church and ministry. Pendleton was, consequently, opposed to union meetings between Baptists and the various denominations.
2. *Mode of Baptism.*--Much importance was placed on the mode of baptism. In Graves' opinion, "the form is the substance of a ceremony, and the design of a rite determines its form, and one can not be changed without affecting the other, and the change vitiates the ordinance"; "it is the form which constitutes, and is the essence of a rite, human or divine." Since Christ commanded immersion, he "expressly forbid" other modes. Two major arguments were used to substantiate immersion as the sole, valid mode of baptism: "(1) the meaning of baptizein and (2) the practice of the apostolic or New Testament church."
3. *Proper Administrator of Baptism.*--Although the "immersion only" doctrine could justify rejection of pouring and sprinkling, it did not disqualify immersion performed by non-Baptists. To do this, Landmarkers emphasized administrator, design, and candidate.
4. *Design of Baptism.*--The design of baptism was defined "in terms of (1) a candidate's agreement with a denomination's doctrinal position and (2) the relationship between salvation and baptism."
5. *Necessity of Baptism.*--Baptism, however, is necessary for two reasons: (1) It is the rite of initiation which must be undergone before one can become a member of the visible church, and (2) it is the command of Christ which must be obeyed.

## **Church and Government**

1. *A Visible Institution.*--In early Landmarkism, the church was defined in visible, institutional terms. Although Graves, Pendleton and Dayton agreed fundamentally in their respective ecclesiologies, they did disagree in some respects. Pendleton stated that "church . . . refers either to a particular congregation of saints or to the redeemed in the aggregate. It is employed in the latter sense in Ephesians 1:22; 3:21; 5:25, 27 . . . . In these passages and a few more like them, it would be absurd to define the term Church as meaning a particular congregation of Christians, meeting in one place for the worship of God." Few features of Landmark ecclesiology are more striking than its definition of the character of the church as visible and local only.
2. *Denial of Invisible or Universal Church.*--The complement of the view seeing church as visible and local only was the "denial of such conceptions as the invisible church, the universal church, the church militant, [and] the church triumphant."
3. *Church and Kingdom.*--The relationship between the church and the kingdom provided the background for a difference of opinion between Graves and Dayton. As early as 1848, Graves was "identifying the Kingdom of God with 'the Baptist Church.'" Only in the mid-fifties, however, did he formulate a detailed theory of the relationship between the church and the kingdom. Dayton provided the first extended Landmarker discussion of this subject in volume two of *Theodosia Ernest* (1857). Dayton did not accept the concept of an invisible church, but he did maintain the existence of an invisible kingdom

of God. The children of God from all ages of history are embraced in this kingdom. Dayton also conceived of a visible kingdom. "Like the invisible kingdom, it is composed of individuals, but unlike the [invisible] kingdom, it is not composed of individuals alone. Gospel churches also belong to it." Faith alone enters one into the invisible kingdom. A profession of faith and baptism places one into the visible kingdom. Thousands of people have been members of the invisible kingdom of Christ and have never entered his visible kingdom. Similarly, not all those in the visible kingdom are members of the invisible kingdom. Simon the Sorcerer was in the latter category. The invisible kingdom has existed as long as there have been men living by faith, but the visible kingdom was "set up in the days of Pontius Pilate." Baptism is the door into the visible kingdom:

4. *Marks or Signs of True Churches.*--According to the leaders of early Landmarkism, true churches may be identified by certain clear and unmistakable marks or signs. Graves listed eight of these in Old Landmarkism: (1) "divine institution," (2) "visible institution," (3) "locality . . . upon this earth," (4) "local organization," (5) "spiritual" or "professedly regenerate" membership, (6) "scriptural baptism," (7) Lord's Supper as "a local church ordinance, commemorative only of a sacrificial chastisement of Christ for his people, never expressive of fellowship, or of courtesy for others, or used as a sacrament," and (8) "church succession" or perpetuity of the "kingdom." The early Landmarkers maintained that no religious group may be called a true church "unless it conforms to all of these marks."

### **Succession**

1. Dayton and Graves affirmed the *continuous existence of Baptist churches* since the time of Jesus Christ. Although "Graves preferred to date the church's beginning with John the Baptist, . . . he admitted that John did not organize a church." Tull has noted that "Pendleton, [however,] always an independent spirit, cared little for the succession theory." Early Landmarkers interpreted the church in Matthew 16:18-20 as an ecclesiastical organization, having institutional form and existence since the time of Christ.
2. *Christ's Veracity.*--In the eyes of Graves, Christ's veracity was the main issue at stake. He said: "LANDMARK Baptists very generally believe that for the word of the Living God to stand, and for the veracity of Jesus Christ to vindicate itself, the kingdom which he set up 'in the days of John the Baptist,' has had an unbroken continuity until now." Graves continued: "To-day [sic] all his true churches on earth constitute it [i.e., the kingdom]; . . . therefore, if his kingdom has stood unchanged, and will to the end, he must always have had true and uncorrupted churches, since his kingdom can not exist without true churches."
 

To question. . . [the kingdom's continuous existence] is to doubt his sure word of promise. To deny it, is to impeach his veracity, and leave the world without a Bible or a Christ. . . . For Christians to admit that Christ has not-preserved his kingdom, unbroken, unmoved, unchanged, and uncorrupted, is to surrender the whole ground to infidelity.
3. *Proof of Church Succession.*--Although Graves and his colleagues disclaimed any necessity to prove succession, they sought proof from "definition" and from "history."

Graves argued that one need only discover the "marks" or characteristics of the original church which Christ established and test contemporary bodies to find a replica.

4. *Historical Proof of Church Succession.*--Graves' arguments were objected to by both non-Baptists and "Liberals" (i.e., Baptists who did not accept Graves' teachings about historical succession). Graves, therefore, turned to history to prove Baptist succession. He traced Baptist history through such non-conformist sects as the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, Donatists, and Anabaptists. "The trail of blood," a term originated by Graves to designate persecuted believers throughout the centuries, became "the clearest and most satisfactory proof" of Baptist succession.

### **Non-Intercommunion**

1. In the early stages of the development of Landmarkism, most Landmarkers apparently embraced what was the majority view of the churches throughout the Southern Baptist Convention: close communion.
2. The traditional argument for close communion was two-fold: (1) "Immersion is essential to baptism" and (2) "baptism is prerequisite to the Lord's Supper." Dayton, when he wrote the first volume of *Theodosia Ernest*, stated that the only issue between Baptists and such pedobaptists is related "to what baptism is." The close communion practice of the Baptist churches, however, did not necessarily extend to a strict local church communion, for intercommunion was commonly observed. Strict local church communion restricted participation to the particular members of the local church observing the ordinance. Intercommunion took at least three forms: (1) "Local church communion in which visiting Baptists were invited to partake," (2) "associational communion," and (3) "convention communion." Even J. R. Graves participated in "associational communion."
3. The full importance of the Landmark insistence upon strict local communion is manifest when Graves' conception of open communion, as the end result for which pulpit affiliation and alien immersions are preparatory stages, is considered. "The only guard upon which we can successfully meet and counteract the liberalizing influences, which are gently bearing the Baptists of America into the slough of open communion [Graves stated], is strict local church communion . . . ."
4. *Logic and Biblical Conclusions.*--Hugh Wamble has described the Landmark system succinctly: "Its logic is tight. Given its premises and logic, its conclusions are inescapable. Its impulse is religious--as if to deny the system at any point is to reject Christ, to destroy the Bible, to subvert salvation, to compromise Baptist convictions, and to threaten Baptists' organized work."

## **III. ADVOCATES OF LANDMARK ASSOCIATIONS**

### **1. GOSPEL MISSIONS**

In 1859 J. R. Graves challenged the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to convert from the "Convention" or "Board" method of missions to "Direct Missions" wherein churches directly

select, send and support missionaries. Graves contended that the “Great Commission” (Mt.28: 18-20) was given directly to churches, and that the Board system was an “episcopal” hierarchy that usurped the authority of local churches. The SBC was not persuaded to change the methods of the mission boards, but it did offer to forward funds for churches who appointed their own missionaries. One of the board appointed missionaries present at this meeting, however, was persuaded by Graves. This missionary was TARLETON PERRY CRAWFORD, who served in China from ca.1852-1892. Conflict over Direct Missions, or “Gospel Missions” as J. N. HALL preferred, was delayed by the Civil War, but not forgotten. Several times in the 1870s and 1880s Crawford tried unsuccessfully to convince the Foreign Mission Board to adopt his methods. In the early 1890s Crawford began to separate from the board and organized the Gospel Mission Association. He published his views in a tract entitled *Churches, to the Front* (1892), which launched the Gospel Missions movement. Crawford’s views were similar to those of J. R. Graves, and were readily promoted by Hall and others in the Landmark movement.

1. *Gospel Missions Issue.*—J. N. Hall's version of Landmarkism, coupled with the particular exigencies of his own day, were related to what might be described as another tenet of Landmarkism. This issue focused on the proper way for churches to do mission work. Hall called his view "Gospel Missions." The points stressed by this view were rooted primarily in his Landmark insistence on the authority of each local church (Baptist) to do and direct all missionary enterprises. Many of the issues will be seen subsequently in the controversies which directly led to the separation of the Associational Baptist movement from the Southern Baptist Convention and ultimately to the division of the American Baptist Association in 1950.
2. *J. N. Hall was indeed a Landmarker among Landmarkers.* His particular strain of Landmarkism agreed in almost all points with J. R. Graves' views. The only areas where they appeared to differ were on the subjects of the relationship between baptism and church membership (Hall did not believe that baptism is "the door into the church") and non-intercommunion (Hall apparently practiced intercommunion). On these two accounts, therefore, his views approximated those of Samuel Howard Ford and James Madison Pendleton. Graves did not explicitly advocate gospel missionism, but Hall maintained that Graves was indeed "a sure-enough Gospel Missioner in all . . . [its essential] principles. . . ."
3. *Gateway to Landmark Associations.*—Landmark views on missions work and the proper/best ways of doing it led eventually to the establishment of new associated work, eventually the American Baptist Association and the Baptist Missionary Association of America. The Landmarkist positions on Church history and succession was most influential in that phenomenon.

Ashcraft observed:

Perhaps more than any other single factor, the Gospel Missions movement led to the withdrawal of the Landmark churches to form separate associations in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, and finally the General Association in 1905. (*Contending for the Faith*, pp. 330-35)

## 2. LANDMARK ASSOCIATIONS

Ashcraft characterized the conflict in Arkansas as a struggle between “pro-Landmark country churches” and “pro-convention city churches.”

(*History of ABA*, p. 145). The principal Landmark leader in the formation of both the State Association of Arkansas Baptist Churches in 1902 and the General Association of Baptists in the United States in 1905 (the names of both the state and national associations changed several times) was BEN M. BOGARD (1868-1951). Other leaders included WILLIAM A. CLARK, owner and editor of the “Arkansas Baptist”; SAMUEL HOWARD FORD, editor of “Ford’s Christian Repository” and several books; JOHN NEWTON HALL, owner and editor of the “American Christian Flag”; and JOSEPH A. SCARBORO, managing editor of the “American Baptist Flag”, author and associational missionary. ALL WERE STRONG ADVOCATES OF “GOSPEL MISSIONS”! Through their work as associational leaders, pastors, and writers these men and others guided the new associations; but none more than Ben Bogard. He was raised and educated in Kentucky; served as pastor in Kentucky, Missouri, Texas and, in Arkansas, at Searcy (1899-1903), Argenta (North Little Rock, 1903-1909) and Antioch Baptist Church in Little Rock (1920-1947); he was founder and president of the Missionary Baptist Seminary (1934), located at the Antioch church. He was a publisher, writer and editor of the “Arkansas Baptist” (with W. A. Clark), “The Baptist Commoner” and (after merger) the “Baptist and Commoner”. As a “bitter” opponent of “conventionism”, Bogard became the primary leader in the organization of the State Association of Arkansas, the General Association, and the American Baptist Association (ABA). Following the “Unification Effort”, led by C. C. Winters and Bogard, the ABA was organized in 1924 from the merger of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas (BMA, 1899), the Baptist General Assembly of Oklahoma (1924) and the old General Association. (Ashcraft, *History of ABA*, pp. 142-47 and 179-240; and L. D. Foreman and Alta Payne, *The Life and Works of Benjamin Marcus Bogard*, 3 vols, 1965.)

The following Landmark writers largely reaffirm the views of the Landmark pioneers, and give reasons for separating from the SBC and forming Landmark associations. These reasons include Gospel Missions, the “episcopacy” of the “Board System” and the “tyranny” of the centralized Convention.

## 3. WRITINGS ADVOCATING LANDMARK ASSOCIATIONS:

1892 Crawford, T. P. : *Churches, to the Front!*

A militant tract published by Crawford in China that launched the Gospel Missions movement; also known as “Crawfordism.”

1901 Bogard, ed: *Pillars of Orthodoxy: Or, Defenders of the Faith*

A collection of Baptist biographies, with selected writings, including A. C. Dayton, James P. Boyce, T. T. Eaton, J. R. Graves, J. B. Jeter, S. H. Ford, J. N. Hall and others.

1903 Scarboro, J. A.: *The Bible, the Baptists and the Board System*

Supports Gospel Missions; opposes the SBC Boards.

- 1908 Bogard: *The Baptist Way Book*  
A text for teaching Baptist (Landmark) doctrine and practice in churches.
- 1914 Bogard: *Old Landmarkism Made Plain*  
A text on Landmark doctrine and practice.
- 1925 Bogard: *Associations Are Scriptural*  
A Biblical justification for ABA and other associations.

See numerous articles and editorials in the following periodicals:

S. H. Ford, ed. *Ford's Christian Repository* (1871-1905)

J. N. Hall, ed. *American Baptist Flag* (1898-1905) and its successor, *Baptist Flag* (1905-1925)

S. H. Slaughter, ed. *Baptist Progress* (1910- )

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Associational Baptist Landmarkism

### Succession and Church Perpetuity

1. *"Perpetuity"*-- Associational Baptist literature on the subject of Baptist succession is in almost virtual agreement with the approaches taken by early and later Landmarkism. Instead of using the term "succession," however, most Associational Baptist writers have preferred the expression "perpetuity." From D. N. Jackson's explanation of the two terms, one may infer why they have preferred this term:
2. *The Meaning of "Perpetuity."*-- Perpetuity of the church is a doctrine cherished by missionary Baptists. By perpetuity is meant that there has never been a day since Christ founded His church when there was no Scriptural church on earth, and that the church shall continue in existence until He shall come again. Church succession is another term denoting perpetuity, implying that churches have succeeded in all ages the one founded by Christ in person. This is a succession of churches, not of the apostles, as taught by the Romish doctrine of "apostolical succession." Roman Catholics hold that their bishops are the successors to the apostles."
3. *What Perpetuity does not Mean.*--Jackson explained also, however, that perpetuity "does not mean that we must link church to church by name across the centuries anymore than we must name each of our ancestors to believe that we descended from Adam. But, to emphasize, it does mean that Scriptural Churches today have lineal descent from the original church, being essentially connected one with another from the first church (Matt. 16:18; 7:24-27; I Cor. 3:11; Isa. 28:16; Eph. 3:21)."

4. *Logic Says Otherwise.*--From the expressions "lineal descent" and "essentially connected," however, one may logically infer that Jackson actually believed in a "chain-link" theory of succession. Moreover, almost all Associational Baptist literature on the subject of perpetuity may be characterized as advocating this theory.
5. *Christ's Veracity.*--Most of the literature begins with Jesus' promise in Matthew 16:18. Bogard stated: "To establish our doctrine and practice by the New Testament is of chief importance." He believed, accordingly, that "the New Testament makes some declarations concerning the history of churches. When our Lord established his church he declared he would build it up, edify it, enlarge it, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18.) [sic]"
6. *The Great Commission and Perpetuity.*--Bogard also maintained that when Jesus gave the commission to His church, He promised "it perpetuity to the end of the world. (Matt. 28:19-20.) [sic]." Bogard also looked to Paul for further support: "Unto him be the glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, through all ages" (Eph. 3:21). He reasoned: "It therefore follows that the church should live in all ages, for there could not be glory in a dead church. Neither should the church apostatize, for there could be no glory in an apostate church..."
7. *Bogard's Logical Conclusion.*-- Bogard then concluded: "The Lord's promise has been kept. There has never been a day since he ascended in the presence of his church, that a church just like the one which saw him ascend could not be found on the earth. History abundantly establishes this position."
8. *Logical Proof of Church Succession.*--Like the early Landmarker Graves, and later Landmarkers Ford and Hall, Associational Baptists have not believed that church perpetuity or succession demands that the name "Baptist" be traced throughout the centuries. The existence of twentieth-century churches which have the "marks" of New Testament churches is proof of perpetuity. Jackson argued: "Why should such a demand be made in the face of all the array of facts that show that the first church was in all essential elements Baptist? For instance, a house built of brick does not require a sign across its facade reading--THIS IS A BRICK HOUSE. Having brick material in it, anyone could see what kind it is. So Christ, the builder of the church, took Baptist material prepared by John the Baptist and built His church. This makes the first church easy to identify." Jarrel, moreover, claimed that "the burden of proof is on opponents of Baptist Church Perpetuity."
9. *Historical Proof of Succession.*--The final point in the presentation of the church succession tenet is logically the citation of specific churches, sects, and movements in history which tend to corroborate the thesis. Like that of early and later Landmarkism, Associational Baptist literature is replete with quotations from non-Baptists whose testimonies purportedly substantiate the successionist claims. Four authors quoted most frequently include the following: (1) The Lutheran historian John Lawrence Mosheim, (2) The Dutch Reformed Church historians Ypeij and J. J. Dermont, (3) The Roman Catholic Cardinal Hosius, and (4) Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples Church.
10. *Three Lineal Lines.*--D. N. Jackson delineated three "lines of descent of Baptists across the century. (a) His **first example** of Baptist descent was "**the Bohemian Line.**" Bohemia

was called Illyricum and Dalmatia in New Testament times (Rom. 15:19; II Tim. 4:10). "It lay across the Adriatic Sea from Italy and Northwest of Greece." Paul preached there in the first century. "Primitive Christianity survived in [the] . . . area [especially in the famous Hercynian forest], the inhabitants of which fleeing there to escape the yoke of Rome."

(b) The **second line** Jackson presented was "**the Welsh Line.**" "The Baptists of America [he continued] are able to boast of a line connecting them with the Welsh Baptists." The Baptist minister John Myles came over from Wales in 1663 and organized Rehoboth church in Massachusetts. In 1701 the Pennepek Baptist Church came over as a body and settled in Pennsylvania.

(c) Jackson's **final example** of lineal descent was "**the Anabaptist Line.**"

(d) Including essentially where earlier successionist historians like G. H. Orchard, J.M. Carroll, and J.T. Christian, Jackson then gave a ninefold process by which the present day Baptists have descended from the first century through these Anabaptist groups. He warned, however, "Bear in mind the names here given which Baptists have borne through the centuries were imposed upon them by their enemies, as our Baptist lineage from the first century is more distinctly traced by the earmarks of doctrine and practice than by names."

## CONCLUSIONS

1. *Church Perpetuity, a Major Belief*--From the present study, one may see easily that the Landmark tenet on church perpetuity has been a major belief in Associational Baptist ecclesiology. It is major because it is believed to be rooted in and demanded by the Bible.
2. *Gospel Missions*--Gospel Missions assigns missions' responsibility to the authority of the individual churches. ABA leans more toward simple Gospel Missions, and BMAA more toward organized missions.
3. *True Church Continuity*--Landmarkism envisions the continuation of the true, NT church, among Baptists who bear the "landmarks" of the early church.
4. *Landmark Writings*--Landmark writings have maintained a general consistency from early to later to contemporary writers, with minor variations--but with less emphasis upon the earlier polemical debates.

**Breakout Session #2 – 1:15-2:20 p.m.**

**Baptist History and Resources**

*B. Landmark Writings*

**Leaders/Conveners** – Philip Bryan and Donald Davidson, faculty Members at Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, Jacksonville, TX 75766.

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Philip Bryan holds degrees from Jacksonville College (A.A), the University of Oklahoma (B.A.), BMA Seminary (B.D.), and Baylor University (M.A., Ph.D.) He also received graduate training at Syracuse University.

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Unless otherwise stated, the primary sources for the materials relating to Landmark doctrines and practices are a master's thesis and a doctoral dissertation prepared by Philip R. Bryan in 1966 and 1973 at Baylor University. Html copies of these documents are on Bryan's web site, as well as a full bibliography for Landmark writings: "A Critique of the English Separatist Descent Theory in Baptist Historiography and "An Analysis of the Ecclesiology of Associational Baptists: 1900-1950," <http://geocities.com/prbryan.geo/>