

# The Baptist Examiner

A nation-wide, independent paper, standing foursquare for the distinguishing doctrines of Baptists, and shunning not to declare all the counsel of God.

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

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## How Pastors Are Bound, Gagged, and Hog-Tied by Apostate Ecclesiastical Machines

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The mistake of the present day religious world is that it makes ecclesiasticism synonymous with Christianity, and the denominational machines synonymous with the kingdom of God.

The title of this message may at first be a little shocking to the uninformed who do not distinguish clearly between ecclesiasticism and Christianity. Christianity centers in Christ. Modern denominationalism is more and more centering in man and human organizations, and therein lies the heart and core of the problem of the impotency of the modern church.

There is no such thing as an ecclesiastical machine in the Scriptures—No, I'll take that back. There is a record of one—just one. It was called the Sanhedrin and was composed of a group of outwardly pious religious men who wanted to dictate the religious policy of the people. Inwardly they were wolves and it was this ecclesiastical machine that crucified the Lord of glory.

I would like to emphasize three important truths in this connection. First, the Lord never founded or sanctioned anything like our present denominational machines. Second, since it was an ecclesiastical machine that crucified the Lord of glory we need not expect any better treatment of our Lord by the present modern, apostate ecclesiastical machines. Third, pastors, and church members should not allow themselves to be bound, gagged, and hog-tied by these organizations, when loyalty to our Lord and God's word is involved.

There are some who say, "We'll stay in our Modernistic denomination and straighten it out." There are two things wrong with that attitude. One is that God commands you to come out and be separate. The other is that staying on the inside to straighten out a modernist machine doesn't work. No one has been able to do it, and no one will ever be able to do what is contrary to God's command—it just doesn't work—never has—never will. Another important fact is that if you are true to God and cry out against the corruption of Modernism, you'll not be able to stay in your apostate organ-

*This article is written, of course, from the standpoint of the Northern Baptist Convention. The conditions it depicts are not so aggravated in the South as they are in the North. But it shows the trend of denominational machinery today everywhere. It shows the fallacy of trying to reform denominational machinery from the inside, and emphasizes the need of separation. The Son of God did not come to this world to reform man-made systems. He planted his own church in the world and gave it a commission. That church is still here with the same commission. It is sufficient for the work Christ commissioned it to do. It is well for God's people to meet (call the meeting what you will) as did "the apostles and elders and brethren" (Acts 15:23) at Jerusalem for the purpose of discussion, counsel, and inspiration. And such a group may properly make such recommendations to the churches as seem good to the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:28) but neither such a group nor any similar agency has any right to dominate the churches or undertake the discharge of the commission Christ entrusted to the churches.—ED.*

ization. You will not be wanted. You'll lose your denominational standing and soon find yourself on the outside if they can freeze you out. With a lot of pastors—well, they'd rather be dead than lose their denominational standing. Something like the woman who'd rather be dead than out of style. But God's styles never change. They were perfect from the start and cannot be improved. So I'd rather be the John the Baptist, Elijah, Daniel, Peter, Paul style of uncompromising messenger, than the pious, pussy-footing, petticoated, pink-lemonade type of preacher who is just as truly ruled by his denominational leaders, as any priest is ruled by the Pope.

The purpose of some of the denominational machines is to get a deed to every church property, a mortgage on every pastor's soul, and a lien on every pastor's message. There are too many pastors who are willing to mortgage their souls to an apostate denominational machine in order to be assured of a meal ticket. Let us illustrate the method used to bind and gag pastors and churches.

The July 25, 1929, issue of "The Ohio Baptist," publishes a report of the "survey committee" which was "Adopted at Cleveland Monday, May 20." The following is an excerpt:

"Any church receiving aid from the State Board toward any PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT must first have inserted in its deed a Reversionary Clause returning the property to the Convention when the church ceases to function as a Baptist church cooperating with the Ohio Baptist Convention."

Let us examine this paragraph carefully and illustrate what it means.

Suppose you are building a church to cost \$100,000. The Convention aids you to the extent of \$1,500, we will say. By virtue of this comparatively small gift, the Convention inserts in your deed a REVERSIONARY CLAUSE.

Now we will suppose that after your church is built and paid for you decide that you are going to be true to God and no longer contribute your missionary money to the Modernistic