

## The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

<http://www.mormonbeliefs.org/>

"Mormon" is a nickname for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They believe in, hope in, rejoice in, and testify of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World. Mormons attest to the validity of the Bible and modern-day revelation and have a core belief in the importance of eternal families. They assert that Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith in 1820 with the express purpose of restoring His Church and gospel in its purity and fulness to the earth. Mormons represent the fourth largest religious denomination in the United States.

<http://www.letusreason.org/LDS12.htm>

### Early History of the Mormon Church

**1805** Joseph Smith, is born in Sharon, Vermont

**1820** Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray concerning which church to join. He had his First Vision of God the Father and Jesus who appeared to him and told him not to join any of the denominational churches. (**Pearl of Great Price**, Joseph Smith 2:3 & 17-19). *other dates given with a different versions of the vision 1832, 1835, 1840, 1842, 1855, and 1879).*

**1823** Sept. 21 An angel called Moroni, a resurrected being who is supposed to be the son of Mormon who was the leader of the Nephites who had previously lived in the Americas. Moroni directed Smith to the hill Cumorah in upstate NY. He could dig and find these golden tablets (plates) which was written in reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics a sacred record of the people who lived on the American continent prior to the time of the Indians. Joseph examined the plates once a year until 1827.

**1826** March, He was found guilty of the misdemeanor of "glass looking" by Justice Albert Neely (claimed to find treasures and lost property by looking into a hat containing seer stones)

**1827** Sept. 22, Angel Moroni gives Smith the Golden Plates and instructs him on how to begin the translation process which will later become the **Book of Mormon** .

**1828** June; Joseph Smith joined the Methodist church but was given an ultimatum of either withdrawing his name or standing an investigation. He withdrew his name. "We (members of the church) thought it was a disgrace to the church to have a practicing necromancer, a dealer in enchantments and bleeding ghosts, in it." (*The Anboy Journal* p. 1 June 11, 1879)

Question? Why Did Smith try to join this church after he already received the revelation that they were all abominable? "I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all *wrong*; and the Personage who addressed me said that all *their creeds were* and abomination in *his sight*, that those professors were all *corrupt*.... (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith--History 1:19, Page 49) Wouldn't this be considered disobedience and even joining what he called the apostates.

**1829** Smith finishes translation of the Golden Plates, publishes **Book of Mormon**. (Smith did this by looking into a hat with a seer stone "peepstones", prior to using this method of translating the book of Mormon He would place his face into the hat and see visions of buried treasure, lost property, of which he was formerly convicted of glass looking.)

**1829** "After the completion of the translation of the **Book of Mormon** in 1829, the angel (Moroni) again appeared to Joseph Smith and received back the plates into his keeping," (*Essentials In Church History*, Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 68).

**1829** May, John the Baptist allegedly conferred the priesthood of Aaron upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdrey.

And baptized Smith to accomplish the restoring the true church by preaching the true restored gospel which, had been lost from the earth.

**1829** Peter, James, and John, appeared and conferred the priesthood of Melchizedek upon Joseph Smith and Oliver

Cowdrey. D and C 7. says "John the beloved shall live until hard at the Lord's work bringing souls to Christ." the Lord comes. According to Mormon teachings, four apostles are to stay alive until Jesus second coming. History shows they all died. Many Mormon leaders still claim they have received spiritistic contacts from their dead "masters" Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, other church presidents (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol., p. 369; Vol. 7, p. 240; Crowther, op. cit., p. 60)

**1830** April 6, Joseph Smith, Jr. founded the church called the Church of Christ. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, David Whitmer, p. 73)

**1830** March, first publication of the Book of Mormon.

**1831** Moves to Kirtland, OH., Temple was commenced to be built on March, 27, 1836.

**1833** Smiths First 65 revelations are printed in Book of Commandments.

**1834** Why did Smith change the Name of the Church after God already told him 4 years before what to name it? "In June, 1829, the Lord gave us the name by which we must call the church, being the same as He gave the Nephites. We obeyed His commandment, and called it The Church of Christ until 1834, when, through the influence of Sydney Rigdon, the name of the church was changed to The Church of the Latter Day Saints, dropping out the name of Christ entirely..." (An Address to All Believers In Christ Witmer, p. 73). Now to be called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

**1834** New First Vision information on Joseph Smith's age. "I shall, therefore, pass over that, till I come to the 15th year of his life," (Vol. 1, *Messenger and Advocate*, Dec. 1834, p. 42)

**1844** June 27, mob attacks jail in Carthage, Ill., Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum are killed. Smith was smuggled in a pistol and he defended himself During the attack, Joseph Smith killed two men and wounded a third with a small pistol he had smuggled into him. (History of the Church, Vol. 7, p. 103). Hardly a martyr as the describe him.

Brigham Young was a member of the church's Council of Twelve Apostles. When Smith was killed, Young succeeded him as leader of the church

**1844** Several splinter groups break off from main group in Nauvoo during the next few years (Divergent Paths of the Restoration).

**1846** In February Brigham Young lead the Mormons out of Nauvoo, IL, choosing the site which is now Salt Lake City.

**1847** July 24, Mormons arrived in Salt Lake City.

**1847** BrighamYoung officially becomes the second prophet of the LDS Church. (Deseret News Church Almanac, 19n, p. 92).

**1852** Brigham Young teaches Adam-God doctrine. "When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael the Archangel the Ancient of Days! About whom holy men have written and spoken -- He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 50).

**1855** Doctrine & Covenants, Brigham Young preaches in a sermon. "Now if any of you will deny the plurality of wives, and continue to do so, I promise that you will be damned."(Journal of Discourses vol.3 p.266) (Deseret News, Nov. 14, 1855).

**1861** Brigham Young said, "Some years ago (9 to be exact) I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our Father and God. That will be a curse to many of the elders of Israel because of their folly with regard to it. They yet grovel in darkness and will. It is one of the most glorious revealments of the economy of heaven. Yet the world holds it in derision." (*Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young*, Oct 8, 1861).

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/society/A0859200.html>

## History

### Founding of the Church

The history of the Mormons began with Smith's claim that golden tablets containing the Book of Mormon had been revealed to him, and his establishment of a headquarters for his organization at Kirtland, Ohio (1831). His following grew rapidly, particularly from the intensive missionary activity in which members engaged, both in the U.S. and abroad. Stakes of Zion, as the Mormons called their settlements, were started in W Missouri, and Smith prepared to make the region the permanent home of his people. However, the intolerance of gentile neighbors toward the Mormons's communal economy and unconventional belief system led to persecution and violence. Finally, in 1838–39, Gov. Lillburn W. Boggs ordered their expulsion (see also Doniphan, Alexander William).

### Violence in Illinois

The Mormons sought a new Zion in the Illinois town of Nauvoo. There, they received a charter giving them virtual autonomy, with the right to maintain their own militia, their own court, and the power to pass any laws not in conflict with the state or federal constitutions. The town expanded as converts poured in from abroad, and in 1842 it was the largest and most powerful town in Illinois. The growing wealth and strength of the Mormon community caused envy and fear among their neighbors.

At about that time, Joseph Smith, as mayor of Nauvoo, ordered the suppression of church dissidents. Violence resulted, and Smith called out the Nauvoo militia to protect the city. For this, he and his brother, Hyrum, were arrested by Illinois authorities (June 24, 1844), and charged with treason. They were jailed in Carthage, Ill., where three days later they were murdered by an angry mob.

After that many Mormons fled, dissension and suspicion were rife, and there was debate over the succession to Smith's leadership. Possible choices included another brother, William Smith, and several prominent leaders, notably Sidney Rigdon, James Jesse Strang, Lyman Wight, and Brigham Young, whom the church leaders ultimately chose.

## The Mormons under Brigham Young

Young proved a forceful and able leader who dominated and worked for the good of his people. Again, it became necessary for the Mormons to find a home. Under Young's guidance, a remote spot was chosen, the valley of the Great Salt Lake in what is now Utah. Those who rejected Young's leadership and claimed the succession for a son of Joseph Smith declined to accompany the main body to Utah; they ultimately constituted themselves into a separate church (see [Community of Christ](#)).

In July, 1847, the first settlers reached what is now [Salt Lake City](#) and began an agricultural community. The first few years were extremely difficult, but the organization of the Mormons for community welfare, their great industry, and the determined leadership of Young made for their success. Through extensive irrigation, farming prospered.

In 1849, the Mormons wished to have their communities admitted to the Union as the State of Deseret, but the area became Utah Territory instead. Brigham Young was appointed territorial governor and superintendent of Indian affairs, but Mormon isolation was destroyed. Non-Mormons filtered in, resented by the Mormons. Young's formal announcement in 1852 of the doctrine of plural marriage, based on a vision of Joseph Smith in 1843, set the Mormons further apart from their fellow Americans. Thereafter, polygamy was luridly discussed in newspapers across the country. The antagonism was very strong in the 1850s, and when Col. Albert S. Johnston was sent out with an army force in 1857, Young prepared to defend the Mormon state. The [Utah War](#) did not rise to serious proportions, but the bitterness of feeling was shown after the massacre of the members of a wagon train at [Mountain Meadows](#) in 1857, for which the Mormons were blamed.

The question of plural marriage was the important point in Utah's bid for statehood. Congress passed laws against polygamy aimed solely at Utah. Despite persecution, the Mormon community was a thoroughly established commonwealth by the time of Brigham Young's death in 1877. Statehood was finally granted after Mormon president Wilford Woodruff made a statement (1890) withdrawing church sanction of polygamy: Utah entered the Union as the 45th state in 1896. Since then, the church has spread beyond Utah, becoming truly international in the late 20th cent. when church membership roughly doubled. More than half of all Mormons now live outside the United States.

A number of Mormons, generally referred to as fundamentalists, continue to believe in plural marriage, either as members of a splinter church or quietly within the mainstream church, which excommunicates those who adhere to the practice. Some 10,000 people in North America belong to the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the largest of the splinter faiths. Many of its members live in SW Utah and NW Arizona.

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## Lutheran Church

<http://www.elca.org/who-we-are/history/lutheran-roots-in-america.aspx>

### Martin Luther

The ELCA, along with other Lutheran churches, can trace its roots directly to the Protestant Reformation that took place in Europe in the 16th century. Martin Luther, a German monk, became aware of differences between the Bible and church practices of the day. His writings, lectures and sermons inspired others to protest church practices and call for reform.

By the late 1500s the Reformation had spread throughout Europe. Followers of Martin Luther's teachings were labeled "Lutherans" by their enemies and adopted the name themselves. Lutheran beliefs became widespread, especially in Germany and the Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland), later spreading throughout the world as early explorers took their faith with them on their voyages. Lutheranism came to the Americas that way; some of the earliest settlers in the Americas were Scandinavian, Dutch and German Lutherans. Their first permanent colony was in the West Indies, and by the 1620s there were settlements of Lutherans along the Hudson River in what are now the states of New York and New Jersey.

As people migrated to the New World they continued to speak and worship in their native languages and use resources from their countries of origin. Europeans from a particular region would migrate to a particular region in America and start their own churches. As the number of these congregations grew, scattered groups would form a "synod" or church body, and as the nation expanded so did the number of Lutheran church bodies.

By the late 1800s the 20 or so Lutheran church bodies that would eventually merge to become The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America had been established. Massive immigration from traditionally Lutheran countries had started, and between 1840 and 1875 alone 58 Lutheran synods were formed in the U.S.

There were revivalist and confessional movements within Lutheran churches in Europe and in America, and as Lutherans migrated to this country they were influenced by the evangelicalism of various Protestant sects. Consequently, a wide variety of expressions of Lutheranism developed in North America. Nineteenth-century Lutherans still looked to their homelands to supply pastors and worship materials, but as second and third generation Americans spoke English more than German, Norwegian or Danish, a need arose to provide formal theological training, hymnals, catechisms and other materials

### Cooperative Work Begins

Immigration of Lutherans continued to be heavy through the first two decades of the 20th century, and the first significant merger of church bodies happened in 1917 when three ethnic Norwegian synods joined to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA) and in 1918 when three ethnic German synods joined to form the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA). With World War I taking place, the next logical step in denominational consolidation was to form a joint agency of these two large synods and other smaller ones in order to provide relief. The National Lutheran Commission had been formed in 1917 because the churches were concerned about the spiritual well-being of U.S. service personnel being sent into combat. In a short time 60,000 laymen were involved in the relief effort, which proved a vast and complex enterprise. The laymen stayed active in the relief and ministry of the commission, but formed their own organization, the Lutheran Brotherhood, which supported the work of the commission by building facilities and supplying equipment. After the war the Lutheran Brotherhood continued to develop lay leadership and to foster intersynodical relationships.

The various Lutheran churches continued to work together closely, but were limited to soldiers' and sailors' welfare efforts. There was a growing need to provide missionaries to America's expanding industrial centers and to render aid to Lutherans in Europe, and by September 1918 the National Lutheran Council (NLC) was formed to meet those needs. Representation on the council was proportionate, based on membership figures of participating church bodies.

### The Early 20th Century

For the first 12 years of its existence, the NLC concentrated on overseas relief programs, then from about 1930 through the entry of the United States into World War II it developed its domestic programs. In 1945 it reorganized and expanded the work it did on behalf of the participating churches. In addition to the refugee and chaplaincy work, the council provided coordination of new congregations, town and country ministries, student services, public relations and uniform statistical reporting, among other services. In 1930 three churches with German origins had merged to form the American Lutheran Church, which had become one of the eight member churches in the NLC, along with the ULCA. As cooperative work proved beneficial to all the participants, other areas of commonality naturally surfaced. In the late '40s and '50s there were proposals by the ULCA to merge all the member churches of the NLC, and although they failed, in 1952 the American Lutheran Conference Joint Union Committee

presented the document "The United Testimony" to its member churches, agreeing they were in "essential agreement" with the positions of the ULCA and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The next round of mergers occurred in the early '60s.

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In 1960 the American Lutheran Church (German), United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian) merged to form The American Lutheran Church (ALC). The Lutheran Free Church (Norwegian), which had dropped out of merger negotiations, came into the ALC in 1963.

In 1962 the ULCA (German, Slovak and Icelandic) joined with the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church (Swedish), Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and American Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish) to form the Lutheran Church in America (LCA).

Meanwhile, the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) 1957 resolve to study contemporary Roman Catholicism with the possibility of entering "interconfessional conversations," and the reforms proposed by the Second Vatican Council, led to a series of theological dialogues. Lutherans also accepted the invitation of Reformed churches (Presbyterian) in America to begin discussions of possible pulpit and altar fellowship. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), not a member church of the NLC or the LWF, participated in these ecumenical dialogues at the national level, and joined the NLC churches in 1967 to form the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. (LCUSA).

### **A New Player Takes the Field**

The LCMS, firmly rooted in confessional conservatism and relatively unchanged since its organization in 1846-47 as "The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States," held to a belief in the inerrancy of the Bible.

"Historical criticism," an understanding that the Bible must be understood in the cultural context of the times in which it was written, was gaining ground in both Europe and America. Trouble was brewing in the LCMS as some seminary professors began to adopt historical critical methods in their classrooms. A new seminary president with experience in inter-Lutheran and ecumenical affairs was challenged by the new conservative synodical president. A three-year investigation ensued and the 1973 convention voted to censure the faculty. In 1974 the seminary president was suspended and many seminarians and faculty left the seminary to continue their work in another setting, forming "Seminex," a seminary-in-exile. Meanwhile, a moderate movement in LCMS called Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM) was formed.

The issue of whether or not to ordain graduates of Seminex led to the removal of four district presidents at the 1975 convention, and by 1976 the moderates had gathered forces to form the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). Approximately 300 congregations and 110,000 people moved into the AELC from LCMS with a stated goal from the beginning of promoting unity with the ALC and LCA.

In 1977 the LCMS decision to place fellowship with ALC "in protest" along with the AELC's "Call to Lutheran Union" nudged the three church bodies, ALC, LCA and AELC, toward merger. The 1978 ALC and LCA conventions adopted resolutions aimed at the creation of a single church body. The AELC joined them, and the ALC-LCA Committee on Church Cooperation became the Committee on Lutheran Unity (CLU) in January of 1979.

Presiding Bishop David Preus (ALC), Bishop James Crumley (LCA) and President and later Bishop William Kohn (AELC) met with the CLU over the next 16 months, and the 1980 conventions of all three church bodies adopted a two-year study process.

Documents were in the hands of congregational leaders by November of that year, and by 1982 all the pieces were in place for the three churches to have simultaneous conventions so that, on September 8, 1982, with telephone hook-ups so each could hear the others' votes, all three church bodies voted to proceed on the path toward a new Lutheran church.

## **Southern Baptist Beginnings**

by **Robert A. Baker**

Southern Baptist beginnings were filled with exciting events. To capture this excitement requires describing Baptist beginnings in America, why the Southern Baptist Convention was organized, why some call it a different kind of Baptist body, and how it got so large. The story will go as far as the founding of the Sunday School Board in 1891, which was a very important event in Southern Baptist life.

### **The First Baptists in America**

Most early Baptists in America originally came from England in the seventeenth century when the king and the state church persecuted them for holding their distinctive religious views. Baptists like Roger Williams and John Clarke migrated to New England in the 1630s; Elias Keach and others entered the Middle Colonies in the 1680s; and still others purchased land in the Southern Colonies in the 1680s and 1690s.

The oldest Baptist church in the South, First Baptist Church, Charleston, South Carolina, was organized in Kittery, Maine, in 1682, under the leadership of William Screven. The church moved to South Carolina a few years later. A Baptist church was formed in the Virginia colony in 1715 through the preaching of Robert Norden, and one in North Carolina in 1727 through the ministry of Paul Palmer. By 1740, there were probably only eight Baptist churches in these three colonies with no more than 300 or 400 members.

A great revival affecting all denominations swept through the American colonies about 1740. Shortly thereafter, Baptists in the South began a period of rapid growth. The principal Baptist leaders in this revival were Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, who were called Separate Baptists. In 1755, these two Baptist preachers from Connecticut and a few of their followers organized a church at Sandy Creek, North Carolina. During the next few years they preached zealously in all the southern colonies, stormed the new western frontier, and provided patterns of church life that Southern Baptists still follow.

This rapid spread of Baptists in the South was strongly opposed by the churches supported by public taxes. In Virginia, especially, many Baptist preachers were whipped and imprisoned in the decade before the American Revolution. Baptists soon became active patriots in the Revolutionary War. With their demands for religious liberty, they included a cry for political liberty. They loyally supported patriots like Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Washington, and received their praise. Baptists in the South played an important role in securing the adoption of religious liberty in Virginia. 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 new Constitution of the United States.

After the close of the Revolutionary War, Baptists in the southern states grew steadily during the remainder of the 1700s. A second great revival broke out among several denominations west of the Allegheny Mountains just at the turn of the century. Baptist churches in the South gained many new members as a result of this revival.

### **Baptist Organization Beyond the Churches**

Baptists in America, like their English Baptist forefathers, desired the larger fellowship and united strength for Christian tasks that could come only through joining hands. In 1707, Baptists around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, organized the first Baptist association in America by sending messengers from nearby churches. The second association, a daughter of the first, was formed in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1751. After this, the number of associations began to increase rapidly.

At first the principal functions of the associations were to provide a larger fellowship and to allow counsel concerning common problems facing the churches. By common understanding, associations had no authority over the churches which affiliated with them. Some Baptists, however, were not willing to relate to an association for fear that their churches might lose some of their freedom and authority. When the Philadelphia Association began a home missions program in 1755, many churches viewed this as another way in which the associations might rob them of their freedom. They began to consider other ways to do mission work which would safeguard the authority of the churches.

One of these new methods came into being in 1792 when William Carey led in the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society in England. This kind of missionary body would make it possible for individuals to work together in missions or any other Christian task without surrendering any church authority. Called the society method, it differed from the older associational method by removing the churches from the supervision of the associations in missionary activity. Under this new plan, any Baptists interested in foreign missions could organize an independent society for foreign missions whose membership would consist of those who would make a financial gift for foreign missions. Similarly, those Baptists interested in home missions could organize another independent society for that purpose, or another society could be organized in this way for any kind of Christian work. Massachusetts Baptists adopted such a plan in 1802. Within a decade, most of the associations had turned their missionary programs over to independent missionary societies.

A larger challenge soon faced Baptists in America. In 1812, Adoniram and Ann Judson and Luther Rice sailed to India as missionaries for

another denomination. En route, they studied the Bible and other books carefully, concluding that Baptist beliefs were closer to the New Testament teachings than their former views. All three were baptized in India. They desired to become missionaries for Baptists of the United States, but at this time there was no Baptist foreign mission society in the nation. Local societies were formed in the North and the South to meet the immediate needs of these new Baptist foreign missionaries.

Then, on May 18, 1814, thirty-three messengers representing Baptists in America met at Philadelphia and formed a national foreign mission society called the General Missionary Convention. Meeting only once every three years, this body was sometimes called the Triennial Convention. The Convention was organized on the society pattern (that is, organizing a separate society for each Christian ministry), although southern leaders sought for several years to change it into the associational type (that is, one denominational body fostering several different Christian ministries). Baptists in America formed a second society in 1824 for tract publication and distribution. In 1832, they organized a home mission society. Seemingly, these Baptists had permanently united on the society model for Christian work.

### **The Southern Baptist Convention Organized**

When Baptists in this country formed the first of their three national societies in 1814, many of their leaders recognized that there were numerous social, cultural, economic, and political differences between the businessmen of the North, the farmers of the West, and the planters of the South. These differences had already brought much rivalry between the several sections of the new nation. Each section continued to revive old colonial disagreements and wrestled with questions about how the new constitution should be interpreted, what constituted the final legal power, and similar problems.

Perhaps most critical of all was the slavery issue. This practice had been forced upon the colonies by England early in the seventeenth century against the protests of Northerners and Southerners. Northern merchants, however, soon sought the profit involved in importing slaves from Africa. Southern planters, the only ones able to use large numbers of unskilled laborers on large plantations in a relatively warm climate, helped to prolong this evil. At the height of this system, however, two-thirds of the white families of the South owned no slaves at all, and Baptists (who were generally of the lower economic status) were probably less involved than this.

The same moral blindness that caused a minority of northern businessmen to purchase and import slaves from Africa and finance their sale to southern planters was displayed in the South in continuing this evil institution. The same arguments concerning the right of secession from the federal union that were debated by the South in 1860 had been vigorously used by the northeastern states a generation earlier in the Hartford Convention. The same political frenzy that finally brought all of these issues into civil conflict in 1861 dominated equally the New England merchant, the western farmer, and the southern planter.

These tensions were already building at the very time when Baptists united in the three national societies for Christian work. Naturally, Baptist unity was affected by such tensions. Furthermore, the meetings of these societies between 1814 and 1845 revealed some basic differences in the thinking of northern and southern Baptists.

Southern leaders, for one thing, desired a stronger denominational unity than the society plan afforded, but were unable to achieve it. In addition, just three years after the organization of the national home mission body in 1832, many Baptist leaders of the South openly urged the formation of a separate southern body for home missions. They believed that southern mission needs were not being met by the northern-based society. A separate southern home mission body was actually organized in 1839, but it died after three years. In his history of the Southern Baptist Convention, W. W. Barnes expressed the view that these differences between northern and southern Baptists would have brought separation eventually, even if there had been no slavery-abolition issue. However, when the "slave states" voted as a bloc in Congress (and particularly in the Senate), threatening to upset the political balance, the slavery issue became a political football as well as a moral issue.

The meetings of the three Baptist national societies in the 1840s brought angry debates between Northerners and Southerners. These debates concerned the interpretation of the constitutions of the societies on slavery, the right of Southerners to receive missionary appointments, the authority of a denominational society to discipline church members, and the neglect of the South in the appointment of missionaries. The stage was set for separation.

In 1844, Georgia Baptists asked the Home Mission Society to appoint a slaveholder to be a missionary in Georgia. After much discussion, the appointment was declined. A few months later, the Alabama Baptist Convention asked the Foreign Mission Society if they would appoint a slaveholder as a missionary. When the society said no, Virginia Baptists called for Baptists of the South to meet at Augusta, Georgia, in early May, 1845, for the purpose of consulting "on the best means of promoting the Foreign Mission cause, and other interests of the Baptist denomination in the South."

Thus, on May 8, 1845, about 293 Baptist leaders of the South gathered at the First Baptist Church, Augusta, Georgia, representing over 365,000 Baptists. They concluded, with expressions of regret from their own leaders and from distinguished northern Baptist leaders, that more could be accomplished in Christian work by the organization in the South of a separate Baptist body for missionary work. The Methodists in the South had already separated over the issue of slavery, and southern Presbyterians would do so later.

Southern Baptist leaders noted that Paul and Barnabas had disagreed over the use of John Mark in mission service, and "two lines of service were opened for the benefit of the churches." These leaders hoped that "with no sharpness of contention, with no bitterness of spirit, . . . we may part asunder and open two lines of service to the heathen and the destitute."

On May 10, 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention was provisionally organized under a new constitution, which was ratified the following year in Richmond, Virginia. In their address to the public, Convention president William B. Johnson and other Southern Baptist leaders pointed out that Baptists North and South were still brethren; that separation involved only the home and foreign mission societies and did not include the third national society for tract publication; and that this new organization would permit them to have a body that would be willing to appoint Southerners to home and foreign mission fields.

At the 1845 meeting, Southern Baptists were faced not only with the question of whether to organize a separate body but also with the problem of what kind. Baptists, like other denominations which give final authority to the local churches, have had difficulty in trying to form an effective general body without threatening the local authority. This was the reason that the association-type plan had been viewed with suspicion by some churches, resulting in the adoption of the society plan for missionary and other Christian work.

In safeguarding the authority of the churches, however, the society plan made it difficult to secure unity and effectiveness in denominational work. Southern Baptists, at their meeting in 1845, deliberately rejected the method of having a separate society for each kind of Christian service. They chose instead to follow the more centralized pattern of the older associational plan to form only one general convention closely related to the churches for all Christian ministries. They felt that they could provide safeguards in Convention operation that would protect the authority of the local churches. Rather than form independent societies for Christian ministries, Southern Baptists elected a board of managers to supervise foreign missions and another to supervise home missions, both under the authority of the Convention. Other boards for additional Christian ministries would be formed later by the Convention.

After 1845, Northern Baptists moved even farther toward the society type of organization until 1907-08, after which they began experimenting with a modified associational type of convention. Southern Baptists continued to move toward an associational-type body until 1931 when, by constitutional action, practically all of the remaining society-type characteristics were eliminated from their convention.

### **Expansion and Growth (1845-91)**

The Civil War, Reconstruction, continued sectional rivalry, depressions and inflation, the withdrawal of blacks from the white churches, internal doctrinal conflicts, perplexing organizational questions, and—despite these things—remarkable growth and expansion in Christian ministries made up the story of Southern Baptists until 1891.

Civil war totally disrupted all of the programs of the Convention, while Reconstruction (until 1877) delayed the return to normalcy. Although the slavery-abolition issue had disappeared, sharp sectional differences in other forms continued to mar the fellowship and cooperation of all Baptists in America. The question of reunion was raised by Northern Baptists after the civil conflict had ended, but Southern Baptists declined to return to the society-type denominational bodies they had left in 1845. Despite this, the Home Mission Society of the North carried on a fruitful program of missions, education, and church, assistance among both blacks and whites in the South during this period. This active work in the South by the northern society provided a formidable rival for the Southern Baptist Convention. Not until the 1880s was the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board able to claim the southern field as its base.

Landmarkism, another important movement in Southern Baptist history, developed in the 1850s from the views of J. R. Graves. He migrated from Vermont to the South bringing with him the typical New England Baptist fear of conventions. His ideas were reflected in various severe controversies during the remainder of the century.

Meanwhile, the work of the two original boards of the Convention showed good progress. In 1846, after the first year of operation, the Foreign Mission Board reported that only two missionaries had been appointed to one field (China) and that receipts had totaled only \$11,735. By 1891, however, the board had raised a total of almost \$2,000,000 and had increased the number of missionaries to ninety-one serving in six fields: China, Africa, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, and Japan.

One of these missionaries in China was Lottie Moon. In 1887, she appealed to Southern Baptist women to make a special Christmas offering for foreign missions. In the following year, the newly-organized Woman's Missionary Union set a goal of \$2,000 for this cause and raised \$3,315. This was the small beginning of an annual Christmas offering that has raised more than \$1,000,000,000 for foreign missions.

The Home Mission Board encountered many problems in its first half century of life. Despite adverse conditions, this board made excellent progress. In its first year, it reported seven missionaries and receipts of \$1,824, but by 1891 the number of missionaries had increased to 407 and the receipts for that year to \$199,251.

In addition to these two original boards, the Convention elected two other boards during this period, neither of which survived. In 1851, a Bible Board was formed at Nashville, Tennessee, but it was dissolved during the Civil War. From 1863 to 1873, the Convention fostered the first Sunday School Board at Greenville, South Carolina, but it was a casualty of the postwar financial crisis in 1873.



Some Southern Baptists desired to carry on ministries which the Convention preferred not to include as boards. Four society-type bodies were organized outside of the Convention between 1845 and 1891 to support these ministries. A Southern Baptist Publication Society was organized in 1847 and a Southern Baptist Sunday School Union in 1857, but neither survived the Civil War. In 1859, an Education Convention opened the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Greenville, South Carolina. Forced to close during the Civil War, the seminary resumed classes at the close of hostilities, moving to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1877.

The fourth organization developed outside of the board structure was Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention. After many years of activity on the local and state levels, in 1888 Southern Baptist women formed a southwide organization, with Annie W. Armstrong as the first executive secretary. In the following three years, this organization demonstrated its deep commitment to missions, a harbinger of great things to come in the next period.

The close of this period of Southern Baptist beginnings occurred in 1891. Southern Baptists did not separate from the American Baptist Publication Society of Philadelphia at the time the Southern Baptist Convention was formed. This northern society continued to publish books for Southern Baptist writers, provide tracts, and furnish Southern Baptists with Sunday School quarterlies, supplies, and helps for Sunday School teachers. It had many friends among Southern Baptists. When southern leaders in the 1880s proposed the formation of a separate Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, there was immediate resistance from many Southern Baptist leaders. When J. M. Frost, a Virginia pastor, declared in an article in Baptist papers in 1890 that he intended to push for a separate Sunday School Board, he was opposed by a large majority of southern leaders and editors. Nevertheless, after many debates and some sensitive confrontations, Southern Baptists formed their present Sunday School Board [now LifeWay Christian Resources] in 1891 with headquarters at Nashville, Tennessee.

The formation of this board marked a new era for Southern Baptists. It signaled the move of the Convention toward becoming a truly denominational body. Through its promotion and financing of many ministries, its development of effective methods for church growth and training, and its unifying effect by providing a common literature for all Southern Baptists, the Sunday School Board rapidly fostered a strong denominational unity that became an important factor in the geographical expansion of Southern Baptists in the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, the growth of the constituency of the Convention between 1845 and 1891 was substantial. From 365,346 members in 4,395 churches in 1845, Convention affiliation increased to 1,282,220 members in 16,654 churches by 1891. Scores of new ministries had been undertaken by the Convention, and a developing denominational unity gave the promise of effective cooperation through the years ahead.

*Robert A. Baker (1910-1992) was professor of church history, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.*