

## SOME FACTS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF THE REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

By Rev. Handley C. Mullen  
(Continued)

Perhaps, this is as good a place as any to introduce the two resolutions of the Free Christian Conferences which culminated in the final separation.

The first one I copied verbatim from an old story of F. C. B. minutes for 1886. The Conference met in Saint John West, Charlotte Street Church in October, 1886. Resolution regarding Entire and Instantaneous Sanctification:

"Your executive wish to express their deep regret over the doctrinal trouble, and with sincere desire to prevent further division, and hoping to restore in whole or in part the union of former days make the following recommendations:

1. Resolved, That the ministers of this Conference who have changed their views and teachings on the doctrine of sanctification from that held and taught by the denomination, and all who now believe in entire and instantaneous sanctification as it has been taught amongst us by some of late, be affectionately requested to prayerfully consider the whole question, with a view to returning to the belief of the denomination, and restoration of doctrinal harmony.

2. Resolved, That this Conference cannot ordain any man holding the views on sanctification condemned in this paper.

3. Resolved, That this Conference cannot license to preach any man holding such views.

4. Resolved, That this Conference recommend the District Meetings of the denomination not to grant license to any persons holding these views.

5. Resolved, That the Conference request the churches of the denomination not to license to preach any man holding these views.

6. Resolved, That the Conference recommend all the churches not to elect any person holding these views to any office in any of their respective churches, nor to appoint any of them Trustees of Church property.

7. Resolved, That the Recording Secretary notify the District Meetings and churches, through their clerks, of this decision."

"Signed G. A. Hartley,  
Chairman of Executive."

This resolution as recommended from the executive was passed by the Conference on October 12, 1886, showing vote of 47 to 23.

It will be noted that no other charges were preferred against these men other than their crime of preaching that a man could be saved from all sin and be made pure in heart through the blood of Christ in this life.

There was no heresy charged regarding the Virgin Birth, The Atonement, or the Resurrection, nor any question about the truth of the Bible.

This memorable resolution was ever afterwards referred to as "The Deliverance of Conference." When this "Deliverance" was passed the F. C. Baptist Church was using and recommending to their ministerial students a work on Theology written by one John J. Butler, D.D., of New Hampshire, and published in 1861 by the Free Will Baptist Printing Establishment, Dover, N. H. His chapter on Sanctification was clear and explicit and in accordance with Wesleyan teachings. Wesley, Fletcher, and Upham were quoted along with plain Scripture support to show that regenerated believers could be wholly sanctified as a second definite crisis. This book had been adopted by the F. C. Baptists and was standard among them for many years. Conference after conference had sanctioned its

teaching, especially the chapter on sanctification.

One quotation will suffice: "WE therefore recommend that Conference request all our young brethren to procure "Butler's Theology" and strive to become thoroughly acquainted with doctrines therein treated, which is the best exposition of the leading sentiments held by our denomination of which we have knowledge."

Once, the chapter on holiness was read before the conference and no one denied that it was the doctrine of their church, but when some folk really found "the blessing" and began to publish it, the battle was soon in array, and the question brought to vote as stated. Later they claimed it never was a doctrine of their church and discarded Butler entirely.

I shall quote a few selections from Butler's Theology so the reader may judge for himself whether the believers in entire sanctification were astray, either as to the denomination or the Scriptures: "The holiness, sanctification, or perfection required of believers, is consistent with their condition as men—not the perfection of Adam before the fall, not a state of infallibility or of freedom from temptation. Mr. Wesley never approved of the phrase 'sinless perfection' as applied to men in a militant state." The renewed man soon finds he has a warfare before him—numerous subtle and powerful foes to contend with—both external and internal." The prayer of the Apostle is highly significant in I. Thess. 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." "God does not desire the existence of sin in any of His creatures. All sin is against His will and He does all He wisely can for its prevention and removal . . ." The passages of Scripture which teach this sentiment are too numerous to be cited. We then may rest assured that if any moral being is not saved from all sin, it is in no sense nor degree the fault of God." "God has made provision for entire deliverance from sin, and sanctification to Himself. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If then any are not wholly sanctified, it is not for want of gracious and ample provision for that purpose." "The soul must be entirely free from sin before it can enter Heaven. When will this be done? After death? Then we must admit a doctrine of purgatory." "Death cannot take away sin, for it is but a physical change. Sin pertains to the soul. The sanctification of the heart is a moral work, and wrought only on condition of our exercising faith in the blood of Christ." "The same grace that can sanctify a believer at the moment of death may sanctify a day, a month, a year, or longer period before death, and preserve the subject blameless unto the coming of Christ." "Hence we consider it the believer's privilege to be wholly sanctified—body, soul and spirit, to God."

The conference vote in 1886 settled the attitude of the denomination but did not change the views of those who had experienced it.

I have in my possession a small booklet bearing the name of Wm. Kinghorn, but Rev. W. B. Wiggins claimed he wrote it while Mr. Kinghorn "fathered it." Its title is "The Doctrine of Sanctification as Taught by the F. C. Baptist Standards of Faith versus The Last Deliverance of Conference." It is quite a lengthy discussion which clearly shows that there was a wide deliverance between the statements of the Conference and Butler's Theology. It should be noted that there was a discussion on the doctrine of sanctification in the Conference besides the resolution quoted that defined their attitude toward those who taught it.

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