

IV. F. B. Meyer

F. B. Meyer, who had “attended and enjoyed the Broadlands Conference, Oxford Convention, and Brighton Convention,”¹ was a key figure in the spread of Keswick theology in Baptist churches. Meyer was a pastor who was “once, President of the Baptist Union,” at a time after C. H. Spurgeon had already pulled out of the Union because of the heresies that were filling it. Meyer was also “a prolific author . . . [although] [h]is books are not of a very scholarly nature.”² Nonetheless, he was a definitive Keswick writer.³ “[R]aised by a Quaker grandmother, [he] was also much influenced by . . . Hannah Pearsall Smith.”⁴ It “is doubtful whether any other Keswick leader ever did more than Dr. Meyer to make the distinctive Keswick message known throughout the world,”⁵ as he “spoke at twenty-six Keswick conventions as well as at important regional conventions, and encouraged Keswick teaching within the Baptist denomination through a Prayer Union, which attracted wide ministerial support . . . [and] became Keswick’s leading international representative,” making nearly twenty visits to the United States and Canada, addressing meetings in South Africa, and engaging in tours in the Middle and Far East,⁶ where he preached Keswick theology to the heathen. “F. B. Meyer . . . was Keswick’s best known international representative . . . h[e] travel[led] on behalf of the holiness movement . . . [in] South Africa, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Ceylon, China, Nigeria, and the United States” just between 1907-1910, being away “from Britain for several months at a time”⁷ and traveling over twenty-five thousand miles spreading the Keswick teaching.⁸ “He introduced Keswick teaching into the Baptist denomination,” so that, largely through him, “Keswick’s influence . . . sprea[d]”⁹ beyond its largely

¹ Pg. 126, *Let Go and Let God? A Survey and Analysis of Keswick Theology*, Naselli.

² Pg. 182, *So Great Salvation*, Barabas.

³ Pg. 47, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall

⁴ Pg. 152, *Changed by Grace: V. C. Kitchen, the Oxford Group, and A.A.*, Glenn Chesnut. New York, NY: iUniverse, 2006.

⁵ Pg. 186, *So Great Salvation*, Barabas.

⁶ Pgs. 429-430, *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Larsen. Meyer “emphasized strongly in his own teaching the steps which led into ‘the blessed life’” (pg. 43, *Transforming Keswick*, Price & Randall).

⁷ Pg. 62, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall

⁸ Pg. 111, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall.

⁹ Pg. 43, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall. By 1920, not Meyer alone, but other Baptists, including those corrupted by rationalism and theological modernism, were speaking at Keswick (pg. 140, *ibid*).

Anglican and Quaker roots. Thus, Meyer, having followed the Keswick theology from the time of its origin at the Broadlands, Oxford, and Brighton Conventions,¹⁰ contributed greatly to the spread of Keswick theology through his preaching tours, writing, ministry at specifically Keswick venues, and preaching at well-attended convocations from A. B. Simpson's deeper life conferences to Moody's Northfield conferences.¹¹ Meyer was key to the spread of the Keswick theology in Baptist churches and in many other places as he worked as an ecumenical conference speaker and Higher Life holiness evangelist.

Meyer held for years that "the saints alive on earth toward the end of the [first] century were rapt to heaven[,] a view he mixed "with the historical interpretation of the Book of Revelation." Concerning this view of a first century catching away, "Mr. Meyer said, 'In the main I thoroughly accept [this] conclusion. It must be true.'" After all, "the theory is not so fantastic as it seems . . . the miracle it involved . . . account[ed] in great measure . . . for the rapid spread of Christianity in the next [the second] century. That there is no record of the event is . . . justified by the fact that there was nobody left to record it." On "the first day of 1905 Mr. Meyer preached a sermon advocating this view, which attracted considerable attention, one of the London daily newspapers giving an extended report of it," as a prominent minister affirming that all Christians were snatched away near the end of the first century as the explanation for the rapid spread of Christianity in the second century would surely sell quite a few newspapers.¹² Furthermore, in "1917 Meyer launched, with the support of several Keswick leaders, the Advent Testimony and Preparation Movement, which became a significant body,"¹³ and of which Meyer "became [a] very pronounced" advocate. By this time, Meyer was suggesting that the world was going to end because of the First World War: "the Great War was . . . the Midnight Cry . . . he and some others suggested,"¹⁴ an affirmation somewhat comparable to the prophetic proclamation of Evan Roberts and Jessie Penn-Lewis of the Translation and the end of the world about that time.

¹⁰ Pg. 65, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*, Fullerton; pgs. 42-43, *Transforming Keswick*, Price & Randall; pg. 103, *The Keswick Story: The Authorized History of the Keswick Convention*, Polluck.

¹¹ "Keswick . . . was imported back into the United States by Moody, who brought into his Northfield Conventions in the early 1890s such figures as F. B. Meyer . . . who returned five times within the decade; Andrew Murray . . . [and] H. W. Webb-Peploe" (pgs. 105-106, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, Dayton).

¹² Pg. 157, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*, Fullerton.

¹³ Pg. 430, *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Larsen.

¹⁴ Pg. 159, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton. The war was "the precursor of the return of Christ to reign on earth for a thousand years" (pg. 133, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall). Other Keswick supporters of the Advent Testimony movement from its inception were H. W. Webb-Peploe, John Steward Holden, and E. L. Langston; Meyer was the chairman of the Movement (pg. 133, *ibid*).

Although Meyer did believe in baptism by immersion for believers, he was very far from being a strong defender of historic Baptist doctrine and practice. He was “less theological and didactic” than even the other speakers at the already extremely undogmatic Keswick convention¹⁵—indeed, his “relatively undogmatic approach was of crucial importance”¹⁶ for his spread of Keswick doctrine worldwide—although he did defend a view of Spirit baptism as a post-conversion second blessing similar to the view of William Boardman instead of endorsing the historic Baptist view of Spirit baptism, as it was important to Meyer to put away denominational distinctions and seek post-conversion Spirit baptism.¹⁷ Meyer denied that by means of believer’s baptism one was added to the Baptist church that authorized the ordinance (cf. Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Rather, he taught not only that one could receive believer’s baptism and not be added to a Baptist church, but also that one could be immersed and remain a member of a paedobaptist religious organization, with no desire whatsoever to separate from it and join a Baptist congregation. Rather than a church ordinance in the Biblical sense, baptism was simply a personal matter: “[R]emember . . . that you may be baptized, as a believer, without becoming a member of the Baptist denomination. You may be baptized, and still continue in communion with that Christian body with which you have been accustomed to worship. This rite is a personal matter between the Lord and the individual believer.”¹⁸ Since baptism did not add one to a Baptist church, in Meyer’s view, “[p]robably no man has baptized more members of other churches”—who remained in these other churches—“than he.”¹⁹ Indeed, Meyer pastored a paedobaptist religious assembly, Christ’s Church, for twenty-one years—a longer period than he spent as the pastor of any Baptist church, and this paedobaptist assembly was both his last pastorate and the place where his funeral was held. Explaining why he was leaving a Baptist church for a paedobaptist religious organization, Meyer wrote: “I am less of a denominationalist than ever . . . I can best serve my generation from an undenominational standpoint,” although the Baptists he had previously pastored expressed “regret and dismay” once they found out Meyer’s plan, at the last minute—for he had neither “consulted the [Baptist] Church or even consulted with its officers” but “arrangements

¹⁵ Pg. 67, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*. W. Y. Fullerton.

¹⁶ Pg. 111, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall

¹⁷ Pgs. 41-42, 45, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton; cf. “Spirit Baptism: A Completed Historical Event. An Exposition and Defense of the Historic Baptist View of Spirit Baptism.” **Ref. appendix with this work.**

¹⁸ Pg. 84, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*. W. Y. Fullerton, citing Meyer’s “Seven Reasons for Believer’s Baptism.”

¹⁹ Pg. 84, , *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*. W. Y. Fullerton.

were carried through . . . [with] secrecy” and as he was “at the bottom a little ashamed of his desertion of Regent’s Park [Baptist Church] . . . he practically accepted the new church before he informed the old one.”²⁰ Not only did the fact that the members of Christ’s Church had no Biblical baptism, and so could not Biblically be church members or be a true church of Christ at all, stop Meyer from assuming its pastorate, the fact that his newly adopted religious organization had a “liturgy” did not stop him either.²¹ He was happy to have Christ’s Church “mainly suppor[t] the L. M. S.,”²² the paedobaptist London Missionary Society, founded as an ecumenical mix of Anglicans, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, and Presbyterians, Calvinists and Arminians, and numerous other forms of doctrinal divergence, such as acceptance of the idea that the heathen could be saved without knowing the name of Jesus Christ—thus, Meyer’s book advocating this heresy of a Christ-less salvation, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, was in substance delivered as the Annual Sermon of the L. M. S.²³ The previous pastor at Christ’s Church, Christopher Newman Hall, a divorced adulterer, annihilationist, and opponent of verbal inspiration, “was delighted to secure as his successor at Christ Church F. B. Meyer . . . a worthy heir.”²⁴ Meyer was willing to immerse the Anglican minister, Keswick leader, and annihilationist heretic George Grubb.²⁵ Indeed, faithful to Keswick ecumenicalism, Meyer refused to “declar[e] it impossible to receive those who accept a formula which implies baptismal regeneration,” thinking that this “would have been far from the unity in Christ . . . at the beginning and the end he rejoiced that we,” whether believing in baptismal regeneration or not, “are ‘all one in Christ Jesus,’” in the words of the Keswick motto.²⁶ Meyer presided over the Keswick Open Communion service where those who believed in the true gospel and false gospels united to celebrate, as they thought, the Lord’s Supper.²⁷ The Galatian false teachers that the Apostle Paul anathematized (Galatians 1:8-9) would have been welcomed as Christian brethren by Meyer, for he stated that he “hoped one day ‘to kneel before the Throne of God with a High Churchman on one side and a Quaker on the other,’”²⁸ despite the baptismal regeneration and sacramental false gospel of High Church Anglicanism and the rejection

²⁰ Pgs. 73-77, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*, Fullerton.

²¹ Pg. 76, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*, Fullerton.

²² Pg. 143, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*, Fullerton.

²³ Preface, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer. New York: Eaton and Mains, 1906.

²⁴ Cf. pgs. 282-284, *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Larsen.

²⁵ Pg. 85, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

²⁶ Pg. 194, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

²⁷ Pg. 195, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

²⁸ Pg. 208, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness and other damnable heresies of Quakerism. He happily preached the Higher Life to those who went beyond even High Church Anglicanism in sacramentalist heresy, such as the Eastern Orthodox.²⁹ Meyer's personal grounds for an eternal hope were most questionable in light of the lack of even a sentence or a single phrase about a personal conversion experience in Meyer's authorized³⁰ biography of several hundred pages and his deep confusion about the nature of the gospel. Indeed, "Meyer didn't know anything about conversion, or about the gathering of sinners around Christ" even during his first pastorate—he only picked up, in 1873, certain evangelistic practices, or perhaps certain promotion and marketing techniques, from D. L. Moody, who himself was sadly ecumenical—but even at that point there is no record of Meyer experiencing a personal conversion.³¹ Since Meyer believed good Quakers were Christians, not people in a false religion in need of true salvation—a position that made it much easier to accept the doctrines of Quakers such as Hannah W. Smith—it is not surprising that he would invite "missionaries of . . . the Society of Friends to a yearly Conference."³² Furthermore, Meyer was "one of the very few outsiders who has been allowed, in the course of its 260 years' history, to address the . . . executive committee . . . of the Society of Friends."³³ Meyer's understanding and proclamation of the Christian gospel was terribly deficient and grossly heretical.

In light of Meyer's strong identification with Keswick, it is natural that he also encouraged Pentecostalism. "In the 1890s, F. B. Meyer was to be found assuring his Keswick audience that they could receive 'a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost' like 'another Pentecost.' It was an outlook which helped to create the emphasis on Spirit-baptism found in twentieth-century Pentecostalism. . . . Meyer embodied a spiritual power that was 'literally Pentecostal.'"³⁴ He was a clear "Pentecostal predecessor," who taught that even Jesus Christ "needed" a post-conversion "anoint[ing]" or second blessing

²⁹ Pg. 111, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall. Meyer even preached to the Armenian Patriarch in the Gregorian Church in Constantinople, exhorting him to embrace Keswick theology, rather than exhorting him to repent and turn from the worship of idols, from sacramental salvation, and from other abominable heresies to Jesus Christ and be born again.

³⁰ Pgs. 7, 222, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

³¹ Pg. 102-103, *The Keswick Story: The Authorized History of the Keswick Convention*, Polluck.

³² Pg. 143, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

³³ Pg. 188, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton; note also the Quaker influence in ancestors of his family, pg. 11.

³⁴ Pg. 43, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall. Meyer proved his doctrine of post-conversion Spirit baptism by "outspoken personal testimonies about a sense of failure giving way to new power, a power seen in practice," rather than by a careful exegesis of Scripture; Meyer also "often gave away copies of Murray's *Abide in Christ*" (pg. 53, *ibid*).

before He could do the work of God.³⁵ In his international travels, Meyer was part of the “explicit . . . link between . . . holiness revivalism and Pentecostalism,” as he led people to “claim the promise and power of Pentecost” and reported that “Baptists . . . were speaking in tongues and casting out demons.”³⁶ Meyer contributed to the founding of the Welsh Keswick Convention at Llandrindod Wells in 1903, an important precursor to the work of the 1904-5 holiness revival associated with Evan Roberts and a place where the doctrines of Jessie Penn-Lewis were propagated.³⁷ Meyer taught that the Welsh holiness revival involved a restoration of the miraculous gifts of 1 Corinthians 12³⁸—a chapter where tongues are included. It is not surprising that, “[f]ollowing the Welsh Revival of 1904–1905, Meyer reported in Los Angeles on what he had observed in Wales. His report encouraged future leaders of the Pentecostal movement, which was to spread from 1906.”³⁹ Meyer’s encouragement of Pentecostalism was perhaps furthered by the fact that he himself received revelations that added to Scripture. For example, he claimed to have a vision in which he engaged in conversation with Jesus Christ⁴⁰ and also received, apparently by revelation, information that in heaven angels were making “a new road, along the River Bank” since there had “been so many arrivals lately,” and that Meyer and his physician would have their “mansions . . . together”⁴¹ along this new road overlooking this heavenly river.

F. B. Meyer’s Keswick ecumenicalism, however, did not extend only to sacramentalists, Quakers, and Pentecostals within the broad pale of Christendom. In keeping with the teaching of the teaching of the Broadlands Conference, Meyer taught that pagans, idolaters who knew nothing of Jesus Christ and who—if one accepts the authority of Scripture alone (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 1)—are worshippers of the devil without hope or God in the world, could also be saved without ever hearing about or knowing the Lord Jesus, the Son of God and only Savior of the world. In India, following his practice in other countries, Meyer preached the Keswick theology to

³⁵ Pg. 221, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness*, F. D. Bruner, citing pg. 87, *A Castaway and Other Addresses*, F. B. Meyer. Chicago, IL: Fleming H. Revell, 1897.

³⁶ Pg. 178, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall

³⁷ Pgs. 168-169, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall.

³⁸ Pg. 172, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall.

³⁹ Pgs. 429-430, *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Larsen.

⁴⁰ Pg. 212, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

⁴¹ Pg. 213, *F. B. Meyer*, Fullerton.

idolaters trapped in the darkness of Hinduism because he believed that God had already given Hindus “revelations” of himself, and that their “tears and prayers come up as a memorial before God,” although not offered to the Triune Jehovah, but to their abominable idols, so that they were in need only of “further revelations” through Christ. Meyer affirmed: “I [am] . . . deeply convinced that the prime work of our missionary societies is to discover the souls . . . the non-Christian natives . . . with whom the Divine Spirit has already been at work, ascertaining the stage which they have reached in the divine life, and endeavoring to lead them forward.”⁴² The Keswick theology was important to pagan Hindus and other non-Christians, for many of them already possessed “the divine life” and just needed to move forward, and, of course, nothing could move idolatrous polytheistic Hindus forward to a deeper spiritual life than Keswick theology. Preaching Keswick doctrine to such people was, indeed, the prime work of missionary societies, and Keswick doctrine would strike a better cord with such Hindus than preaching the objective and finished work of Jesus Christ and justification by repentant faith alone in Him, since Hindu mysticism and quietism were like Keswick doctrine. Meyer testified:

At the close of an afternoon service in one of the public halls of Bombay, a number of intelligent and thoughtful men . . . non-Christian natives of India . . . gathered round me, who said that my teaching of the inner life, and especially of the negation of self, was not what they were generally accustomed to hear from the lips of a Christian teacher, though it was exactly in line with much that was taught in their own religious books. They told me that one objection which they had towards the religion of Jesus Christ was that, so far as it had been presented to them, it seemed so exclusively objective in its testimony, and gave so little room for those deeper teachings of the subjective discipline of the spirit which appeared to them so all-important. . . . It is interesting to recall the eagerness with which the non-Christian natives of India heard from my lips teaching as to those higher or deeper truths [of the Keswick theology] concerning the crucifixion of the self-life in order to the indwelling of the Son of God.⁴³

Hindu idolaters were not the only ones who could be saved without knowing Jesus Christ, of course; pagan religious leaders “from all races” could lead one to heaven, since nature revealed all that was necessary for salvation. Meyer’s belief in “a kind of nature mysticism,” found very prominently and notably in his own oft-repeated testimony to his entrance into the Keswick experience, led Meyer to believe that “Wordsworth and all his followers were . . . students in the school of Jesus Christ. . . . Nature was being given greater emphasis at Keswick than had previously been the case in

⁴² Pgs. 25-29, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, F. B. Meyer. New York: Eaton and Mains, 1906. Meyer even met Mahatma Gandhi and commended his sincerity. Indeed, Meyer was even “formative in . . . Ghandi[’s] own ‘passive resistance’ movement,” although, sadly, Ghandi did not receive the gospel of Jesus Christ through his interaction with his mentor Meyer (pg. 113, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall).

⁴³ Pgs. 26-27, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

evangelicalism.”⁴⁴ Such nature mysticism led Meyer to “often” leave the “Keswick tent to breathe in both the Keswick air and the Holy Spirit,”⁴⁵ for Meyer would pray: “Father, as I breathe in this breath of the evening air, so I breathe in Thy gift of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁶ After all, the initial impulse for the Broadlands Conference arose out of a discussion by the Pearsall Smiths with the Mount-Temples about the value of the “habit [of] go[ing] out into the woods for a week or ten days, and seek together in long breaths to draw in the influx of the Spirit,”⁴⁷ so breathing in the Spirit was a solid Keswick and Broadlands teaching from the very beginning, even if that Holy Ghost who dictated the Scriptures said nothing whatever about going into nature to breathe Him in. However, as Broadlands testified, with the Catholic mystic Bernard of Clairvaux as its support, “experience” demonstrated that there was “something greater in woods than in books,” so one could “tur[n] from the Bible to nature.”⁴⁸ Perhaps for F. B. Meyer, as for his Higher Life predecessors, it was not necessary to find support for his nature mysticism in Scripture, since the woods were better than the Book. In any case, Meyer had entered into the Higher Life himself originally by breathing God in after a meeting led by George Grubb at Keswick.⁴⁹ Thus, through nature mysticism, the heathen could be saved, breathing in the Holy Spirit with the evening air like Meyer did. Indeed, the heathen did not even need to live up the light that they had to be saved, since none of them do so (as is true, and which justifies their universal condemnation, according to the Apostle Paul in

⁴⁴ Pgs. 46-47, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall. Part of this emphasis on nature was the strong cultural influence on Keswick in favor of Romanticism; at Keswick, “sentiments which embodied some Romantic traits and which could at times seem to be less firmly anchored in older scriptural orthodoxy . . . [were] voice[d],” and not by F. B. Meyer alone, but also by Evan Hopkins, Webb-Peploe, and others. Indeed, “Keswick was . . . a symptom of the Romantic inclinations of the period . . . what was distinctive about it did derive primarily from the spirit of the age, and can be understood only in that light.” Both philosophical “romanticism” and “relativism” contributed to the growth, popularity, and teaching of Keswick (pgs. 45-47, 254, *ibid*). It is noteworthy that Wordsworth was born in the Lake District, where the Keswick Conventions were held.

⁴⁵ Pg. 76, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall.

⁴⁶ Pg. 47, *Transforming Keswick: The Keswick Convention, Past, Present, and Future*, Price & Randall. Compare the words of A. B. Simpson: ““I had to learn . . . every second, to breathe Himself in as I breathed, and breathe myself out. So, moment by moment for the spirit, and moment by moment for the body” (“Himself,” A. B. Simpson. Elec. acc. http://www.biblebelievers.com/simpson-ab_himself.html).

⁴⁷ Pg. 117, *Memorials [of William Francis Cowper-Temple, Baron Mount-Temple]*, Georgina Cowper-Temple. London: Printed for private circulation, 1890.

⁴⁸ Pgs. 88-89, *The Life that is Life Indeed: Reminiscences of the Broadlands Conferences*, Edna V. Jackson. London: James Nisbet & Co, 1910; cf. pgs. 90ff. One was also to turn from “nature to the Bible” as both nature and Scripture supposedly contributed to the understanding of the other, but nature is still given first priority, the woods being above the books. The Scriptural position that grammatical-historical exegesis is what drives Biblical interpretation, not nature in any degree whatsoever, is indubitably rejected.

⁴⁹ Pgs. 103-104, *The Keswick Story: The Authorized History of the Keswick Convention*, Polluck.

Romans 1-2, though not according to Mr. Meyer); some kind of vague faith in their pagan gods was enough for the heathen to be saved, just as in Christendom one does not need “accurate views of that redemption” wrought by Christ to be saved, but simply a faith that is the same in kind with that of the allegedly saved pagans: “[M]yriads of souls, who lived and died with no other teaching than that of natural reason, have entered into the Kingdom . . . and they have been admitted on precisely the same terms as those on which we [Christians] hope to be accepted.”⁵⁰ Accurate views of redemption were the more certainly unnecessary, since Meyer himself did not hold to them—for example, he rejected the doctrine that Christ’s cross-work was a propitiation (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10): “We must never think that our Lord stepped in to appease the otherwise implacable wrath of the Father.”⁵¹ For a Keswick revival to come, the universal church must reject the work of Christ as a propitiation of the wrath of God for a doctrine of atonement by her own blood and self sacrifice: “[T]he Church . . . accounts that her blood is not too great a price to pay for an atonement through love and self-sacrifice—it is only under such circumstances that a work of lasting revival can be inaugurated.”⁵² In light of these affirmations, clearly the old orthodox doctrine of Christ’s blood atonement was not necessary for salvation. Meyer received further support, as he supposed, for his doctrine that a vague faith in a deity was all that was necessary for salvation from his gross misunderstanding of Old Testament theology, seen in the alleged fact that throughout the Old Testament Israel believed the lie that the Lord was “God of the hills alone,” but not “of the valleys also”—the truth that God was the Omnipresent and Omnipotent One over the whole world, including the valleys and the hills, was allegedly only revealed in the New Testament. Furthermore, in keeping with weakness on the Trinity at the Broadlands Conferences,⁵³ Meyer thought that from the creation of the world until the day of Pentecost the Triune God was unknown, and the saints of Scripture accepted the blasphemy that the Holy Ghost of God was “an atmosphere,” not “a Person.”⁵⁴ If people who knew nothing of the Trinity, who thought God was only a local deity who controlled hills but was powerless in valleys, and who rejected the orthodox doctrine of Christ’s blood atonement, could have faith and be saved in the past, they

⁵⁰ Pgs. 23-25, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁵¹ Pg. 101, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁵² Pg. 109, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁵³ E. g., “Jesus Christ is . . . the Holy Spirit, Who will dwell in us” (pg. 170, *The Life that is Life Indeed: Reminiscences of the Broadlands Conferences*, Edna V. Jackson. London: James Nisbet & Co, 1910), the heresy of modalism. Elsewhere (pg. 195, *ibid*), even the Spirit’s dual procession from the Father and the Son is given a strange Higher Life interpretation.

⁵⁴ Pg. 80, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

could be saved in the same manner today also; people within Christendom who simply have the vague faith in a deity that one can have from natural revelation are saved, Meyer taught. After all, if accurate views of the atonement of Christ, the Trinity, and other fundamental Christian doctrines, are necessarily part of saving faith, the ecumenicalism of Keswick must fall to the ground, and the heretics that founded the Keswick theology and filled so many of the seats of Keswick conventions would be unconverted—a clearly unacceptable conclusion. Those “earnest brethren . . . [who] denounced [Meyer] as a heretic”⁵⁵ were certainly mistaken, and just were not ecumenical enough; neither was Naaman when he confessed to Elijah, “now I know that *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Israel” (2 Kings 10:15), nor Paul when he affirmed that pagans were without hope and without God (Ephesians 2:12). Meyer was not nearly as narrow as the Scripture and its Author:

Not from the Hebrew race alone, but from all races, God has called forth great souls . . . the great Prophets and Teachers of the Race . . . who have received His messages for their contemporaries and all after time. We utter their names with reverence, and acknowledge the important contributions that have been made to the religious history of the race by Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, Plato, and other prophetic souls, who have reared themselves like soaring Alps above their fellows, catching and reflecting the light of the Eternal.⁵⁶

Zoroaster, Buddha, Plato, and other pagan devil-worshippers were actually prophets who received messages from God, just like those received by the Prophets of the Bible; their teachings, writings, and religious systems were not the proclamations of idolatry to be detested, but “sources of religious knowledge and inspiration,”⁵⁷ as the Bible is an inspired source of religious knowledge. Alongside of the Bible one may recognize the inspiration of the “Vedas . . . Krishna . . . Seneca” and other pagan writings and writers; “the founder of the Moslem faith” also gave a “noble witness,” and “Marcus Aurelius,” that “loftiest of pagan moralists,” was a righteous heathen although he “cruelly persecuted the Christians of the [Roman] empire,” so not only those ignorant of Christ, but those who put His people to death, can be saved and be vehicles of Divine revelation. From the message of pagan writings, the heathen receive “revelation of the truth” and “righteousness is imputed to them,” although they “know nothing of our Lord’s work on their behalf.”⁵⁸ Unsurprisingly, while uplifting the documents of pagan religion to the level of inspiration, Meyer downgraded the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible, accepting modernistic ideas such as a documentary hypothesis about the composition of

⁵⁵ Pg. 204-205, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography*. W. Y. Fullerton.

⁵⁶ Pgs. 18-19, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁵⁷ Pg. 20, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁵⁸ Pg. 104, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

the gospels comparable to the modern “Q” theory⁵⁹—“Meyer was a late nineteenth/early twentieth-century Protestant liberal who took modern biblical criticism for granted, and was not a fundamentalist. . . . Fundamentalism . . . was a divisive force which . . . placed an overemphasis on doctrine and dogmas.”⁶⁰ He proclaimed that theologically liberal views of Scripture were by no means to be opposed—on the contrary, “the great need of the present hour is that leaders of religious thought should cease to concern themselves with the questions of Higher Criticism” and retreat to an alleged “essentially spiritual plane,” abandoning “the intellectual plane” to unbelief.⁶¹ What is more, pagans, and their writings, Meyer affirmed, “are a striking comment on those great words of Malachi, ‘From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, God’s name is great among the nations, and in every place incense has been offered unto His name, and a pure offering; for His name is great among the Gentiles,’”⁶² although Malachi actually was not affirming that pagans were worshipping the true God and making pure offerings as they served their idols through human sacrifice, temple prostitutes, and the like, but predicting the future Messianic kingdom when the Gentiles would reject all idolatry and purely worship Jehovah alone through Jesus Christ, as validated in the translation in the Authorized Version, which correctly has future tense verbs where Meyer employed the present tense: “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.”⁶³ Phoenician Baal-worshippers in Tyre and Sidon, and even the sodomites who sought to gang-rape other men in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and who were destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven (Genesis 19), could be saved—for God knew the faith that they had, and their real, fundamentally positive attitude toward Him: “God, who searches the heart, and knows what would have happened in Tyre and Sidon and the cities of the Plain, if they had heard of the mighty works of Christ, deals with them on the basis of the faith they have, anticipating the hour when that faith, which is an attitude towards God, and the embryo capacity for receiving God, shall

⁵⁹ Pg. 72, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁶⁰ Pg. 152, *Changed by Grace: V. C. Kitchen, the Oxford Group, and A.A.*, Glenn Chesnut. New York, NY: iUniverse, 2006.

⁶¹ Pg. 209, “The Indestructibility of the spirit,” F. B. Meyer, in, *Spiritualism: Its Present-Day Meaning; A Symposium*, ed. Huntly Carter. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1920.

⁶² Pgs. 21-23, 35, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer; italics in original.

⁶³ Cf. *Haggai, Malachi. The New American Commentary*, R. A. Taylor & E. R. Clendenen on Malachi 1:11 for a defense of the future tenses of the verbs in translation and a Millennial interpretation of the verse.

no longer be an unfurled bud, but shall open to its full radiance and glory in the tropical atmosphere of heaven.”⁶⁴ Since Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, animists, and even idolatrous sodomites who practice gang-rape, could be saved without ever hearing the name of Jesus Christ, and certainly without a conscious conversion to Him, their problem was not that they were certain of hell in their religions—rather, it was that they lacked the power for service to God provided by the Keswick theology, just like the Jews did in the Old Testament dispensation. Meyer was Keswick’s great international ambassador because of his belief that heathen people could get eternal life through faith in their gods, but they needed the Higher Life only found in the Keswick doctrine to discover the secret of a happy life on earth. As in the Quakerism of Hannah W. Smith, Meyer believed men are not totally depraved, and religion ignorant of Jesus Christ can bring people to heaven, but Meyer thought non-Christian religions could not supply power for service—only Keswick could. “It is a mistake to suppose that the state of the world, as it is today, is due to the determined choice of man to be evil,” for men are not determined to evil, and it certainly is not the case that “there is none that seeketh after God” (Romans 3:11) or that “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [is] only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5)—rather, all men have a “better self,” so that even in “Heathenism . . . [m]en have seen and approved the better,” and “the heart of man never ceased to feel after God . . . the soul of man has ever cried out for God, for the Living God . . . [and] sighed with unutterable and insatiable desire for light and life and love.” Just like the world developed through long evolutionary ages, getting better and better over time, so the heathen are getting better and better over time. While heathens are not totally depraved, and many will be in heaven, nonetheless they do not have the power supplied by Keswick: “the state of the world . . . is due to inability to be and do the things which reason and conscience alike demand. . . . Natural Religion cannot supply power.”⁶⁵ Romans 7:14-25 is a description of both the righteous heathen who are headed to heaven without knowing of Christ, and of Jews in the Old Testament⁶⁶—the heathen will be saved, just like many Jews before Christ were saved, but power for service was lacking to both—hence the need to preach to the heathen, not so much justification by the objective substitutionary work of Christ, but the Higher Life of Keswick theology. Keswick, not the gospel, was the need of the idolater.

⁶⁴ Pgs. 26-27, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁶⁵ Pgs. 39-41, 116ff., *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

⁶⁶ Pgs. 39-40, 65-67, *The Wideness of God’s Mercy*, Meyer.

In light of Meyer’s belief that pagan devil-worshippers were really worshippers of the true God, and the spiritualism associated with the foundations of Keswick at the Broadlands Conference, it is not surprising that he was weak in his condemnation of spiritualism. “Not all Christians regarded paranormal manifestations as necessarily evil. The Baptist theologian F. B. Meyer . . . believed telepathy and clairvoyance to be natural capacities of the mind, endowed by God, analogous to wireless telegraphy.”⁶⁷ Furthermore, Meyer believed that those on earth received visitations from the dead; for example, while preaching the funeral of one Mr. Buckley, Meyer stated that while Buckley was dying he “saw his spirit relations, and even called them by name.”⁶⁸ Direct communication with the dead was possible, Meyer affirmed.⁶⁹ Meyer did not endorse spiritualism *per se*—it came in for general condemnation in his pamphlet *The Modern Craze of Spiritualism*. However, as a reviewer of his pamphlet noted, “[H]e deals too tenderly with clairvoyance, which . . . [is] an easy stepping-stone to the séance; and . . . he astonishes by saying that ‘in passing over, the soul may sometimes manifest itself to the beloved ere it is definitely withdrawn into the presence of God,’ . . . [a teaching which is] erroneous and dangerous.”⁷⁰ Thus, Meyer condemned what he recognized as spiritualism, but certain spiritualistic phenomena were not considered to truly be spiritualism. For F. B. Meyer, if not for Scripture, the dead did communicate with the living, and clairvoyance was an ability endowed by God—forms of what truly was spiritualism were acceptable.

F. B. Meyer did believe in the bare fact that believers should be immersed, and he performed a variety of ministries in and with Baptist churches, contributing to their being infected with his heresies, as well as serving as the leader of the Baptist Union during a period when it was capitulating to theological modernism and liberalism. While he contributed greatly to the infiltration of Keswick theology in Baptist churches, and contributed to the spread of continuationism and thus the rise of Pentecostalism, he was very far from an advocate of historic Baptist doctrine—he was a far better representative of the easy heterodoxy and ecumenical practice of Keswick.

⁶⁷ Pg. 70, *Photography and Spirit*, John Harvey. London: Reaktion Books, 2007.

⁶⁸ Pg. 28, “Spiritualism at the Leicester Cemetery,” in *The Medium and Daybreak: A Weekly Journal Devoted to the History, Phenomena, Philosophy, and Teachings of Spiritualism*, 15:718 (January 11, 1884) 1-32.

⁶⁹ Pg. 208, “The Indestructibility of the spirit,” F. B. Meyer, in *Spiritualism: Its Present-Day Meaning; A Symposium*, ed. Huntly Carter. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1920. Meyer affirmed that “what are thought to be direct communications with the spirits of the departed” are “largely,” but not totally, “accounted for in other ways” than direct fellowship with the dead. That is, most spiritualistic phenomena are not actual encounters with the spirits of dead people, but some are.

⁷⁰ Pg. 577, “Book Notices,” in *The Christian Worker’s Magazine*, 20:7, March, 1920.

Applications from the Life and Teachings of F. B. Meyer

F. B. Meyer would be better classified as a wolf in sheep's clothing than a Bible-believing, historic Baptist minister. His writings should be rejected, and he should be warned against. Why should God's people read the writings of one who propagated the standard errors of the Keswick theology, and who also gave no evidence of personal conversion, who accepted absurd eschatological fictions, who refused to contend for Baptist distinctives, who found liturgy and baptismal regeneration acceptable but rejected the Regulative Principle of worship, who was grossly ecumenical, who radically watered down the demands of the gospel and taught that heathen did not need to hear about and consciously believe in Jesus Christ to be saved, who rejected the truth that Christ propitiated God's wrath on the cross, who blasphemed Jehovah by claiming that Old Testament Israel thought He was only the God of the hills, not of the valleys, who blasphemed the Holy Spirit by claiming that He was thought of as an atmosphere, not a Person, for most of the history of the world, who rejected the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture for modernistic apostasy, and who spread continuationism, contributed to the rise of Pentecostalism, and was open to forms of spiritualism? Do not the writings of such a man have a better place in a fire than in the minds and hearts of the Triune Jehovah's people? Are they not laced with the sulfurous stench of the fires of hell? F. B. Meyer was a heretic, and the Lord's precious faithful ones should beware of both his pernicious personal influence and his baneful and continuing influence on the doctrines and practices of others. That such a man as he is hailed by the adherents of the Higher Life as Keswick's leading international representative provides yet another reason why Keswick theology must be rejected by true churches and faithful Christians.

While F. B. Meyer did not, you must treasure the power of the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ. Natural theology will only condemn, never save (Romans 1:18-32), but "the gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). There is no other name than that of Jesus Christ by which men must be saved (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), and no other way of salvation than by repentant faith in Him and His substitutionary death, as validated by His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). All who do not receive this gospel must necessarily perish eternally, but the Holy Spirit, through the Word, produces faith in countless of those who hear it (Romans 10:17; James 1:18), so that they are washed in Christ's blood, adopted into the family of their infinitely loving, gracious, and tender heavenly Father, and are enabled to join the eternal song in grateful worship of their God

and Lord, Jesus Christ: “Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. . . . Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Revelation 5:9-12)! Is not this gospel, this best of all Good News, worth proclaiming in all its purity to the ends of the earth, worth living in light of, and worth dying for? Where is the Christian who will not cry out, with his heart and soul, “Yes, it is so—Amen, Amen!” Then, dear reader, act upon this truth. Be part of reconciling the world to Christ by proclaiming His sweet name to all men unto the very ends of the earth. Furthermore, do not allow the truth of this gospel to be corrupted in the least part. View with horror the wounds F. B. Meyer sought to inflict upon the gospel, and inflicted in truth upon countless precious souls who followed him in his damnable errors. Rather than rejecting, or being the slightest bit ashamed of the precious doctrines of propitiation and of penal substitution, let the penal substitution of Christ on the cross, and His appeasement of the Father’s wrath thereon, be your only hope and confidence for a blessed eternity, and your joy and glory on earth even now. Treasure them in your heart. Meditate upon them in your mind. Speak of them everywhere, and be heartily thankful to God for them always. They are at the heart of that only saving gospel that is the undiluted power of God unto salvation.

Hate the abominable error of F. B. Meyer of preaching Keswick theology to unconverted heathen instead of preaching the gospel. Only God knows the numbers who are in hell today because of this fearful error and dereliction of obvious duty by Mr. Meyer and those whom he influenced. Meyer’s practice in this regard is a clear example of how God is dishonored and people come to be eternally damned when cultural pressure is surrendered to, rather than resisted by, the Lord’s church and people. Telling people in India that their heathen ancestors were saved, not lost, was surely easier and much more culturally acceptable. Surely there was great pressure to lie to them in this manner, as F. B. Meyer did, or at least downplay or equivocate on the truth, as many others did. What was the result? God’s truth was not glorified, the gospel was corrupted, apostasy was furthered, and precious souls were deluded and lost. Reader, you must never under any circumstances surrender, be ashamed of, or water down anything taught in God’s holy Word because of cultural pressure. “[F]ear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

Christians must practice the methodology of gospel proclamation taught in Scripture. The book of Acts clearly teaches and models by example aggressive evangelism for every church member; all should go “every where preaching the word” (Acts 8:4), with the goal of preaching to “every creature which is under heaven” (Ephesians 1:23; Mark 16:15), that is, giving clear presentations of the gospel to every single person on the face of the earth. God’s Word presents house-to-house evangelism as an explicit pattern of Scripture (Acts 5:42; 20:20-21). If Christians in the New Testament went out preaching “daily,” you can certainly go persistently. If they sought to reach large groups at one time by preaching in the temple and other places “publicly,” then Christian men should follow their pattern by preaching on the streets, and all Christians should follow their pattern by distributing literature and proclaiming the gospel wherever sizeable groups of people can be found. If they also went “house to house,” seeking to reach “every house,” then you also ought to specifically reach every single household in your area and send forth laborers from your church who will seek to do so likewise in communities that are further away, until “all men every where” have heard the gospel (Acts 21:28; 19:10; Mark 16:15). Are you part of a church that is following the Biblical pattern and preaching publicly and house to house? If not, it is time to either start obeying Scripture or time to leave that church for a faithful congregation. If so, are you participating in this blessed and holy work, with zeal and love for Jesus Christ, and love for and holy boldness towards sinners? If not, now is the time to repent—now is the time to beg God for a heart like His for the lost.

Christian pastors and other spiritual leaders must by no means turn aside from the sufficient and God-glorifying Biblical methodology for gospel-proclamation to promotion and marketing techniques that violate Biblical principles. F. B. Meyer learned from D. L. Moody, and others, a variety of how-to methods that could draw large crowds and build a big church—but without a pure gospel, and without pure methods of proclaiming that gospel, the glory goes to man, not to God, and truly beneficial long-term results will not follow. A congregation may grow numerically as “an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21) filled with the blessings of Jehovah, or it may grow numerically utilizing unbiblical techniques and methodologies into a great mixed multitude of converted and unconverted people, filled with spiritual confusion and with the curse of the Lord. The latter sort of “growth” is more easily accomplished—it is within the potency of human might and power, while the former is solely through the power of God’s Spirit—but the eternal consequences will be evident when each stands before the Judge of all the earth.

Believers must also exercise careful spiritual discernment about popular public speakers who are popular with the world and with broad Christendom. While God is certainly able to make a congregation large (cf. Acts 2:41), Christ also warned, “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets” (Luke 6:26). The size of a man’s congregation, or the worldly success associated with it, is by no means a reliable indicator of the presence of true and vital spirituality or Divine blessing. Popularity does not indicate orthodoxy and orthopraxy. F. B. Meyer had huge congregations and tremendous popularity in his day, although, as his many heresies validate, he did not have the blessing of God. The prophets of Baal in Elijah’s day had far larger congregations and far greater popularity than Elijah, and the Antichrist will command a greater following in the Tribulation period than any truly godly preacher in church history. What is more, the blessing of God and true faithfulness will not always lead to a large congregation—you can have Christ’s smile, keeping His Word and not denying His name, while yet having but “a little strength” (Revelation 3:8). Do not allow the desire for numerical growth to lead you to downplay, compromise on, or abandon one tittle of the truth. Far better to preserve the whole of the once-delivered and holy faith uncorrupted, yet be hated and rejected by the world, than to be a popular and accepted speaker but compromise it. For what is the eternal reward of the life to come in comparison to the temporal and fleeting reward of the praise of men of dust?

Beware of allowing error into your church, or into your own mind and heart, in the name of missions. It is a clear Biblical imperative for congregations to send out church-planters worldwide (cf. Acts 13:1-4), and God’s people should be very desirous that God would call them, or their children, to such a blessed work. The reading of the biographies of great missionaries of the past to quicken a passion for missions is most commendable. However, false doctrine and practice must not be allowed in the name of missions. Sending an F. B. Meyer out worldwide to blaze abroad Keswick and modernistic heresies, or sending out a George Grubb to assail Christ’s teaching on hell, fills the world with pseudo-Christian heresies rather than the pure gospel message and sows terrible worldwide confusion concerning the character of true Christianity and the faith Christ delivered to His churches. Keswick errors, continuationist errors, and many other errors are spread through biographies, testimonials, and other narratives of events on mission fields, the people of God relaxing their guard against false teaching because of the sacrifice or suffering of those in foreign lands. This must not be. Highly esteem Biblical mission work while refusing to bypass God’s eternal truth in the name of foreign missions.

You must also reject spiritualism in all its forms—even those that deny that they are spiritualism. The devil is very unlikely to openly admit that he wishes you to reject God and follow him to utter ruin. Rather, he will perpetrate a multiplicity of deceptions to make himself appear like an angel of light. There are far more people who worship the devil while thinking that they are worshipping God than there are who intentionally and knowingly worship the devil. Be careful—more careful than Meyer was—in recognizing all the workings of Satan in spiritism and avoiding them all.

Reject theological modernism in all its forms—for, indeed, it is a form of the working of the devil. Reject rationalism and begin all your thinking with the only truly consistent logical foundation—the Word of God. Reject higher critical nonsense about the alleged evolutionary development of Biblical religion and the Hebrew Scriptures and accept the plain self-testimony of the Almighty to His own works in His Word. Reject the fictional “Q” document and all higher critical ideas about the origin of the New Testament. Reject evolutionary lower critical ideas that deny the preservation of God’s Word in the common Received Text and treat God’s Book like some secular document. Indeed, reject evolution entirely and accept the truth of the creation of the world *ex nihilo* in six twenty-four hour days thousands, and not millions, of years ago. Every jot and tittle of the Bible is God’s verbally, plenary inspired Word, dictated by the Holy Ghost through holy men of old. Recognize this fact and oppose every idea and teaching that conflicts with it.

Baptists must by no means accept what someone teaches simply because he claims to be a Baptist. Since all the first century churches were Baptist churches, Judas, along with the other eleven Apostles, was a Baptist. Ananias and Sapphira were Baptists. Diotrephes was a Baptist. F. B. Meyer was, after a sort, a Baptist also—he was even the president of a Baptist Union for a time, albeit one that was rapidly slipping into utter apostasy and theological liberalism. It is not enough that one claims that he is a Baptist—rather, his doctrine and practice must be tried by the Word of God.

Learn also from Meyer the danger of Baptists forming Unions, Conventions, Associations, and other forms of “Baptist” hierarchicalism not found in Scripture. The pernicious influence of Meyer’s modernism, and of many modernists like him, was able to corrupt many more churches because of their position in the Baptist Union. The leaven in the Union spread throughout the organization, corrupting church after sound church, until all that did not separate was leavened. Not a scrap of Scripture supports the existence of any denominational hierarchy—all that the Lord Jesus has authorized in the New Testament is the local, visible, independent and autonomous congregation. All Conventions, Unions, and the like are certain to fall into false teaching, for the Lord Jesus

has not promised to protect them, nor has He promised His special presence with them—such promises are only given to His church. Nor can hundreds of assemblies with diverse views on all sorts of doctrine and practice unite in a Union, Association, or any other formal structure without setting aside some of what the Bible teaches, violating from the very beginning the requirements of Scripture to contend for all of the faith. Within the church it is possible that “no other doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:3) at all than the truth is advocated—in all forms of Baptist hierarchicalism such purity is impossible. Churches of like precious faith can work together as they see fit, but once they form parachurch or suprachurch organizations the seed of compromise has already been sown. Let the Lord’s churches learn from the destruction of the Baptist Union, and countless similar organizations—let them remain independent, unaffiliated, and truly autonomous, that they may be truly holy—as separation, both personal and ecclesiastical, is inherent in true holiness, so ecumenicalism of any kind is inherently unholy—so that they may be truly pleasing to their sole and sufficient Head and Husband, Jesus Christ.

Learn from F. B. Meyer’s example the danger and damage unconverted church members can do—and how much the more danger there is in unconverted ministers. How much evil came to the Baptist churches of England through a failure to guard their baptisteries and membership roles! How many more congregations would be faithfully practicing the truth today had previous generations rigidly allowed none to be baptized into the membership of their churches who could not clearly testify to personal conversion and possessed a life that bore the evident marks of supernatural regeneration? Modernism and rationalism were able to spread like wildfire in late nineteenth century British nonconformity because many church members and ministers were already unconverted and were thus susceptible to the wanton embrace of any alluring heresy that came along. How much better it would have been for F. B. Meyer personally—and for Baptists in his country generally—had he been forbidden to submit to God’s holy baptismal ordinance because of his lack of anything like a clear conversion? How much the more evil was it to allow him to enter the Baptist ministry in the same state? Let no one today deceive himself into thinking that results the less pernicious will result from a similar practice. Only churches that carefully guard their membership role, doing all that is in their power to restrict their congregation to true saints both by great care in who they allow into the baptism and by the consistent practice of church discipline, can expect to be preserved from apostasy in the long term.

Unlike Meyer, you must cleave to and contend for a sound and robust Baptist polity. Love the Lord Jesus Christ, and, like your Master, be dogmatic and defend all the truths of the written Word. Defend, even unto death, believer’s immersion as a church

ordinance and the door to membership in Christ's congregation. Reject all liturgy and embrace the Regulative Principle of worship. Be jealous over the purity of Biblical worship, even as your God is jealous over it. Reject open communion; protect Christ's precious Supper as Paul commanded in 1 Corinthians 11. Preach the Word—all of it, from the verbal inspiration of Scripture, to the necessity of faith in the Triune God for salvation, to the fire and brimstone in the lake of fire, to the restriction of Spirit baptism to the book of Acts and the cessation of the sign gifts to the first century, to the historic Baptist doctrine of sanctification.

Are you a member of a Bible-believing and practicing historic Baptist church? Marvel, and be filled with humble and awful amazement, at your glorious privilege—you have not only been chosen to be part of God's spiritual and invisible kingdom through the new birth, but have been added by baptism to Christ's own body, temple, and bride! What opportunities you have to walk closely with God! You are a living stone in God's holy temple. Oh, how necessary it is for you to live like one!