

STRAIGHTWAY

"And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him" [Mark 1:18].

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

The Witness Outreach of Foundations Bible College
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"A Founder's Plea: The Whitefield Plea"

By Dr. H. T. Spence, President

This month we send forth a special edition of *Straightway* in acknowledgment of the passing away of my father and the founder of the Foundations ministries. There were some 600 in attendance to his funeral on July 22nd. We were truly thankful for the Lord's presence during the Memorial Service. God honored Himself and in doing so brought a proper honoring to His precious servant, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence.

Hundreds of cards and letters have poured in from all over the world extending consolation and sympathy to us as a family; we will never forget these kind gestures from God's people and the community. Several thousands of dollars have been given in memory of

him to the College. With this money the "Founder's Memorial Scholarship Fund" has been set up to provide scholarships for worthy students in the coming years here at Foundations.

After the Memorial Service the family and congregation walked behind a horse-drawn carriage that carried his body to its resting-place at Paracleft Cemetery, our ministry's campus cemetery.

One of the ingredients obvious at this funeral was the representation of the Body of Christ among the ministers present: Independent, Presbyterian, Baptist, Bible, Independent Methodist, etc. My father's heart had included all of them in his influence and association. As in the case of

Special Edition

the passing away of Dr. Bob Jr., my father's death is bringing to a close an era in Fundamentalism. The Movement today is becoming more of a synonym for "Independent Baptist" or Baptist exclusivism. But my dear father, as Dr. Bob Jones Jr., was a man who longed for the love of the Biblical Fundamentals to transcend the pre-eminence of the distinctives. Such a view was at the heart of historical Fundamentalism, a trans-denominational movement, giving pre-eminence to the whole Body of Christ in a time when false ecumenicity was on the rise. My father longed for such a spirit to be restored to the Fundamentalist movement. When he and I were in the Pentecostal denomination back in the 1960s there was an "air" among many that if one was not Pentecostal he or she had less of God in their life or were not a "full" Christian in Christ. It was even implied by a number of such men that one could not be in the Bride of Christ unless they were Pentecostal. I thought this was only "Pentecostalist" mentality

until I began to meet the "Baptist Bride" and those who would not want fellowship unless an individual was of a peculiar, distinctive theologically. My father pressed for what he called the "George Whitefield spirit" among the Fundamentalists. For he believed that once the peculiar distinctives of each Fundamentalist began taking precedent over the Fundamentals, we truly would lose the Body-of-Christ view. This does not mean to compromise when sin and error begin their invasion into the Body; but it means that the Fundamentals are greater than the distinctives in which we have come to uniquely believe as we work out our salvation "with fear and trembling." How often my father told us over the years, "no theological system is infallible; they all have their weaknesses." He also made clear that "only the Bible can declare itself infallible and impeccable in its fullness." It has been refreshing over the years to hear Dr. Rod Bell, president of the FBF, declare in Congresses of Fundamentalists, "I am a Christian first, a Fundamentalist second, and a Baptist third." I believe he too has desired a Whitefieldian spirit among God's men.

While Orthodoxy seems to remain true in Fundamentalism today, the greater alarm is to be seen in its Orthopraxy—especially in the areas of personal holiness of life and music. It is in the realm of "practice" that Neo-Evangelicalism creeps into the personal life and the local church. But while there is concern in this matter there is also concern for the constrictive view of

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fellowship and ministry in the true Body of Christ. One must guard against the breakdown of Biblical separation in practice and doctrine while at the same time guarding against the building up of separation and exclusivism among the true remnant of God. May we plead for this paradox till the end of our days on earth.

Thank you, dear readers, for your prayers and letters during our

family's time of bereavement. We pray that God will bless the memory of the Righteous among us in the land of the living. Yes, we honorably salute the memory of this husband, father, grandfather, and was soon-to-be great grandfather. May his mantel be known among us and may God grant unto us a double portion of his Spirit.



Opening Of The Foundations Schools

August 23, 2000

Foundations Christian Academy
Foundations Bible College
Foundations Graduate School & Seminary

Special Evening Preaching Services

August 23-25

Special Evening of Fellowship

August 26

Fourth Congress of Fundamentalists

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**"Militant Against the Apostasy,
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Rev. W. L. Wade
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