



The Resurgence of Fundamentalism in the Southern Baptist Convention: A History from 1960-1979

Jerry Faught

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This manuscript adds significantly to the literature by its extensive and probing analysis of the two key Southern Baptist controversies of the 1960s and 1970s, the Elliott and Broadman Controversies. The author shows how denominational leaders, in an effort to maintain the unity of the Convention, sacrificed academic freedom to appease vocal Fundamentalists. Fundamentalism in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) re-emerged in the early 1960s after a period of apparent hibernation as some Baptists attacked *The Message of Genesis*, a book written by one of their professors, Ralph Elliott, which questioned the historicity of certain events in the biblical book of Genesis. Elliot's book evoked a significant controversy in Southern Baptist life that lasted until 1963. Only six years later fundamentalists provoked another major convention conflict by expressing their objections to the content of the first volume of the Broadman Bible Commentary. The controversy became especially severe during the 1970 convention as Southern Baptists adopted a motion instructing the Baptist Sunday School Board of the SBC to withdraw volume one from publication. The conflict ended at the 1972 convention when messengers defeated a motion calling for the Sunday School Board to cease publication of the entire commentary series. This study investigates both the Elliott and Broadman Controversies. Since events do not take place in a vacuum, the conflicts are set in their respective historical contexts, both socio-cultural and religious.

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