"This book will become the 'go to textbook' for an up-to-date history of the International Mission Board for many years to come. It uniquely looks at the IMB through the lives of key individuals prior to the formation of the Foreign Mission Board (chapter one) and the administrations of the mission organization's leadership right up to the present. I found this approach both fascinating and informative. I am glad to commend this work to all who desire to obey the final marching orders of King Jesus."

—Daniel L. Akin, President,
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

"Where you find Southern Baptists, you find a denomination committed to taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. This has been our heritage for 175 years—and this essential volume reminds Southern Baptists today of this crucial stewardship. There are serious historical, moral, and theological questions that arise in any honest reckoning with the past. The contributors in this book have done Southern Baptists a great service by tracing both the unwavering commitment to the Great Commission that has been the hallmark of Southern Baptists and the issues that history presents us. The reader will grow in appreciation for Baptists and their missionary convictions—and for the SBC and its global missions force, now serving Christ for 175 years."

—R. Albert Mohler, Jr., President,
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

"Southern Baptists are at our best when we are focused on taking the gospel message to as many people as possible in as many places as possible. This book tells that story! It is a compelling saga of a mission-focused people, motivated by the love of God for the nations. It is also a story of perseverance through all kinds of hardship and opposition—sometimes created by our mistakes and shortcomings. Through it all, we have remained on mission, telling the good news about Jesus to many people who have never even heard his name. May God inspire you to join this movement!"

—Jeff Iorg, President,
Gateway Seminary

"*Make Disciples of All Nations* recounts the remarkable history of SBC global missions. The accomplished contributors relate important stories about the origins, presidents, settings, turning points, identity, theology, finances, challenges, and more. Along the way, readers will gain insight into Baptists, missions, and the global context."

—Christopher W. Morgan, Dean and Professor of Theology, School of Christian Ministries, California Baptist University;
author of *Christian Theology: The Biblical Story and Our Faith*

"If you love Baptist history, and more specifically the history of Baptist missions, then this is exactly the book you will want. Carefully broken into the most important moments and eras, each section provides a detailed look into the most important moments of our missiological history. I'm grateful to see this volume and trust that Southern Baptists will find it to be an enormously helpful resource for the next generation of missiological work."

—Jamie Dew, President,
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

"*Make Disciples of All Nations: A History of Southern Baptist International Missions* is an expansive look at the work of the International Mission Board across 175 years of history. It provides insights into the leaders who led the organization and the strategies they employed. Today, under the leadership of Dr. Paul Chitwood, the IMB continues to serve Southern Baptists in this 'one sacred effort'—leading the next generation of mission advance in obedience to the Great Commission, with the vision of Revelation 7:9 ever before us."

—Todd Lafferty, Executive VP and COO,
International Missions Board, SBC

"*Make Disciples of All Nations* is an encouraging—though not sanitized—historical account of Southern Baptist cooperation focused on faithfulness to the Great Commission. The authors of this volume do not write as disimpassioned historians, but all in various ways are both the beneficiaries and contributors to the history about which they are writing. While any time is a good time to be encouraged by churches aiming to cooperate to advance the kingdom of God, perhaps today—more than any other time—we need to be reminded of how God's mission to make his name known unites us. I am glad to commend this excellent volume to you to that end."

—Matthew Bennett,
Assistant Professor of Missions and Theology,
Cedarville University

"What an incredible gift this book is to all those who wish to know and learn about the remarkable missions heritage that has been passed along through the years by Southern Baptists through the Foreign/International Mission Board. We are forever indebted to the leaders and staff who navigated the crises, changes, and challenges that took place over the many years. But most of all, we are reminded of the missionary heroes who have served—often nameless and faceless—so courageously and faithfully. God has used them mightily and he is still working through them today. May Southern Baptists always hold this mission to take the gospel to the ends of the earth with the highest priority and regard."

—Kevin Ezell, President,
North American Mission Board

"From our beginnings in 1845, Southern Baptists have always been a people deeply committed to global missions. Even today, many would argue it remains the most important 'glue' that holds our convention of churches together. A new history of Southern Baptist global mission efforts has been long overdue, so I couldn't be more excited about *Make Disciples of All Nations*. This volume is denominational history at its best. The authors focus upon key individuals, themes, controversies, and initiatives. They are sympathetic to the subject, because they each love the Great Commission, but they avoid hagiography. When it is regrettably necessary to be critical, the authors never venture into cynicism. I trust this book will introduce a generation of Baptists to our missionary heritage. More importantly, I pray the Lord will use this book to call thousands of men and women to embrace God's call to make disciples here, there, and everywhere."

—Nathan A. Finn, Provost and Dean of the University Faculty,
North Greenville University

"International missions may be a core part of Southern Baptist identity, but few in our denomination know the story of how we got there. *Make Disciples of All Nations* is a clearly told account of God's provision and providence in Southern Baptist missionary efforts, highlighting our personalities, our strategies and successes, and even our failures and warts. This book is a God-send for pastors, students of history, and anyone passionate about fulfilling the Great Commission."

—Rhyne Putman
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
Director of Worldview Formation, Professor of Christian Ministries
Williams Baptist University

"The story of Southern Baptist missions through the International Mission Board is a testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit mobilizing God's people to fulfill the Great Commission. Our cooperative missions efforts have planted seeds of the gospel around the world, and countless lives have been transformed by the power of Jesus Christ. What a blessing it is to be a part of a body of churches that is unified in its purpose to preach the gospel among all the nations."

—Ben Mandrell, President and CEO
Lifeway Christian Resources

"*Make Disciples of All Nations* provides a fresh perspective to the development of Baptist missions in general and Southern Baptist missions in particular. It presents the historical context preceding the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, the founding of the Foreign Mission Board, and its development into the International Mission Board in a readable, engaging style. The historically curious and the serious historian will both find this work a valuable addition to their libraries."

—Lloyd A. Harsch, Professor of Church History and Baptist Studies
Associate Dean of Theological and Historical Studies
Director, Institute for Faith and the Public Square
Occupying the Cooperative Program Chair of SBC Studies
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

"What a joy it is to read this recounting of the challenges, controversies, and successes of Southern Baptist missionary workers and leaders. This book is a must-read to understand our cooperative missionary endeavor. It also serves to recall us to our charter for obedience and cooperation—to the orders that Christ has given his church."

—Gregory A. Wills
Director, B. H. Carroll Center for Baptist Heritage and Mission
Research Professor of Church History and Baptist Heritage
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Make Disciples of All Nations: A History of Southern Baptist International Missions

Published by Kregel Academic, an imprint of Kregel Publications, 2450 Oak Industrial Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020.

ISBN 978-0-8254-4558-3

Printed in the United States of America

21 22 23 24 25 / 5 4 3 2 1

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FOREWORD

I'VE HAD THE PRIVILEGE of viewing Southern Baptist missions from a host of roles and relationships. Growing up in a Southern Baptist church, I learned of the love and admiration that people in the pew have for their missionaries, heard their prayers voiced for the lost around the world, and witnessed their sacrificial giving to support the work. As a ministry student in a Baptist college and Southern Baptist seminary, I learned about our denomination's mission history and sat under the teaching of former missionaries. As a local church pastor and seminary professor, I taught about that history and led our church and my students to partner with our missionaries. As trustee of the International Mission Board, SBC, I learned about the inner workings of Southern Baptists' most revered missions entity and began to see its vast reach among the nations.

None of these roles or relationships compares, however, to the view that I now have as IMB president. How I wish every Southern Baptist could see what I see! The cumulative impact of 175 years of churches working together to fulfill the Great Commission is staggering not only in terms of the fruit that remains from that work but also in terms of the new pathways that are being forged. Every year, hundreds of thousands of lost people overseas hear the gospel, tens of thousands of new believers are baptized, and thousands of new churches are planted as Southern Baptists undertake their cooperative mission work among the nations.

The vision of heaven that John describes in Revelation 7:9–10 includes a vast multitude from every nation, all tribes, peoples, and

languages. For 175 years, Southern Baptists have faithfully stewarded our part of the vision. As we learn about those who have gone before us, may we be inspired to go ourselves, even to the nations.

—Paul Chitwood, PhD
President, International Mission Board

INTRODUCTION

In the year 2020 the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention celebrated its 175th anniversary of making disciples of all nations as a denomination of SBC churches. Since its formation by the newly formed Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, the Foreign Mission Board (which would later become the IMB) has represented the enduring commitment of Southern Baptists to engage cooperatively the task of the Great Commission around a common confession of faith through times of many internal and external challenges. The history of SBC missions is a great adventure, one of survival and expansion, conflict and resolution, trials and triumph, sacrifice, and the planting of gospel churches to the ends of the earth. From its beginning the FMB has endured, adapted, and grown significantly in the midst of all the changes and upheavals that the United States and the world have experienced. The FMB survived the Civil War, Reconstruction, two world wars, economic boom and bust, and widespread civil unrest during the decades of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The SBC and its missions agency persevered in orthodoxy during the theological downgrade of many mainline denominations during the so-called modernist-fundamentalist controversy, the rise of the ecumenical movement, and the theological challenges faced in various quarters of SBC seminary and denominational life that surfaced in the 1960s and 1970s. The IMB has faced the tragic events of 9/11 and the subsequent "war on terror" that has lasted until this day, the hyperpolarization of politics, postdenominationalism, denominational tribalism, the challenges and

opportunities of globalization, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. In all of these periods of American and world history, the FMB/IMB has by God's grace survived, adapted, and thrived through its commitment to cooperative missions founded on a common confession of faith. This book tells the story of SBC missions efforts and progress to make disciples of all nations.

The following book was born out of the need to update and retell the history of Southern Baptist missions from a contemporary perspective for a new generation in light of the dramatic changes in the world and in the SBC over the last twenty-five years. William R. Estep wrote the last comprehensive history in 1994 in his *Whole Gospel Whole World: The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention 1845–1995.* Much has transpired over the last twenty-five years in SBC denominational life and missions. The name has changed from the Foreign Mission Board to the International Mission Board. The IMB has implemented major strategic and organizational changes. The IMB board of trustees has elected three new presidents. The manner in which the IMB relates to churches and funding missions has evolved. The SBC landscape has become more diverse in approaches to ministry, theological subgroups, and demographic composition. Globalization has led to the nations migrating to the large urban areas of the world, including North America. Missions is no longer only "over there" but also in the cities of the United States, where immigration has brought about significant demographic shifts in local populations. As a result, the IMB now works closely with the North American Mission Board to develop strategies and equip churches to reach diaspora peoples in North America. Churches of the SBC and other evangelical churches are in need of thinking missiologically like never before in order to reach their own internationally diverse neighborhoods with the gospel of Jesus Christ. A retelling of the story of SBC missions will be one way to help shape missions strategy today.

One of the most significant changes to the context of SBC missions is the rise of global Christianity and the multiplication of Baptist and evangelical missions partners worldwide. Since the

mid-twentieth century the epicenter of global Christianity has shifted to the Global South. Baptist churches and conventions are present on every continent because of the tireless efforts of FMB/IMB missionaries and their national partners. More than two centuries of the evangelical Protestant missionary movement has borne fruit. From its beginning, the FMB has been a part of the larger evangelical missions movement that has sown the seeds of the gospel, leading to a shift in the epicenter of the evangelical world from its traditional strength in the West to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Rethinking the role of the IMB in the age of global evangelical Christianity is a pressing need that can be partly met by an updated review of SBC missions history.

The time has arrived for a fresh examination and reflection on where we have been in order for us to understand where we now stand in our cooperative missions efforts and where we should go into the twenty-first century in the Great Commission ministries of the people called Southern Baptists. We have chosen to utilize the basic approach of Estep in his *Whole Gospel Whole World* by telling the story of Southern Baptist missions through each administration of the FMB/IMB. The content of this work differs, however, in emphases, perspective, and content. *Making Disciples of All Nations*, as an edited work, includes contributions from across SBC life. We decided at the beginning to utilize the perspective of historians, theologians, and missiologists to retell the story. This work presents chapters that are unique but when taken together provide a rich mosaic of SBC missions in all its diversity. We asked each contributor to write from his academic strength. Missiologist contributors address issues of missions strategy more than others. Historians do a deeper dive into historical details that shed light on the events and personalities involved in the advancement of SBC missions. Theologians offer more color on internal and external theological challenges and issues that gave shape to SBC missions. A guiding assumption for this work is that SBC missions activity does not exist in a vacuum; the contexts of world events, denominational life, American cultural developments, and the broader

evangelical Christian world have shaped it deeply. The viewpoints of the historian, theologian, and missiologist offer a more complete picture of how and why the FMB has evolved over time and the driving forces that have molded it.

The present work is meant to be celebratory of 175 years of cooperative missions while also being critically reflective. This book is a family portrait painted by members of the SBC family, each committed to cooperative missions founded on a common confession of faith. Southern Baptists, along with all believers, are works in progress both individually and corporately. Authors have sympathetically yet often directly addressed both the strengths and weaknesses present in SBC missions history. Such history is replete with inspirational sacrifices of those whom God has called to serve cross-culturally and of the faithful "rope-holders" who have made SBC missions possible through sending, praying, and sacrificial giving. A renewed narrative of SBC missions will hopefully inform current missions practice and strengthen the ties of cooperation among SBC churches.

In chapter 1 Jason Duesing begins our narrative with an examination of SBC pre-beginnings—the missionary roots that ultimately led to the formation of the SBC and, consequently, the FMB. He suggests a change in methodology in the way historians look at the origins and progress of Baptist missions. He acknowledges three prevailing positions on the genesis of Baptist history and missions: the single-source view, the multi-source view, and the genetic view of Baptist history and missions. Rather than only considering who came first in Baptist missions, Duesing argues that an assessment of the Baptist missions movement cannot be reduced to an oversimplified chronological approach and is not fully captured with the multi-source or genetic views. He argues, however, for a "symphonious" view of Baptist missions that is composed of many contributions and movements. While Duesing acknowledges multiple contributions to Baptist missions, he narrows his biographical sketches to three key figures who represent significant movements in this symphony of Baptist missions: (1) the African

American George Liele, (2) the Englishman William Carey, and (3) the American Adoniram Judson. While Duesing covers all three of these men in chronological order, he notes that their contributions to Baptist missions go far beyond their era.

In chapter 2 W. Madison Grace II chronicles the beginning of the SBC, the FMB, and the contribution of its first corresponding secretary, James B. Taylor (1846–1971). Grace rightly points out that SBC missions are a part of a larger evangelical missions narrative but has its own unique beginning and subsequent associational-denominational approach to missions funding and administration. He identifies Adoniram and Ann Judson's embrace of New Testament baptism, and their resulting break with the Congregationalist missions sending agency that appointed them, as the spark that led Baptists in America to form a denomination for the support of missions at home and abroad. Fellow Congregationalist missionary Luther Rice also converted to Baptist views on baptism and took up the task of raising support for the Judsons and other Baptist missionaries who would follow. Rice's efforts led to the formation of the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions, on May 18, 1814, also known as the Triennial Convention because it met every three years. The Triennial Convention united Baptists in the North and the South for the cause of missions through its Baptist Board of Foreign Missions but ultimately split in 1845 over the controversial practice in the South of appointing slaveholding missionaries, a practice supported in the South but rejected in the North. Grace identifies the pro-slavery stance of Baptists in the South and their unwillingness to reject the practice as the underlying issue that led to the split in 1845. This birth in sin, as Grace points out, marked the beginning of the SBC and consequently of SBC missions.

J. B. Taylor served a lengthy and distinguished tenure as the first corresponding secretary of the FMB. As Grace notes, he was a foundation stone for the FMB that set the direction for its growth and expansion into new fields. Taylor was a pastor with a heart for

reaching the nations for Christ. He led the FMB to exert its initial efforts in China, a mission that would become the single greatest investment in dollars and personnel until the communist insurgency expelled the last remaining missionaries after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Grace recounts that Africa soon became a new field of service for the FMB as Taylor addressed two of the greatest challenges of the new missions agency: recruiting new missionaries and raising funds to support the work. The FMB made attempts to open a Japan mission but to no avail. It did manage, however, to open new work in Italy at the close of Taylor's tenure as corresponding secretary. Taylor and the FMB would face and overcome many obstacles; the largest and most obvious challenge was the devastation and interruption of support for SBC missions due to the Civil War. The money quickly dried up, but many missionaries found a means of sustaining their work and presence on the field until funding resumed after the war. Taylor also skillfully led the FMB through the opposition of the Landmarkers, led by J. R. Graves, and the anti-missions movement that opposed boards managing missionaries, a duty they believed belonged solely to the local churches. Taylor and other SBC leaders gave a hearing to Graves's concerns and formulated a solution that drew Graves's praise and support while also preserving the denominational approach to missions. Taylor ended his leadership at the FMB after having laid a foundation that enabled the SBC to strengthen and expand its missionary efforts.

In chapter 3 Anthony Chute picks up the story of SBC missions after Taylor under the leadership of his successor, Henry A. Tupper (1872–1893). Tupper grew the missions force from nineteen to ninety-two and initiated new work in three new countries: Japan, Mexico, and Brazil. He is also known as the FMB leader who supported and encouraged the appointment of single female missionaries; Lottie Moon is the best-known single female missionary who was appointed under his tenure. During Tupper's leadership, the Woman's Missionary Union, inspired by Lottie Moon, established an annual Christmas offering for its overseas operations—an offering

that would later be named the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. He also emphasized the importance of the missionary wife in reaching women with the gospel of Christ and thereby reaching the entire family. Chute notes that Tupper believed reaching one woman for Christ would be greater in its influence on the family and society than reaching two men.

The FMB work in Brazil would become the second-largest SBC missions investment, second only to China, during Tupper's tenure and beyond. The appointment of William and Ann Bagby in 1881 proved to be consequential for the expansion of SBC missions work in Brazil and led to a multigenerational impact by the Bagby family on missions efforts in this country.

Chute notes that Tupper demonstrated his doctrinal and diplomatically driven leadership by skillfully handling the appointment recension of John Stout and T. P. Bell, both former students of Crawford Toy at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Both men embraced Toy's higher-critical view of the Bible, which viewed Scripture as containing errors. Tupper also led the FMB through the termination of T. P. Crawford and his Gospel Mission Movement, which many believed was rooted in Landmarkism. The administration of Tupper strengthened the foundation of FMB missions that was laid by Taylor and set the stage for the future.

In Chapter 4, Mike Morris examines developments within the FMB during the leadership tenure of R. J. Willingham (1893–1914), successor to Tupper. Morris recounts that Willingham was the pastor of First Baptist Church in Memphis when he received the call to serve as corresponding secretary of the FMB. By the time of Willingham's appointment, the FMB was already involved in China, Japan, Africa, Italy, Brazil, and Mexico. Willingham's administration would continue a focus on China that contained the largest share of missionaries in any field of service. He inherited the controversy initiated by T. P. Crawford's Gospel Mission Movement and the controversy over methodology that ensued. Morris helpfully points out that John Nevius and the self-supporting principle for new churches influenced Crawford and many in the China

mission, including Lottie Moon. The FMB, however, did not fully embrace the principles of Nevius, choosing instead to continue to offer financial support to local leadership with gradual reductions over time but remaining committed to evangelism, education, publishing, and medical ministries that characterized FMB work from the beginning. Willingham was in leadership when Lottie Moon died on Christmas Eve 1912, aboard a ship bound for home in the harbor of Kobe, Japan. Morris points out that by the time of his death in office in 1914, Willingham managed to grow the number of missionaries from ninety-four to three hundred during his tenure and expand into Argentina and Uruguay.

In chapter 5 David S. Dockery explores the monumental changes within the SBC with the formation and implementation of the Cooperative Program during the tenures of J. Franklin Love (1915–1928), successor to Willingham, and T. Bronson Ray (1928–1933); and the issuing of the 1925 Baptist Faith and Message. Dockery also offers a look at how the broader national and international context of the FMB during these two administrations shaped SBC missions. J. F. Love began his administration at the beginning of World War I. Concurrently, American Christianity was engaged in a war of its own over the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" and biblical authority. The so-called modernist-fundamentalist controversy was underway among Northern Baptists and Presbyterians. This controversy prompted the publication of *The Fundamentals* in 1915; Southern Baptists were among its contributors and signatories. Southern Baptists responded to the debate by issuing in 1925 the Baptist Faith and Message, an update of the 1833 New Hampshire Confession. This publication demonstrated the long-standing practice of the SBC to cooperate together for missions around a common confession of faith. As Dockery observes, in the same year as the adoption of a new confession of faith, the Cooperative Program was also adopted by the SBC; this occurrence brought about a significant advance in the way Southern Baptist churches carried out cooperative ministries. Churches would give to the Cooperative Program, and then money would be distributed to the various boards and

entities from this central fund. This practice eliminated the need for agents of boards to inundate local churches with solicitations of support. These significant doctrinal and administrative changes took place during the tenure of J. Franklin Love and eventually led to the great eras of growth for SBC missions in the post–World War II economic boom. Following J. Franklin Love, T. B. Ray served a short stint as corresponding secretary.

In chapter 6 John Massey covers the administration of Charles Maddry (1933–1944), who immediately followed T. B. Ray. Maddry served during a time of great global crises: the Great Depression, the Sino-Japanese wars, the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany, and the rise of a militarized and expansionist Japan. Maddry was an eyewitness to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the entrance of the United States into World War II. He worked tirelessly to eliminate crippling FMB debt, restructured the FMB to distribute leadership through regional secretaries, and moved the FMB home office to its current location. In many ways Maddry was a pivotal figure. He led during a time when business practices were being more widely adopted in ministry and more modes of international travel had become readily available. He was known as the traveling secretary, who made many overseas trips to check on the progress of the work and minister to FMB missionaries. The FMB work in China and Brazil continued to hold prominence of place during Maddry's administration; but the FMB also intensified its work in many other fields, including but not limited to Africa.

In chapter 7 Keith E. Eitel highlights the important legacy of leadership established by the administration of M. Theron Rankin (1945–1953). Rankin served at key moments in world history as an FMB missionary and later as FMB executive secretary. As Eitel notes, Rankin was the first field missionary to serve as executive secretary; this pattern was followed by the FMB for the next four administrations. He served with distinction as a missionary in China during its days of conflict and turmoil. FMB executive secretary Charles Maddry met Rankin for the first time during one of his trips to China and was greatly impressed with Rankin. Eventually,

Maddry elevated Rankin to the position of secretary of the Orient. As Maddry's service to the FMB came to an end, the board set its sights on Rankin to follow Maddry, and he did so in January 1945. Rankin is credited with laying the foundation for the great period of missions advance that would come to full flowering in the administration of his successor, Baker James Cauthen.

In chapter 8 Thomas Nettles covers the expansive and consequential FMB period under the leadership of Baker James Cauthen (1954–1979). He also, like Rankin before him, served as a missionary to China and as the secretary of the Orient before becoming executive secretary. He presided over the FMB when its missionaries had been expelled from communist China in 1951; these missionaries mostly scattered to serve among the Chinese diaspora all across Asia. By the end of Cauthen's tenure, China had begun to show a new openness to the West and to move away from the extremes of Mao's policies and system of governance. Cauthen oversaw the largest period of growth in SBC missions until that time, building on the Advance program begun by Rankin and being a part of implementing the SBC-wide initiative, Bold Mission Thrust. As Nettles notes, by 1978 the FMB had missionaries in ninety-four countries. Under Cauthen many new categories of service were initiated that had not existed in previous administrations. One example was the well-known Journeyman program. Cauthen led the FMB during widespread domestic unrest—the push for racial equality, the aftermath of the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and many other major crises, both domestic and international. He was a steady hand during the theological crises that arose in the 1960s and that continued until the end of his tenure. In his twenty-six years of service as executive secretary of the FMB, Cauthen proved to be a true statesman in SBC life and the embodiment of the convention's global missions commitments.

In chapter 9 John Mark Terry and Micah Fries introduce the administration of Keith Parks (1980–1992). They note that Parks, before his appointment as FMB president, served as an FMB missionary assigned to the Indonesian Baptist Seminary and later in

various leadership positions within the organization. Parks led the FMB to embrace a focus on unreached people groups, a new concept at the time, and to establish a global strategy group that sought the best methods for advancing the Great Commission with focused attention on the unreached. Parks helped with the implementation of Bold Mission Thrust prior to his election as president and continued the program implemented across the SBC while serving as president. Terry and Fries highlight the creation of the nonresidential missionary model and the formation of Cooperative Services International (CSI) as two important contributions made by Parks to FMB strategy. Parks formed CSI and the nonresidential model to serve the unreached with creative and new strategies for communicating the gospel; this model would carry forward under the administration of Jerry Rankin, Parks's successor. Terry and Fries note that Parks also brought in Anglican David Barrett to help with identifying unreached people groups and developing strategies for reaching them. Barrett's impact on Parks and the work of the FMB was seismic and enduring. The focus on unreached people groups became ensconced in FMB strategy and continues as a primary emphasis of the IMB today. Parks established himself as an innovative missiologist, but his tenure ended in controversy. His criticisms of the Conservative Resurgence in the SBC would eventually lead to his resignation in the midst of controversy and conflict with the board of trustees.

In chapter 10 Robin Dale Hadaway offers a review of Jerry Rankin's lengthy and transformational tenure as FMB president (1993–2010). Hadaway highlights the many significant changes that Rankin made to the structure, strategy, and overall operations of the FMB, one of which was changing the name from FMB to IMB. Rankin dissolved CSI and mainstreamed its strategy and ethos into the overall operations of the IMB. The focus on the unreached that began under Parks was refined and furthered during the Rankin years. This focus led to the deployment of personnel to fields of service with less than 2 percent of an indigenous, evangelical Christian witness. The IMB gradually shifted personnel and efforts from

traditional fields of service to those they deemed underserved by the gospel. The FMB-localized mission structure was abolished in favor of a regional leadership model under Rankin. Rankin oversaw the introduction of new strategies such as Church Planting Movements, as outlined in a booklet authored by David Garrison; the Camel Method, a strategy designed by Kevin Greeson for Muslim contexts; and Training for Trainers, created by Steve Smith and Ying Kai. As Hadaway notes, each of the major changes that Rankin made to the IMB was met with debate and controversy. Perhaps more than any other president before him, Jerry Rankin made the most significant and lasting changes to the IMB.

In chapter 11 Hadaway discusses the brief but important presidency of Tom Elliff (2011–2014), who followed Rankin at the IMB. As Hadaway notes, Elliff was a third-generation pastor who served for two years with his wife, Jeannie, in Zimbabwe. They returned to the United States after their daughter's automobile accident in order to provide further medical care for her. Prior to his election as president, Elliff served as senior vice president for spiritual nurture and church relations under Jerry Rankin. Elliff's presidency of the IMB was marked by pastoral guidance of IMB personnel, an emphasis on the doctrinal preparation of missionaries for service, and a challenge to all SBC churches to adopt and work toward reaching an unreached people group.

In chapter 12 Paul Akin covers the relatively brief but significant presidency of Elliff's successor, David Platt (2014–2018). As noted by Akin, Platt at thirty-six years of age was the youngest IMB president ever to serve in the role. Since the time of M. Theron Rankin, Platt represented the first IMB president who did not serve as a field missionary but brought gifts and skills needed for the moment to guide and direct the work of the IMB. Platt represented a generational shift in leadership within the SBC and the IMB. Akin notes that he inherited an organization that was greatly affected by the economic recession that occurred between 2007 and 2009. Platt skillfully helped to align the organization's financial realities with the number of staff and field personnel employed by the organization.

He brought the number of field personnel down from approximately 4,700 to 3,700, mostly through incentives for voluntary separations. Platt was also deeply concerned about grounding IMB missions strategy in clear biblical teaching and principles. He commissioned the *Foundations* document, which outlined how IMB strategy would operate within doctrinal parameters. As Akin notes, Platt was also concerned to mobilize SBC churches for the task. He often used the example of the Moravians to set out his vision for mobilizing a "limitless" number of Southern Baptists to join IMB efforts around the world for the cause of the Great Commission. Platt continued the emphasis on reaching the unreached peoples of the world by launching a new emphasis on reaching large urban centers of the Global South. The pull of the pastorate eventually led to Platt's transition from the IMB to serve as the teaching elder of McLean Bible Church in Virginia.

Akin in chapter 12 also introduces David Platt's successor, Paul Chitwood, who was elected as IMB president in 2018. As Akin mentioned, like Platt, Chitwood never served as a missionary but was uniquely prepared for the role as IMB president through the pastorate, as an IMB trustee, and as the executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. In an era of flatline Cooperative Program giving, having a seasoned champion for the Cooperative Program will prove to be an advantage for the IMB. Chitwood has established a leadership team to carry out his vision for the IMB as it moves deeper into the twenty-first century, building on a 173-year legacy of missions leadership and missions service before him.

Now we turn to the pre-beginnings of SBC missions.

1

PRE-BEGINNINGS

Jason G. Duesing

WHO'S ON FIRST?

When historians classify historical figures in terms of who was first to do something, even when the figures did not think of themselves by such classifications, sometimes the historical accounts can read like the famous Abbott and Costello skit, "Who's on First?"[1] This is very much the case with the ongoing scholarship surrounding who was the first modern missionary or who should be termed "the father of modern missions." Sometimes, when I read these, a skit like this comes to my mind:

1 "'Who's on First?' by Abbott and Costello," *The Baseball Almanac*, https://www.baseball-almanac.com/humor4.shtml (accessed May 11, 2020).

Who was on the mission field first?

That's what I am asking, who?

Exactly.

Exactly what?

What's on second?

I thought Judson was second.

No, what's on second. I don't know is on third.

Who's on first?

Exactly.

Who *is* on first, Liele or Carey?[2]

Who's on first. I don't know Liele or Carey.

So you don't know Liele, Carey, or who's on third?

Who's on first!

Ah!

To give some context to what I mean, here are just a sampling of quotations:

> 1991—"Books written in English have frequently spoken of William Carey (1761–1834) as 'the father of modern

2 The name Liele can also be spelled as Leile or Lisle.

missions,' and of the work that he brought into being as the first Protestant missionary of modern times. Our earlier chapters have shown that this is a misunderstanding."[3]

1998—"Thus by the time William Carey—often mistakenly perceived to be the first Baptist missionary—sailed for India in 1793, Liele had worked as a missionary for a decade."[4]

2002—"William Carey . . . is most deserving of the title, 'Father of the Modern Mission Movement.' . . . However, he should not be considered the first Baptist foreign missionary! That distinction should be reserved for certain African-American Baptists who left their homes, journeyed to new lands, and started churches a decade before Carey went to India."[5]

2010—"The man often regarded as the first Baptist missionary, George Liele . . . a slave and ordained preacher."[6]

2012—"William Carey may have been the greatest missionary since the time of the apostles. He rightly deserves the honor of being known as 'the father of the modern missions movement.' . . . The man I believe is the pioneer of Baptists missions was a black man and a former slave by the name of George Leile. . . . Here is a modern missions grandfather."[7]

3 Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 1991), 222.
4 Alan Neely, "Liele, George," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998), 400–401.
5 Christopher Ballew, "The Impact of African-American Antecedents on the Baptist Foreign Missionary Movement: 1782–1825" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 218.
6 David W. Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 242–43.
7 Daniel L. Akin, *10 Who Changed the World* (Nashville: B&H, 2012), 1, 86.

> 2015—"[Liele] should, therefore, probably be considered the first Baptist missionary, though some historians of mission would demur, since a 'missionary,' by definition, is sent out by a church."[8]
>
> 2018—"Even though William Carey may be called the father of the modern missionary movement, George Liele left America and planted the gospel in Jamaica a full ten years before Carey left England."[9]
>
> 2019—"George Liele (c. 1750–1820) was America's first cross-cultural missionary."[10]

These observations aside, what is taking place among historians is important, for it reveals that the entire story has not been told of who all helped propel Protestants to contribute to the growing task of global evangelism in the late eighteenth century. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the questions, Who's on first? and, Does it matter when assessing the history of missionary involvement by Baptists? That is, this chapter will acknowledge that George Liele was the first modern Baptist missionary and that it is right to consider William Carey the father of modern missions and Adoniram Judson as the pioneer American Baptist missionary. But I hope to do more than that.[11] Yes, who did what on which day is vital for understanding the historical task, but George Liele's contribution is far greater than just being first. In our efforts to reclaim him, we've also limited him. And then there is the matter of how he, Carey,

8 Anthony L. Chute, Nathan A. Finn, and Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Baptist Story* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015), 98.

9 Lesley Hildreth, "Missionaries You Should Know: George Liele," *IMB*, June 26, 2018.

10 Edward L. Smither, *Christian Mission: A Concise Global History* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019), xiii.

11 For the purposes of this chapter, I define *missionary* as "one who crosses cultures to share the gospel." See Jason G. Duesing, "The Pastor as Missionary," in *Portraits of a Pastor*, ed. Jason K. Allen (Chicago: Moody, 2017).

or Judson considered themselves. What would they make of all these titles? This chapter will answer this question by providing a brief background of the history of the beginnings of the modern missions movement in order to suggest a new methodology for missions historians and theologians to consider, and then it will give a biographical treatment of each figure and their missions strategies to illustrate the methodology.

THE MODERN MISSIONS MOVEMENT

From 1937 to 1945, church historian Kenneth Scott Latourette published his seven-volume *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*.[12] What is remarkable about this massive undertaking is that three of the volumes are dedicated just to the nineteenth century. Following Latourette's emphasis and organization, Ralph Winter classified the history of Christian missions into epochs; the last, which covered 1800–2000, he titled "Modern Missions."[13] What then is premodern missions, or, what happened to missions after the Reformation?

Following the Reformation, Protestants were slow to assemble any kind of organized missionary approach that would rival the Roman Catholic orders. To be sure, the Reformers themselves did engage in some global evangelism, but the movement could not yet sustain the transportation of churches or missionaries.[14] In the seventeenth century, the German Pietist movement influenced Dutch Protestantism and shaped those sent as chaplains throughout their trading colonies. In the early eighteenth century, the Pietists

12 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 7 vols. (New York: Harper, 1937–1945).

13 Ralph D. Winter, "The Kingdom Strikes Back: Ten Epochs of Redemptive History," in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, eds. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 3rd ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 195–213.

14 See Glenn S. Sunshine, "Protestant Missions in the Sixteenth Century," in *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the History of World Missions*, eds. Martin I. Klauber and Scott M. Manetsch (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 12–22; Michael A. G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson Sr., *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin's Missional Vision and Legacy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014).

shaped Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, who gave refuge to persecuted Moravian Christians. This colony would awaken to the missionary task and take the gospel to the West Indies, Greenland, the Americas, South Africa, Egypt, and Tibet.

The Moravian effort coincided with the Great Awakening in England and America through John Wesley, who had some connection to the Pietists. In New England among the Puritans, there had been some cross-cultural work done among Native Americans by John Eliot and then David Brainerd. The accounts of this expansion of the gospel as well as further development of the need for participation in global evangelism were fueled by the writing and ministry of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. As Protestants entered the nineteenth century, they organized their efforts in several mission societies and agencies to enable their churches to fund and send their missionaries. Thus, as George Liele and William Carey were taking the gospel to other cultures in their respective parts of the world, they were doing so on the eve of what we know now as the modern missions movement.

The term *father of modern missions* originated following William Carey's death in an admiring biography by George Smith:

> Yet we, ninety-three years after he went forth with the Gospel to Hindostan, may venture to place him where the Church History of the future is likely to keep him—amid the uncrowned kings of men who have made Christian England what it is, under God, to its own people and to half the human race. These are Chaucer, the Father of English Verse; Wiclif, the Father of the Evangelical Reformation in all lands; Hooker, the Father of English Prose; Shakspere, the Father of English Literature; Milton, the Father of the English Epic; Bunyan, the Father of English allegory; Newton, the Father of English Science; Carey, the Father of the Second Reformation through Foreign Missions.[15]

15 George Smith, *The Life of William Carey, D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary* (London: John Murray, 1885), 439.

Had Carey been alive, he likely would have discouraged this assessment. When writing his *Enquiry* in 1792, he chronicled the spread of the gospel from the apostle Paul to the Reformation. He then depicted the modern era by recognizing the work among Native Americans by Eliot, Brainerd, and Carey's contemporaries, Mr. Kirkland and Mr. Sergeant. Carey included mention of the mission work of the Dutch and then lauded the work of the Moravian Brethren.[16] Nathan Finn mentions that Carey "was keenly aware that he was in continuity with a movement that had already commenced."[17]

This is not to say that no one was aware of Liele's contribution. Many in England were aware due to the publication of Liele's letters in John Rippon's *The Baptist Annual Register.* While there is no evidence that Carey read *The Register*, there is a high likelihood that he did because of the notices about his own works that appeared at the same time. *The Register* chronicled the first notice of the publication of Carey's *Enquiry* in 1792, a notice concerning Carey's ordination, and the minutes of the Northamptonshire Association that documented the formation of what would become the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS). These reports are interspersed in and around the ongoing correspondence of George Liele to John Rippon, a local pastor and editor.[18] As the historian Brian Stanley notes, "Thus, even before the formation of the BMS, Jamaican Baptists were brought to the attention of Particular Baptists in England."[19]

16 William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Leicester, 1792).

17 Nathan A. Finn, ed., *Help to Zion's Travellers* (Mountain Home, AR: BorderStone, 2011), xvn9.

18 John Rippon, *The Baptist Annual Register for 1790, 1791, 1792, and Part of 1793* (London, 1793), iv. "Having had a wish therefore to gratify the Brethren at home and abroad; and hoping, under a Divine blessing to be the instrument of bringing many of the churches so far acquainted, That that they may have an opportunity of *relieving* one anothers wants, of *praying* for each other when the ways of Sion mourn, and of *praising* God in the enjoyment of prosperous circumstances—I determined in the year 1790, God willing, to print a periodical work, which should be intitled, The Baptist Annual Register."

19 Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792–1992* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 69–70.

A SUGGESTED METHODOLOGY

Among Baptist historians, there has been an ongoing methodological discussion about how one can best interpret the Baptist tradition. Some have argued for a single source, or "monogenesis," of great authority that anchors the Baptist tradition, which I argue in another essay is largely an unhelpful contribution, especially as it finds expression in ultra-successionist forms.[20] Most have, instead, acknowledged that there is a multi-source, or "polygenesis," influence that comprises the Baptist tradition.[21] Baptists are a product of the Reformation, yes, but their organizational formation comes in England later, for example. In addition, another historian, William Brackney, has argued that a better way is to think of the various epochs of the Baptist movement as a "genetic approach that attempts to make a historical connection between the various streams of Baptist thought, while allowing for diversity in evolved thinking."[22] This idea of searching for shared DNA, if you will, has merit, but I am afraid it sometimes loses theological precision. Timothy George also used a genetics metaphor when describing his methodology: "Historical theology is the genetic study of Christian faith and doctrine . . . [that] investigates the nuances and modalities, the developments and deviations, of the efforts of all Christians."[23] I like the specificity here best as it attempts to find common doctrinal commitments and seeks to leave no person behind.

What does this have to do with an assessment of the beginnings of the modern missions movement? What I am suggesting

20 Jason G. Duesing, "Baptist Contributions to the Christian Tradition," in *Baptists and the Christian Tradition*, eds. Matthew Y. Emerson, Christopher W. Morgan, and R. Lucas Stamps (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2020).

21 See James M. Stayer, Werner Packull, and Klaus Deppermann, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 49, no. 2 (Apr 1975): 83–121; and Malcolm B. Yarnell, *The Formation of Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007), 7.

22 William H. Brackney, *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004), 2–3.

23 Timothy George, "Dogma beyond Anathema: Historical Theology in the Service of the Church," in *Review and Expositor* 84, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 691.

is that historians are thinking in an unhelpful way about modern missions leaders when thinking merely in terms of the chronology of progeny. However, this is not to say it is unhelpful to identify who might be the first to do something or from whom a tradition developed. I affirm those clarifying efforts. Rather, I am saying that when assessing the modern missions movement, we need to do more than that if we are going to capture with faithfulness the movement itself.

Thus, instead of monogenesis, polygenesis, or a genetic approach, I present what I call a symphonious approach for assessing the modern missions movement. This era in history is, after all, a movement, and much like the musical use of that term, we see similar themes—there are many diverse and complementary components that make up a symphony. For the symphony to achieve its desired sound, all must play their part. Symphonies usually are composed of four movements, each of which tells part of the story at different speeds and intensity.

For example, when considering the Protestant Reformation, historians and theologians do not often speak in terms of who was the first Reformer or who is the father of the Reformation. Rather, those events and people in church history made up a symphonic movement. Like its musical counterpart, it had a prelude in Wyclif and Hus, struck its opening notes with Luther, and saw further development and deployment in Zwingli, Calvin, and Cranmer. Complementing these major sections were a host of other Reformers, with their own social and cultural events, advancements in technology, translation, and specific convictions that added to the color and depth of the symphony that was the Reformation.

So it is with the modern missions movement. The Reformers themselves played some parts of the initial piece, but the Moravians and others opened the overture in its beginning. George Liele, then, represents the first movement with a unique and influential contribution that many have overlooked, yet he mobilized and influenced many. Carey, shaped by all who went before, gave a full, well-organized presentation; the DNA of such serves as a refrain

for later movements that include Americans Adoniram and Ann Judson and many other missions societies, organizations, and work.

What is more, there are other figures who contribute to this symphony who have yet to be acknowledged. Timothy George notes the underappreciated John Sutcliff.[24] Many women advanced the cause of global missions from 1800 to 2000 who have not yet received full study. In addition, there is a need to research the churches involved, those sent by the churches to check on the missionaries and send reports, and the printers and distributors of letters and pamphlets from the field—and much more.

Thus, as far as titles and assessing the right chronology of the movement, I am arguing that it is more helpful to think of the modern missions movement like other movements in church history and to minimize the emphasis on titles in favor of assessing all the component parts and their unique contributions that serve to make up the movement as a whole.

GEORGE LIELE (CA. 1750–1828)

George Liele made a significant mark on American Christian history long before he left America for Jamaica as a missionary. Born as a slave in Virginia, Liele's father is thought to have been the earliest believing slave in America. They were owned by Henry Sharpe, who relocated the family to Georgia in 1770. In 1773, at the age of twenty-three, Liele was converted at Buckhead Creek Baptist Church, where Sharpe was a deacon. Liele would later share with the English Baptist pastor John Rippon that after hearing the gospel,

> the more I saw that I was condemned as a sinner before God, till at length I was brought to perceive that my life was held by a single thread. . . . I saw my condemnation

24 Timothy George, "Let It Go: Lessons from the Life of William Carey," in *Expect Great Things, Attempt Great Things*, eds. Allen Yeh and Chris Chun (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 8.

> in my own heart, and I found no way wherein I could escape the damnation of hell, only through the merits of my dying Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. . . . I felt such love and joy as my tongue was not able to express. After this I declared before the congregation of believers the work which God had done for my soul, and the same minister . . . baptized me.[25]

According to Albert Raboteau, Liele experienced "an inward, experiential realization of the doctrines of human depravity, divine sovereignty, and unconditional election made vividly apparent to the imagination and the emotions."[26] By May 1775, Liele was set apart by the church for the ministry after preaching before the congregation, and as a result, he was given his freedom by Henry Sharpe.[27]

Traveling near Savannah, Liele started meeting with a group of believers in Silver Bluff and soon established a church, the first African American Baptist church in America. One of his earliest converts was David George, who would eventually move to Sierra Leone to serve as the first Baptist pastor in Africa.[28] With the onset of the Revolutionary War, Liele was helped to move to Jamaica in

25 Rippon, *Register*, 332–33.

26 Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 268.

27 Edward A. Holmes, "George Liele: Negro Slavery's Prophet of Deliverance," *Baptist History & Heritage* 1 (August 1965), 28.

28 William Haun, "Missionaries You Should Know: David George," *IMB*, October 2, 2018. Lamin Sanneh, "George, David," in Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, 238–39. Ballew, in "The Impact of African-American Antecedents," considers both Liele and David George as the first Baptist missionaries and joint precursors to the modern missions movement, citing David George's relocation to Nova Scotia with the British at the time or just before Liele was deployed to Jamaica. However, while certainly a contemporary preacher who crossed cultures to preach the gospel, David George's Nova Scotia ministry was distinct from George Liele's in terms of its transient circumstances, whereas Liele's Jamaican work was indigenous from the start. That said, a case can be made for David George's role, and he should not be overlooked as a part of a symphonious approach. Regardless of how one assesses Nova Scotia, his missionary legacy as the first Baptist pastor in Africa due to his landing in Sierra Leone in 1792 is a vital component to the history of the early modern missions movement.

1783, where, once he fulfilled his financial obligations, he began a new church and ministered to the slaves while working as a farmer. Liele's cross-cultural missionary service came to him due to circumstance, but it led to years of fruitful engagement and gospel advance among the people living in Jamaica. His establishment of the church in Kingston helped shape the development of the Baptist movement in that country and beyond, for Liele's church covenant and vision for reaching people would encourage the BMS to focus on sending missionaries to Jamaica in 1814.[29] The covenant was designed to work with both slave and owner, emphasizing the need to settle disputes among believers, the need for slaves to have a recommendation from their owners before joining, and the mutual pursuit of charitableness between the two.[30]

As Alan Neely explains, "While [Liele] never openly challenged the system of slavery, he prepared the way for those who did."[31] Slavery would come to an end in Jamaica in 1838, and by that time there were over twenty thousand believers on the island as a result of Liele's ministry.[32] As a testimony to Liele's labors, Thomas Nicholas Swigle wrote the following to John Rippon in England:

> We have great reason in this island to praise and glorify the Lord, for his goodness and loving kindness in sending his blessed Gospel amongst us, by our well-beloved minister, Brother Liele. We were living in slavery to sin and Satan, and the Lord hath redeemed our souls to a

29 Horace O. Russell, "Prologue," in *George Liele's Life and Legacy*, ed. David T. Shannon (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2012), 10.

30 "1796 Covenant of George Liele," in Charles W. Deweese, *Baptist Church Covenants* (Nashville: Broadman, 1990), 190. For analysis of the covenant, see Russell, "Prologue," 10–11.

31 Neely, "Liele, George," 400–401.

32 Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood note, "The direction and approach of the developing African independence movement, to the extent that they can be attributed to a single individual, were determined by the power and personality of George Liele." Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 115.

> state of happiness to praise his glorious and ever blessed name. . . . The blessed Gospel is spreading wonderfully in this island; believers are daily coming to church, and we hope, in a little time, to see Jamaica become a Christian country.[33]

In my assessment, it is right and good to refer to George Liele as the first Baptist missionary and the first American missionary, but by taking a symphonious approach, there is far more to Liele's contribution to the modern missions movement than his place in line.

WILLIAM CAREY (1761–1834)

Born in a small village to a devout Anglican family, Carey regularly attended church but experienced no major life transformation.[34] By his teens he apprenticed as a shoemaker in a neighboring town, and through the persistent witness of his coworker John Warr, Carey saw his need for a Savior. Soon after his conversion, he left the Church of England and attended a Congregationalist church while intently reading and studying the Scriptures. When faced with the quandary of defending from the Bible his own infant baptism, Carey sought aid from John Ryland Sr., the pastor of College Lane Baptist Church in Northampton. In October 1783, Carey received believer's baptism from the pastor's son, John Ryland Jr. Shortly thereafter, another pastor encouraged Carey to preach for a small congregation while maintaining his shoemaking trade. As he contemplated pastoral ministry, he wrote this to his father, "I see more and more of my own insufficiency for the great work I am called to. The truths of God are amazingly profound, the souls of men infinitely precious, my own ignorance very great."[35]

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33 Rippon, *Register*, 542.

34 Portions of this section are presented with permission in a revised form from Jason G. Duesing, *Seven Summits in Church History* (Spring Hill, TN: Rainer, 2016).

35 Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life & Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 25.

By 1785, Carey had accepted a vocational pastorate in Moulton. There he established a friendship with Baptist pastor Andrew Fuller of neighboring Kettering.

During this time, Carey's regular reading of the voyages of Captain James Cook opened his eyes to the world. In addition, Robert Hall Sr.'s *Help to Zion's Travellers*, a doctrinal primer molded from the evangelical theology of Jonathan Edwards and distinct from the hyper-Calvinist climate in England among Baptists, helped shape Carey's theological thinking more than any other book outside the Bible. With a theology that held the sovereignty of God in balance with the responsibility of man and a growing zeal to see the saving message of the Lord Jesus taken to the ends of the earth, Carey set out to organize his thoughts for accomplishing this task. After wrestling with the Great Commission in Matthew 28, Carey raised the notion of global evangelism at a minister's meeting in 1785 but was told he "was a most miserable enthusiast for asking such a question." Despite the discouraging response, Carey continued his planning, and as Timothy George notes, his "concern for the unevangelized heathen in distant lands did not slacken his zeal to share the good news of Jesus Christ with sinners at home."[36]

In 1789, Carey went to pastor the Harvey Lane Church in Leicester. By May 1792, he published *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, an argument that the Great Commission remained as a mandate for all churches. This argument was novel in Carey's day, for the accepted understanding was that the Great Commission was fulfilled by the apostles and no longer applicable to believers. Carey, instead, read the text plainly and, as Nathan Finn argues, merely applied what he first learned from Robert Hall's doctrinal primer to foreign missions. In the *Enquiry*, Carey answered common objections to the idea of cross-cultural evangelism as well as documenting, in great detail, the vast numbers of people outside of Christ. As

36 George, *Faithful Witness*, 28.

George explains, "Carey's statistics were more than mere numbers on a chart. They represented persons, persons made in the image of God and infinitely precious to Him."[37]

At the next meeting of the Baptist Association, Carey preached a sermon from Isaiah 54 calling for the transmission of the gospel overseas, encouraging his hearers to "expect great things. Attempt great things."[38] Lest one think the staid work of church association meetings, convention sermons, and denominational resolutions are a hindrance for gospel advance, consider that the launch of a missions society that would contribute to the most wide-reaching missions movement began in a small free-church association meeting following a sermon with the formal passing of a resolution that read, "Resolved, that a plan be prepared against the next Ministers' meeting at Kettering, for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen."[39]

In October 1792, the Baptist Missionary Society was formed, and Carey stepped forward to join the first deployment to India. Of that day Fuller recounted:

> Our undertaking to India really appeared to me, on its commencement, to be somewhat like a few men, who were deliberating about the importance of penetrating a deep mine, which had never before been explored. We had no one to guide us; and, while we were thus deliberating, Carey, as it were, said, "Well, I will go down if you will hold the rope." But before he went down, he, as it seemed to me, took an oath from each of us at the mouth of the pit to this effect, that while we lived we should never let go the rope.[40]

37 Timothy George, quoted in *Seven Summits*, 97.
38 William Carey, quoted in *Seven Summits*, 100.
39 William Carey, quoted in *Seven Summits*, 100.
40 Andrew Fuller, in *The Complete Works of Rev. Andrew Fuller*, ed. Joseph Belcher (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1845), 1:68.

Carey made preparations to depart, and when writing to his father, he resolved, "I have many sacrifices to make. . . . But I have set my hand to the plough" (Luke 9:62).[41]

Carey and family arrived in Bengal in November 1793 and endured immediate hardship. In October 1794, the Careys lost their five-year-old son, Peter, to illness; this tragedy, along with other trials, wreaked havoc on both Careys, especially his wife. Paul Pease explains, "Over the past sixteen months Dorothy had suffered many hardships, hurts, losses, and fears: the sad and frantic farewells in England, the long voyage with a young baby, the culture shock of India, the uncertainty of the numerous moves, the humiliation and pain of dysentery, her sister left in Debhata, and now the death of her five year old son. It all became too much for her, and she seemed to retreat from all reality."[42]

Further, the first seven years saw very little spiritual fruit. Writing to his sister in November 1798, Carey said, "No one expects me to write about experience, or any of the common topics of Religion; nor to say anything about the Doctrines of the Gospel, but News, and continual accounts of marvelous things are expected from me. I have however no news to send, and as everything here is the same, no Marvels. . . . At best we scarcely expect to be anything more than Pioneers to prepare the Way for those who coming after us may be more useful than we have been."[43]

In 1799, however, Carey moved his family to Serampore and joined with two other missionaries, Joshua Marshman and William Ward. Known now as the Serampore trio, the three established the Serampore Mission and, in 1800, saw their first convert.

In October 1805, Carey and his fellow missionaries, like Liele, also adopted a covenant to guide their work. "The Serampore Form

41 Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey, D.D.* (London: Jackson and Walford, 1836), 64.

42 Paul Pease, *Travel with William Carey* (Leominster, UK: Day One, 2005), 84–85.

43 "William Carey to Ann Hobson," November 27, 1798, in *Baptist Autographs in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, 1741–1845*, ed. Timothy D. Whelan (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 91–92.

Agreement" gave guidance to the Serampore Mission but would also guide future missionaries.[44] Organized around ten principles, the Agreement discussed preferred methods for sharing the gospel, learning the culture, and the primacy of planting indigenous churches. The Agreement starts, "In order to be prepared for our great and solemn work, it is absolutely necessary that we set an infinite value upon immortal souls; that we often endeavor to affect our minds with the dreadful loss sustained by an unconverted soul launched into eternity."[45] Their plan was to read the agreement publicly three times a year "to keep these ideas alive in our minds."[46]

While Carey's legacy grew chiefly through Bible translation and as the trailblazer for scores of future missionaries, he, like Liele, also influenced the culture and country where he lived. In one instance, Carey wrote first about observing the practice of suttee (*sati*), wherein the wife would cast herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband. In April 1799, Carey wrote:

> As I was returning from Calcutta I saw . . . a Woman burning herself with the corpse of her husband, for the first time in my life. . . . I asked [the people assembled] what they were met for. They told me to burn the body of a dead man. I inquired if his Wife would die with him, they answered yes, and pointed to the Woman. . . . I asked them if this was the woman's choice, or if she were brought to it by an improper influence? They answered that it was perfectly voluntary. I talked till reasoning was no use, and then began to explain with all my might against what they were doing, telling them it was a shocking Murder. . . . But she in the most calm manner mounted the Pile, and danced on it with her hands extended as if in the utmost tranquility of spirit.[47]

44 Zane Pratt, *Introduction to Global Missions* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014), 120.
45 "The Serampore Form Agreement," *Baptist Quarterly* 12, no. 5 (January 1947): 130.
46 "The Serampore Form Agreement," 138.
47 William Carey to Ryland, Mudnabati, April 1, 1799, in *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, ed. Terry G. Carter (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 79–80.

Carey did not give up his advocacy. In December 1829 he wrote, "On the 4th of this month a regulation was passed by The Governor General in Council to forbid the burning or burying alive of Hindu Widows with their husbands. This is a matter of utmost importance and calls for our loudest thanks."[48]

William Carey died in 1834, leaving instructions that his tombstone read, "A wretched, poor, and helpless worm, On thy kind arms I fall." In my assessment, it is also right and good to refer to Carey as the father of modern missions when appropriate, but a symphonious approach shows there is much more to Carey's contribution to modern missions than just his paternal organizational and inspirational role in history.

ADONIRAM JUDSON (1788–1850)

In the summer of 1806, several dedicated young men attending Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, began to gather regularly to pray and read reports of the burgeoning work of Andrew Fuller, William Carey, and the new Baptist Missionary Society in England. On one occasion, while meeting in a field adjacent to the college campus, the students, trapped by a thunderstorm, took shelter in a haystack. Haystacks in 1806 were not the tightly bound bales we see today. Rather, they were piled as high as possible with only a pitchfork and a sundown deadline. Thus, as with a quickly assembled snow fort, the young men of Williams dove into and carved out a hay-lined shelter to continue their meeting. What they found, though, was far more rewarding than had they discovered a missing needle.

The "Haystack Prayer Meeting," as it came to be called, resulted in the dedication of these young men to personal participation in the global missions task, and the ensuing years led to the entry of formal American participation with the sending of Adoniram and Ann Judson along with several others to the East. Herein we can see a

48 William Carey to Sisters, December 17, 1829, Serampore, in Carter, *Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 84.

dotted line from 1806 to the present, for the Haystack Prayer Meeting is, in many ways, the Wittenberg door of American evangelicalism's awakening to the need and universal call for all believers to support, organize, and send many for global gospel proclamation. To be sure, Liele and Carey were formative examples and inspirations, but the organizing force that came after the Haystack Prayer Meeting is what sustained American involvement in global evangelism.

Recognizing the significance of that 1806 prayer meeting, later missions supporters dedicated in 1867 a monument on the grounds of Williams College, where it still resides in the college's Mission Park.[49] In recent years, Protestants have rightly remembered the five-hundredth anniversary of the actual Reformation events the door in Wittenberg helped to launch, events that would encourage the later formation of Williams College and many Protestant churches in New England. Therefore, in the spirit of the Reformation's gospel recovery, it is good and right also to consider the contribution of a group of praying students, heirs of Wittenberg themselves, in a symphonious approach to understanding the modern missions movement.

After meeting the Haystack leaders while studying at Andover Seminary, Adoniram Judson helped form the first missions sending agency in American history despite initial opposition by the culture around him.[50] While only a few were contemplating

49 The monument reads, "The Field is the World. The Birthplace of American Foreign Missions." The selection of the phrase "The Field is the World" is an intriguing one, but not unique given the time and missionary context. Taken from Matthew 13:38 and the Lord Jesus's explanation of the parable of the weeds, the correlation of the harvest field to the world appears first as merely background information, a description of the stage on which the parable would take place. However, as many would rightly note, the acknowledgment that the boundaries for the proclamation of the gospel are global is good and significant news for all dwellers in time and space distant from the land of Israel in the era of the New Testament. An example of how a missionary-minded preacher interpreted and applied Matthew 13 in the mid-nineteenth century is Gardiner Spring (1785–1873), and his sermon "The Extent of the Missionary Enterprise" (1840).

50 The next two paragraphs are adapted from Jason G. Duesing, "Standing Like a Steersman in a Storm: Courage to Act Like Men in a Culture that Says Otherwise," in *Nelson's Annual Preacher's Sourcebook*, ed. O. S. Hawkins (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2014), 4:300–303.

the idea of personal participation in the global missions task, and only a small group of churches in England had formally sent any missionaries by this time, Judson and his friends blazed a path that many Americans would follow. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider Judson as the pioneer American missionary.[51] As a student, he read a sermon by an English preacher that moved him to "break the strong attachment I felt to home and country, and to endure the thought of abandoning all my wonted pursuits and animating prospects."[52] This resulted in the following personal resolution: "The command of Christ, 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,' was presented to my mind with such clearness and power, that I came to a full decision, and though great difficulties appeared in my way, resolved to obey the command at all events."[53] Yet, there was no one to send him. Even though only a young man with young, supportive friends, Judson managed, by sheer courage and harnessed ambition, to persuade the older church leaders of the need to create a missions sending agency. Though he faced delays and criticism, eventually he saw the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) arise out of a network of New England Congregationalist churches.

While traveling to Asia, Ann and Adoniram Judson became convinced that the practice of infant baptism by their own Congregationalist churches did not fit with what they came to see as clear teaching from the Bible on the matter. Thus, when the Judsons arrived in India, they sent word that they could no longer serve in good conscience with the very mission board Judson helped found and on whose financial support they depended. Judson explained, "In a word, I could not find a single intimation in the New Testament, that the children and domestics of believers were members of the

51 See Jason G. Duesing, ed., *Adoniram Judson: A Bicentennial Appreciation of the Pioneer American Missionary* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012).

52 Adoniram Judson to Stephen Chapin, December 18, 1837, quoted in Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson, D.D.* (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1853), 1:51–52.

53 Judson to Chapin, in Wayland, *Memoir*, 1:51–52.

church, or entitled to any church ordinance, in consequence of the profession of the head of their family. Everything discountenanced this idea. When baptism was spoken of, it was always in connection with believing. None but believers were commanded to be baptized; and it did not appear to my mind that any others were baptized."[54]

When the Judsons joined the Baptists, they did so without any clear path of financial security or even a plan to carry out their missionary task. Judson cut off the only lifeline he had and trusted the Lord to provide. His wife, Ann, wrote home defending their decision and concluded, "Thus, my dear parents and sisters, we are both confirmed Baptists, not because we wish to be, but because truth compelled us to be."[55] Judson could have asked for a short-term provision from the ABCFM until they landed on their feet or arrived at their destination. He also could have downplayed the issue as a mere ecclesiological variance, not a major departure of doctrine. But here the Judson's biblical courage appeared as they moved forward by faith in their newfound convictions even though, like Abraham, "[they] went out, not knowing where [they were] going" (Heb. 11:8 ESV).

Luther Rice received an appointment from the ABCFM alongside Judson in 1812 and traveled to India in the second wave of new missionaries. Upon his arrival, he learned of the Judsons' change of mind regarding baptism, and though arguing with Judson at first, Rice, after listening to Judson preach on the doctrine in September 1812, soon thereafter accepted believer's baptism in November. In the ensuing months, Judson and Rice wrote to Baptist churches in America to enlist support to enable them to stay on the field, but Rice's deteriorating health led them to conclude that Rice should return to the United States and seek to organize Baptist churches in a formal missions board. En

54 "A Letter to the Third Church in Plymouth, Mass," August 20, 1817, in Adoniram Judson, *Christian Baptism: A Sermon on Christian Baptism, with Many Quotations from Pedobaptist Authors*, 5th American ed. (Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1846), 100.

55 James Knowles, *The Memoir of Mrs. Ann H. Judson* (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1829), 75.

route, Rice started his tireless work, writing to a Baptist pastor in Massachusetts that they were "under a sincere conviction that the missionary cause would be more advanced by the formation of a Baptist Society in America . . . [for] our brethren in the United States have equal love for the Lord Jesus; and certainly not less zeal for diffusing the savour of his precious name among those who must, otherwise, *perish for lack of vision*."[56]

When Rice arrived home, he traveled north and south on horseback going from Baptist church to Baptist church, proving his giftedness for the task of mobilizing support and calling for a national society to unite all the churches.[57] Though not accepted or encouraged by all Baptist churches, Rice's efforts bore fruit in a short amount of time.[58] The Philadelphia Baptist Association and Baptists in Massachusetts and South Carolina were compelled to organize to "provide funds for foreign missions" and to gather to establish a unified national organization.[59] In May 1814, three dozen church leaders from eleven states gathered in Philadelphia to form the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America. This "Triennial Convention" met every three years and would serve as the forerunner to the Southern Baptist Convention that would originate, sadly, in 1845 over a disagreement among Baptists in the North and South over the tragic and evil practice of slavery. At its start, however, the Triennial Convention remained focused on its task and started to send other missionaries, including John Peck, to the frontier land of Missouri and Lott Cary, a former slave and leader of the African Baptist Missionary Society, to Liberia.

56 Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, September, 1813, 332.

57 Robert G. Torbet, *Venture of Faith: The Story of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1814–1954* (King of Prussia, PA: Judson, 1955), 26–30.

58 One of his leading critics was John Taylor and his anti-missions society following. See John Taylor, *Thoughts on Missions* (Franklin County, KY: n.p., 1820).

59 Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, December, 1813, 354.

So, why did Baptists first form a national denomination? Here is the actual wording from the Triennial Convention's first constitution: "We the delegates from Missionary Societies, and other religious Bodies of the Baptist denomination, in various parts of the United States, met in Convention, in the City of Philadelphia, for the purpose of carrying into effect the benevolent Intentions of our Constituents, by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining, and directing the Energies of the whole Denomination in one sacred effort, for sending the glad tidings of Salvation to the Heathen, and to nations destitute of pure Gospel-light."[60] Simply put, this shared idea of marshaling the energies of churches "in one sacred effort" to take the gospel of Christ to "nations destitute of pure Gospel-light" served as the primary motive for early American Baptists to organize and gather on a national level. This is no small point for our denominationally averse age to miss: the reason why Baptist churches sought to cooperate at a national level, with all of its necessary machinery, politics, stresses, and strains, was for the purpose of uniting to send the gospel to those who have never heard (Rom. 15:21).

In my assessment, it is also right and good to refer to Adoniram Judson as the pioneer American Baptist missionary, given his role in helping to organize the Baptist Foreign Mission Board, but the employment of a symphonious approach reveals there is much more to Judson's contribution to modern missions, and from those who served before, with, and after him, than just Judson's pioneering organizational vision alone.

CONCLUSION

This brief overview of the lives and ministries of George Liele, William Carey, and Adoniram Judson reveals that these men had a lasting impact on those they reached for Christ, the immediate culture and

60 American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, *Proceedings of the Baptist Convention for Missionary Purposes Held in Philadelphia, in May, 1814* (Philadelphia, 1814), 3.

context, and the future of the modern missions movement. As I have argued, when historians and theologians analyze the modern missions movement in the ways they quantify other movements in the history of Christianity, seeing these leaders playing their unique parts in one grand symphony allows their voices and legacies to be appreciated for their ongoing influence. This perspective distinguishes itself from attempts to summarize one missionary or the other as "the first" or "the father" while minimizing their much larger contribution. David Bebbington says, "The most important development in which Baptists participated during their four centuries of existence was the foreign missionary movement."[61] My argument has been that a symphonious approach to assessing that movement allows current researchers to see the full value and beauty of what the movement's leaders were able to do in their lifetimes, not to mention all the supporting figures and trends that helped to strengthen the movement and that have yet to be studied and shared. As Stratford Caldecott reminds us, "Every great change, every rebirth or *renaissance* in human culture, has been triggered by the retrieval of something valuable out of the past, making new, creative developments possible."[62] I hope this assessment serves to help foster new and creative assessments of the modern missions movement for the sake of those who do not yet have a missions history.

Candidly, here at the end, many historians might respond to my clarifications and say, "Enough already. I don't care who is on first or how is the best way to put it all together, just as long as the missions movement and its overlooked figures are studied and shared." With that bottom-line sentiment I would agree—but then would also point out that "I don't care" . . . well, he is the shortstop.

61 Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, 215.
62 Stratford Caldecott, *Beauty for Truth's Sake* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009), 12.