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JOHN R. RICE, *THE SWORD OF THE LORD*, AND
THE FUNDAMENTALIST CONVERSATION:
COMPARISONS WITH J. FRANK NORRIS'S *THE FUNDAMENTALIST*
AND CARL MCINTIRE'S *THE CHRISTIAN BEACON*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Humanities

By

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Robin L. Smith ENTITLED John R. Rice, *The Sword of the Lord*, and the Fundamentalist Conversation: Comparisons with J. Frank Norris's *The Fundamentalist* and Carl McIntire's *The Christian Beacon* BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Humanities.

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ABSTRACT

Smith, Robin L. M.Hum., Master of Humanities Program, Wright State University, 2013.
John R. Rice, *The Sword of the Lord*, and the Fundamentalist Conversation: Comparisons with J. Frank Norris's *The Fundamentalist* and Carl McIntire's *The Christian Beacon*.

John R. Rice and his newspaper, *The Sword of the Lord*, were highly influential in the fundamentalist movement and the larger evangelical world in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. A comparison between Rice's writings and those of fellow fundamentalists J. Frank Norris in *The Fundamentalist* and Carl McIntire in *The Christian Beacon* reveal differences among fundamentalists that contributed to the split between fundamentalism and "new" evangelicalism in the 1950s. An examination of the men's attitudes toward separation, handling of conflicts and disagreements, political rhetoric and involvement in politics, and attention to social and cultural issues show that Rice is consistently more moderate and conciliatory than Norris and McIntire, avoiding the extreme positions characteristic of many in the fundamentalist movement.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1921, John R. Rice embarked upon a career as an evangelist—the “grand labor,” as he called it, “beside which no other toil or effort in the universe is comparable.”¹ The golden age of revival in the United States had largely faded by the 1920s, but Rice was undeterred, determined to bring revival back and win souls for Christ.

In 1934, while serving as the pastor of the Oak Cliff Fundamentalist Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, Rice began publishing *The Sword of the Lord*. *The Sword* grew into what George Marsden describes as “probably the most influential fundamentalist periodical for the next four decades [after its founding in 1934].”² By the early 1950s, the *Sword* boasted a paid circulation of more than 100,000, and although Rice was an avowed fundamentalist, his paper was received and read by a spectrum of Christians outside of the fundamentalist movement. But despite Rice’s popularity and influence, he has been the subject of little scholarly work to date.

Rice and his newspaper deserve attention because they provide important evidence of the variety found within the fundamentalist movement. The fundamentalism of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s is often defined by its most strident proponents and seen as uniformly militant, highly separatist, and antagonistic to cultural change. But the *Sword*

1 John R. Rice, “Leaving All for Jesus,” *Sword of the Lord*, April 11, 1952, 5, in Howard Edgar Moore, “The Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism: John R. Rice and ‘The Sword of the Lord.’” (PhD dissertation, George Washington University, 1990), 38.

2 George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 238.

reveals less extreme currents within fundamentalism—a factor in the simmering disagreements that led to the split between fundamentalism and the “new evangelicals” in the mid-1950s.

The *Sword* was one of many fundamentalist newspapers during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. Texas Baptist J. Frank Norris and New Jersey Presbyterian Carl McIntire published two of the best known, *The Fundamentalist* and *The Christian Beacon*, respectively.

Rice, Norris, and McIntire shared fundamentalist beliefs and a conservative political and cultural outlook, but their newspapers show wide differences in goals, approaches, and focus. Their writings capture on paper a conversation between three very different faces of fundamentalism. Norris was aggressive, dramatic, and nearly maniacal about establishing and controlling his network of Fundamentalist Baptist churches; he sought power and control and mounted vicious attacks on both ecclesiastical and personal enemies. McIntire, founder and leader of the Bible Presbyterian Church, was obsessed with strict separation and the threat of communism, which for McIntire was inextricably intertwined with Christian modernism; he sought absolute purity of doctrine and rejected even distant association with modernist Christians. Rice, in contrast to Norris and McIntire, had no interest in building institutions or a personal power base, maintaining a primary focus on revival and soul winning and a more irenic outlook than his more confrontational colleagues.

Howard Edgar Moore argues that Rice was a “moderate” fundamentalist, but what does that mean? *Webster’s New World College Dictionary* defines *moderate* as “avoiding excesses or extremes; temperate or restrained” and “mild; calm; gentle; not violent.”

Comparisons of the writings of Norris, McIntire, and Rice from the founding of the *Sword* in 1934 to the fundamentalist/evangelical split of the 1950s bear out Moore's description. Rice was remarkably inclusive, sometimes to the point of conflict with other fundamentalists; he avoided personal attacks, preferring to deal with confrontations behind the scenes; and he worked to build bridges between his fellow Bible believers rather than to draw exclusionary lines. In comparison to the aggressive, dramatic, sometimes shrill writings of his fellows, Rice's prose was consistently cool, well-reasoned, and often gently conciliatory. The evidence shows that within the world of fundamentalism, John R. Rice was truly a voice of moderation.

OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION

Following a short introduction in section I, section II provides short biographies of John R. Rice, J. Frank Norris, and Carl McIntire up to the mid-1930s, comparing their origins, religious backgrounds, education, and paths to fundamentalism.

What was the state of Protestant print culture in the early- to mid-twentieth century, and how do these fundamentalist newspapers fit in? Section III discusses the types of publications produced during this period and the validity of a comparison of the *Sword*, the *Fundamentalist*, and the *Beacon*, which were very similar both structurally and in their purposes as the fully-controlled mouthpieces of their respective editors. This chapter also examines and compares the tone and general content of each newspaper.

Section IV explores the positions of Norris, McIntire, and Rice, as expressed in their newspapers, on the question of separation. Though separation was a defining issue for fundamentalists, important differences existed within the movement and among the three men.

Conflict was an integral part of the volatile, militant fundamentalist world.

Section V examines and compares the ways Norris, McIntire, and Rice dealt with both perceived challenges from outsiders and disagreements among themselves.

What part did politics play in the ministries of Norris, McIntire, and Rice? Section VI explores their political writings on several topics of their day and the place of politics in each man's work as a fundamentalist preacher.

Section VII compares writings on several social and cultural issues and the emphasis given to such issues in the newspapers and ministries of Norris, McIntire, and Rice, and is followed by a brief conclusion in section VIII.

II. THREE FUNDAMENTALISTS

JOHN R. RICE

John R. Rice was born near Gainesville, Texas on December 11, 1895. His father Will was a rancher and small businessman who occasionally preached the Gospel. His mother, Sarah LaPrade, was Will's second wife and a former schoolteacher. John was only six when his mother died, asking from her deathbed for the family's six children to promise to meet her in heaven.³

Rice was called to faith early, "going forward" at the First Baptist Church in Gainesville at the age of nine. His father refused to allow him to be baptized, believing he was too young to understand the meaning of regeneration and leaving the boy in fear for his salvation. According to Howard Edgar Moore, "[Rice] was in turmoil about his salvation for another three years, praying continually and begging God to save him."⁴

In 1905, the Rices moved to west Texas, near the town of Dundee. There, Will married his third wife, Dolos Bellah. Their two surviving children, Joe and William Jr., both became preachers and later worked with their half-brother John. At the age of twelve, John was finally baptized in a railroad tank by the Rev. Mr. Harmenson of the Baptist church at Dundee; he later dated his conversion from the day he was baptized.⁵

³ Howard Edgar Moore, "The Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism: John R. Rice and 'The Sword of the Lord.'" (PhD dissertation, George Washington University, 1990), 27.

⁴ Ibid., 29.

⁵ Ibid., 30-1.

When Rice was about fourteen, Will became very ill and was not expected to recover. When he arose, recovered, from his bed the following morning, Rice was convinced that God had heard the family's prayers and healed his father. The incident profoundly affected Rice's belief in prayer and miraculous healing, which later became an issue between Rice and J. Frank Norris in the 1930s. His belief in the power of prayer was also influenced by local pastor R. H. Gibson. Says Moore, "Gibson . . . asked [Rice] to assist in a revival. . . . [He] explained the technique of praying before a service for a specific number of 'professions.' Then he taught Rice that it was acceptable to pray for the salvation of specific individuals. Rice recount[ed] that these prayers were answered with precision."⁶

After graduating from public school, Rice earned a teaching certificate and for several years taught grades 1-8 in a small school near Dundee. In January 1916 Rice determined to go to college, then serve God in whatever capacity he was needed: "I told him that if He wanted me to preach, I would preach, if He wanted me to sing, I would sing. I told Him that I was going to college and then ask [sic] him for my needs."⁷

Rice left home for Decatur Baptist College on horseback, with \$9.35 in his pocket. After a 125-mile ride, he took out a loan on his horse and worked at a series of odd jobs, often several at once, to pay his bills. Later he received a scholarship; he always seemed to receive the money he needed from somewhere.⁸ Rice also played football and was on the Decatur debating team. Two days before his 1918 graduation, Rice was

⁶ Ibid., 32.

⁷ John R. Rice, "How to Exercise Faith and Grow Greater Faith in God," *Sword of the Lord*, July 10, 1942, 2.

⁸ Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 33.

drafted, but before leaving for France, he fell ill with mumps and ended up serving his entire eight-month Army career stateside.

After his Army service ended, Rice enrolled at Baylor University, from which he graduated with a BA in 1920. He taught English at Wayland College briefly, then enrolled in the Masters of Education program at the University of Chicago in the spring of 1921. In quick succession, three events changed Rice's course. First, he discovered a letter written by his mother when he was five years old in which she referred to him as her "preacher boy," perhaps his first inkling that he might have the "call." Second, he heard William Jennings Bryan preach on evolution and became convinced of the inerrancy of the Bible. And finally, while volunteering at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, he assisted in the conversion of a drunken man and found his path.⁹ Rice later wrote, "I saw at a glance that this was the grand labor, the labor with eternal rewards, the labor beside which no other toil or effort in the universe is comparable."¹⁰

His decision made, Rice withdrew from the university. He preached his first sermon in June 1921 at the Pacific Garden Mission, then returned to Texas to serve as a songleader and preach his first revival. On September 27 he married Lloys Cooke, whom he had met soon after arriving at Decatur College. He was ordained by Dr. R. E. Bell of Decatur First Baptist Church on October 9, then he and his wife moved to Fort Worth and both enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Lloys Rice was one of only two women enrolled at the seminary. She later said, "I hadn't planned to go, but . . . I had to help him when he studied Greek . . . and I was helping him with Hebrew. . . . I was

⁹ Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 37-8.

¹⁰ John R. Rice, "Leaving All for Jesus," *Sword of the Lord*, April 11, 1952, 5, in Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 38.

learning everything he learned. . . . I started going to classes and decided I might as well go ahead and enroll.”¹¹

While attending classes at Southwestern, Rice worked as a part-time pastor to several small churches. The Rices' first daughter, Grace, was born on October 22, 1922. Needing to support his family, in 1923 Rice accepted a position as assistant pastor at First Baptist Church of Plainview, Texas, leaving Southwestern without a degree. In 1924 he was called to First Baptist Church at Shamrock, Texas. While Rice moved to Shamrock to begin his position there with a revival, Lloyds Rice finished up some of his obligations at Plainview before joining her husband at his new church.

During Rice's two years at Shamrock, membership rose from 200 to 480 members and the congregation moved into a new brick church. But Rice's heart lay in evangelism, not pastoring. He left in 1926, hoping to pursue evangelism full time.

Revivalism in the United States was in decline at the time, and Rice had created some difficulties for himself though his attacks on modernism in the curriculum at Baylor University. Moore describes mainstream Southern Baptists as “less than cordial” to Rice when he moved to Fort Worth after resigning his pastorate.¹² By the fall of 1926, Rice was making short broadcasts on KFQB, the radio station of J. Frank Norris of First Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Norris was a vocal opponent of Baylor's supposed modernist taint and of the Southern Baptist Convention. Rice's association with Norris did nothing to aid his standing with Southern Baptists.

¹¹ Moore, “Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism,” 38.

¹² Ibid., 45-6.

By 1928, Rice was regularly filling the pulpit of First Baptist Church when Norris was unavailable. On March 17 of that year, Rice received a visit from a group of men representing the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The group demanded that Rice stop preaching on Norris's radio station and at First Baptist Church and break "all alignments' with J. Frank Norris" or he would be forced to give up his membership in Seminary Hill Baptist Church.¹³

Rice's response was that he would continue to preach wherever he felt called, that although he agreed with Norris's opinions on modernism at Baylor and Southwestern, he had arrived at those opinions independently, and that the Baptist disciplinary committee "erred in assuming that he and Norris were closely associated, and that he, Rice, was a disciple of 'Norrisism.'" ¹⁴ Rice cut his ties with the convention.

Rice's connection to Norris is difficult to tease apart. Rice and his later associates frequently repeated his claims of independence, and Rice's friend and associate Robert Sumner makes the relationship sound incidental:

As the fight over modernism in general . . . became more pronounced, [Rice] was thrown more and more into the company of Dr. J. Frank Norris, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth. . . . Because of Rice's opposition to some of the unscriptural practices and teachings of his own denomination, the doors of Baptist churches within the Southern Baptist Convention began to close to him and he started conducting independent city-wide revival campaigns throughout the Lone Star State.¹⁵

Rice appears to have arrived at his views independently and may have begun his affiliation with Norris because he needed the opportunities to preach and broadcast that

13 Ibid., 59.

14 Ibid., 62.

15 Robert Sumner, *Man Sent from God: A Biography of Dr. John R. Rice*, 6th printing (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord, 1975), 73.

Norris offered, but claims that Rice was not very closely associated with Norris are disingenuous. Moore cites several telling points. First, ministers including Dr. R. E. Bell, who had ordained Rice, and J. L. Ward, president of Decatur Bible College and a friend who had helped Rice find work as a student, avoided Rice's revivals and refused to allow his converts to enter their churches because of his association with Norris, leaving Rice little choice but to "plant" new churches.¹⁶ Those new churches were all Fundamentalist Baptist churches, a name firmly associated with Norris. Other Norris associates also founded Fundamentalist Baptist churches, all of which—though nominally independent—aligned themselves with J. Frank Norris and First Baptist Church. And though Rice's revivals were not directly funded by Norris, they were heavily promoted in Norris's newspaper and on his radio station before it was destroyed in a fire at First Baptist Church in 1929.¹⁷ After the fire, the First Baptist congregation temporarily split between three tabernacles; Rice regularly preached in one of them.¹⁸

By 1932, however, Rice began to assert his independence. He held a revival that July and founded Oak Cliff Fundamentalist Baptist Church in Dallas, where he settled in as pastor, possibly because there was little work to be had on the revival circuit.¹⁹ Norris and Rice continued to work together and praise each other publicly, but two events in 1934 marked the beginning of a split: Rice began publishing *The Sword of the Lord*, which both gave him an independent voice and competed with Norris's own newspaper, *The Fundamentalist*. And Norris was called to the pulpit of Temple Baptist Church in

¹⁶ Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 63-4.

¹⁷ Ibid., 69-71.

¹⁸ Ibid., 62-3.

¹⁹ Ibid., 75.

Detroit while simultaneously retaining his post at First Baptist, giving him the opportunity to expand his empire in both the North and the South.²⁰

Shortly after accepting the Detroit post, Norris sent Rice a letter indicating that he wanted him in Detroit at the end of the summer to preach there, and to spend a good deal of his time in the North. Rice published the letter in the *Sword* in May of 1935, publicly declining Norris's direction and beginning an acrimonious argument that was an important thread in the fundamentalist print conversation of the following two decades.

J. FRANK NORRIS

John Franklyn Norris was born on September 18, 1877 at Dadeville, Alabama. His mother, Mary Davis Norris, was a devout woman who dreamed of her son being a preacher; his father, James Warner Norris, was an alcoholic who treated his son harshly throughout his childhood.

The family moved frequently during Norris's childhood, ending up in Hubbard City, Texas, near Waco in the Texas Hill Country. Here Warner Norris bought a farm where his son remained until he left for college in 1898.

Texas in the late nineteenth century could be a violent, lawless place. In 1891, Warner was shot on his own property by John Shaw. Young Frank saw his father fall and came running. Shaw claimed Frank pulled a knife and shot the boy several times, allegedly in self-defense. Warner recovered from his injuries quickly, but young Frank was deathly ill, suffering not only from the gunshot wounds but gangrene and inflammatory rheumatism brought on by his injuries. Ironically, Shaw was sentenced to three years in prison for Warner's minor wounds, while charges in Frank's shooting were dismissed.

²⁰ Ibid., 79-83.

The harshness of his early life shaped and hardened Norris into an extremely focused and determined man. Barry Hankins says in his book *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism*: “[Norris] became an extraordinary personality as a result of a very atypical childhood. . . . The best explanation of Norris is that the circumstances of his childhood produced an individual determined not only to live but to succeed, and his conversion determined that he would choose the ministry as his profession.”²¹

That conversion came at a Baptist revival sometime in the early 1890s. He accepted his first pastorate at Mount Antioch Baptist Church in 1897, at about twenty years of age. In 1898 he began studies for the ministry at Baylor University. While at Baylor, Norris met Lillian Gaddy, the daughter of a Baptist minister. The two married in 1903, just before Norris graduated.

Hankins describes an incident that provides an early illustration of Norris's willingness to goad the powerful and his enjoyment of notoriety. Norris and some friends smuggled a dog into the second floor of the Baylor chapel during services. The dog's howling frustrated Baylor's president, Oscar H. Cooper, to the point that he threw the dog out the window. Though Cooper later apologized for his treatment of the animal, Hankins says Norris “led a student uprising, informing the local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the university trustees. Incredibly, Cooper was forced eventually to resign.”²²

²¹ Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), 10.

²² *Ibid.*, 10.

While at Baylor, Norris held a part-time pastorate at Mount Calm Baptist Church. Mount Calm's congregation was dominated by followers of the divisive Baptist preacher Samuel Augustus Hayden, who had leveled numerous charges of mismanagement and embezzlement against leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) shortly after its formation; failing in an attempt to take over the BGCT, Hayden was expelled and formed the rival Baptist Missionary Association. Hankins speculates that the Haydenites' schismatic confrontationalism may have influenced Norris's later rejection of Baptist denominationalism.²³

After graduation, Norris enrolled at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, earning his master's degree in theology in 1905 and serving as valedictorian of his graduating class. His education completed, Norris set out to make a name for himself.

Norris's first full-time pastorate was McKinney Avenue Baptist Church in Dallas, where he produced impressive growth and built a new church building. In 1908, he bought the *Baptist Standard* newspaper, hiring Baylor classmate Joseph Martin Dawson as editor. Though the paper did well, Dawson resigned after only a year, complaining of Norris's constant interference. The experience alienated the men completely, and provides an early indication of Norris's drive and controlling tendencies. Hankins says:

Early in his career, Norris exhibited all the attributes of a driven man. . . . [H]e took a struggling church and turned it into a success, then did the same with a fledgling newspaper. That he worked himself into exhaustion in the process suggests either a fear of failure or a dogged determination to continue enjoying the fruits of victory. More than likely, some combination of these two forces kept him reaching for still greater results.²⁴

23 Ibid., 11.

24 Ibid., 13.

In 1909, Norris accepted the pastorate of First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, where he remained for forty-three years. First Baptist became the base for his ambitious empire. He began building his reputation as a sensational, fearless preacher in 1911, shocking First Baptist's well-to-do congregation with his sermon, "The Ten Biggest Devils in Fort Worth, Names Given." Norris's genteel parishioners began to leave the church, driven away by what Moore calls Norris's "increasingly vitriolic and sensational preaching."²⁵ They were quickly replaced by the less fortunate classes of Dallas, drawn to the same sermons that drove away the well-heeled. On February 4, 1912, First Baptist Church burned to the ground. Norris was charged with arson and perjury, but eventually acquitted. The congregation built a new church, completed in 1920.

By 1917, Norris had founded his own newspaper, *The Searchlight* (later renamed *The Fundamentalist*), which often included tantalizing teasers on upcoming sermons: "[T]he pastor will name, next Sunday night, the high official who is responsible for the large amounts of bootlegging now going on in Fort Worth."²⁶

As Norris's sermons became more sensational, he also began to attack modernism—the adaptation of Christian belief to changing intellectual trends—among his fellow clergy, in the Southern Baptist Convention, and in universities and seminaries, particularly targeting the teaching of evolution and rejection of supernaturalism and the literal truth of the Bible. His scathing criticisms earned him an expulsion from the Fort Worth Pastor's Conference in 1914. He refused to raise First Baptist's apportionment in the convention's "Seventy-Five Million" fundraising campaign in 1919. In 1921, he accused both professor John A. Rice of Southern Methodist University and Grove Dow,

²⁵ Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 50.

²⁶ *The Searchlight*, October 21, 1921, in Moore, "Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism," 51.

the president of Baylor, of teaching and allowing modernist views at their schools. The fight that drove Dow from his post at Baylor—a fight in which John R. Rice was also involved—split Texas Baptists, with Norris on one side facing down the Southern Baptist Convention on the other. The Tarrant County Baptist Association expelled Norris in 1922, the same year the Baptist General Convention of Texas censured him. Two years later in 1924, the Southern Baptist Convention ended all associations with Norris and First Baptist Church.²⁷

Norris relished the role of the independent maverick goading the “denominational machine,”²⁸ and delivered scorching criticisms of other targets as well. In 1926 his vicious screeds against Catholicism in the *Searchlight* brought him national attention after he accused the Catholic mayor of Fort Worth, H. C. Meacham, of overpaying the Catholic Church for a building he planned to tear down to build a street that would benefit his own dry-goods store. Meacham’s friend Dexter Cripps threatened Norris by phone, then appeared in Norris’s office at First Baptist. The ensuing argument ended when Norris shot and killed Cripps. Charged with murder, Norris was acquitted after the only witness to the shooting, a friend of Norris’s, testified that the unarmed Cripps appeared to be drawing a gun.²⁹

Norris used the notoriety he gained as the “pistol-packing parson” to insert his voice in the 1928 presidential campaign. Hankins says that for Norris, “the campaign was

27 Moore, “Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism,” 52-3.

28 C. Allyn Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 20.

29 Moore, “Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism,” 55.

nothing short of a crusade to save America” from a Catholic, anti-prohibition president—the twin evils of “Rum and Romanism.”³⁰

By 1929, Norris was famous across America for his rhetoric and political activities, and the leader of a growing group of Fundamentalist Baptist churches. With no apparent sense of irony, the fiercely independent, anti-denominational Norris gathered around himself a quasi-denomination of churches united in their opposition to the Southern Baptist Convention and centered firmly around First Baptist Church of Fort Worth. Norris’s notoriety was only enhanced when First Baptist Church burned a second time in 1929, making it necessary to split the congregation into three groups who met in smaller tabernacles until the church could be rebuilt.

One of the preachers who ministered regularly to the divided congregation was John R. Rice. In 1929, Norris was a nationally-known preacher with his own fiefdom of Fundamentalist Baptist churches, a well-known radio voice, and the editor of an established fundamentalist newspaper, while Rice was still a struggling evangelist. Rice remained a close associate of Norris’s until 1936, when he had both his own church and a newly-fledged newspaper with which to challenge the controlling emperor of Texas fundamentalism.

CARL MCINTIRE

While John R. Rice and J. Frank Norris were both Southern-born Baptists, Carl McIntire came to fundamentalism from another direction. He was born to Charles and Hettie Hotchkin McIntire at Ypsilanti, Michigan on May 17, 1906. Charles McIntire was a Presbyterian minister and a graduate of Princeton. Robert Mulholland describes Bible reading and prayer as the order of the day in the McIntire household, and says this early

³⁰ Hankins, *God’s Rascal*, 56-7.

influence “established a pattern of total firmness in his own religious convictions and a lack of flexibility in his dealing with other religious beliefs.”³¹ McIntire’s parents divorced when he was young. His mother raised her children alone in Durant, Oklahoma, where she was employed as the Dean of Women at the Southeastern State Teacher’s College.

McIntire graduated from Park College at Parkhill, Missouri in 1927 and entered Princeton Theological Seminary in 1928, just before J. Gresham Machen and his conservative allies left Princeton over alleged modernist teachings, founding rival Westminster Theological Seminary. McIntire followed Machen to Westminster, from which he graduated in 1931, and was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA). The same year, he married Fairy Davis and accepted his first pastorate at Chelsea Presbyterian Church in Atlantic City, New Jersey. In 1933 he moved to the Collingswood Presbyterian Church in Collingswood, New Jersey, where he remained until he was well into his 80s and caused a serious rift in the congregation over his refusal to step down.³² In 1936, McIntire began publishing *The Christian Beacon*, a weekly platform for his conservative views.

McIntire continued his alignment with J. Gresham Machen, who with McIntire and others founded the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions in 1933 as a protest against the too-liberal theology of Presbyterian missionaries. In 1936, when the Presbyterian Church (USA) ordered the dissolution of the Independent Board, McIntire refused to resign his post on its board of directors. He was tried by the Commission of the

31 Robert Mulholland, “Carl McIntire: The Early Radio Years (1932 to 1955),” (PhD dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1984), 17.

32 Ibid., 17.

West Jersey Presbytery and found guilty of several matters, not of doctrine, but of obedience to the church: “disapproval, defiance, and acts of contravention of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church of the United States,” “not being faithful and zealous in maintaining the peace of the Church,” and “violation of his ordination vows.”³³ McIntire was suspended from the ministry and communion of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Collingswood church stuck by its pastor, withdrawing from the denomination to form an independent congregation, although according to Mulholland the decision had been reached a month before McIntire was actually suspended.³⁴ Presbyterian leaders filed a successful lawsuit to retain the Collingswood building and property, so the congregation built its own new church, an example of McIntire’s considerable talents for organizing and fundraising. Machen was expelled at the same time as McIntire. Collingswood briefly affiliated with Machen’s new Presbyterian Church of America. But in 1937 McIntire broke away again, forming the Bible Presbyterian Church with thirteen ministers and three elders from Machen’s group, and vowing to revise the Westminster Confession of Faith as he saw fit.³⁵ Much like J. Frank Norris, McIntire set to work building a wide-reaching empire, which included *The Christian Beacon*, *The Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program, and Faith Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

33 Ibid., 20-1.

34 Ibid., 22.

35 Russell, *Voices*, 157.

As evidenced by Collingswood's quick recovery from having its property reclaimed by its former denomination leaders, McIntire was a capable organizer and administrator. However, the forcefulness of his personality and his deep belief in the correctness of his own views created problems as a leader of a new denomination: "Proving to be rigidly doctrinaire, autocratic, self-righteous, and intolerant of opposing views, McIntire . . . disrupted almost every religious agency he touched,"³⁶ according to Glenn Utter and John Storey. In 1941 he founded the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) in opposition to the liberal Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCC). Under McIntire's autocratic leadership, Joel Carpenter says the ACCC had a number of problems and did not have enough national standing to bring together a broad alliance. McIntire's rigidly separatist position labeled even extremely conservative churches and denominations apostate if they had even a distant association with liberals. Many conservatives who remained within denominations found the ACCC's separatist policies offensive, limiting its support even among those who agreed with many of McIntire's other doctrines.³⁷

However, in 1936 when he entered the fundamentalist conversation via *The Christian Beacon*, McIntire's empire-building was still largely in the future. The *Beacon* gave him a platform for espousing his conservative doctrine and political views, which for McIntire were integral to his religious beliefs. Famously opposing civil rights as violating private property rights, he argued that "justice can only be attained through God

36 Glenn H. Utter and John W. Storey, *The Religious Right: A Reference Handbook*, 3rd ed. (Millerton, NY: Grey House, 2007), 106.

37 Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 145-6.

and the Bible, not by the actions of man.”³⁸ Most importantly, McIntire equated the fight against liberalism and modernism with opposition to communism as a means to oppose the antichrist and spread the Gospel.³⁹

THREE FUNDAMENTALISTS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

How were John R. Rice, J. Frank Norris, and Carl McIntire alike, and how were they different? All three defined themselves as fundamentalists, dedicated to a strident and often militant opposition to modernism in both religion and society. All adhered to the basic tenets of fundamentalist faith, defined by Carpenter as “an intense focus on evangelism as the church’s overwhelming priority, the need for a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit after conversion in order to live a holy and effective Christian life, the imminent, premillennial second coming of Christ, and the divine inspiration and absolute authority of the Bible.”⁴⁰ All upheld the literal truth of supernatural events such as the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, and the bodily resurrection. All separated from their denominational roots in protest of modernist apostasy. All were well-educated men—Rice and Norris unusually so in an era when the only requirements for the Baptist ministry were a Bible and the inspiration to preach.

And yet there were also differences among the three. Rice and Norris were products of the Baptist tradition of independent Bible-based churches with no single denominational statement of doctrine, while McIntire was raised in the Presbyterian tradition, in which individual churches were governed by a representative denominational structure and doctrinally bound by the Westminster Confession of Faith. While all three

38 Mulholland, “Carl McIntire,” 25-6.

39 Ibid., 26.

40 Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 6.

had separated from their denominations, their exits were accomplished differently.

McIntire was expelled from the Presbyterian Church (USA) for disobedience. Norris was thrown out of every Baptist organization in Texas for his constant harsh criticism of the “denominational machine” and attacks on other ministers. Rice separated only after the Southern Baptist Convention demanded that he end his association with Norris, making his own choice to leave. Compared to Norris and McIntire, his was a rather passive exit.

Perhaps the most obvious contrasts between the three men were rooted in very different personalities. While all firmly fundamentalist in their beliefs, they approached their ministries with different goals and emphases and shades of differences in their doctrines. The fiery Norris and the rigid, doctrinaire McIntire built huge churches, new denominations or denomination-like networks, radio and print empires, and seminaries, while Rice remained at heart a traveling evangelist. A prolific writer and enthusiastic revivalist, Rice’s influence rested primarily on his popular and widely-circulated newspaper, *The Sword of the Lord*.

Examination and comparison of *The Sword of the Lord*, *The Fundamentalist*, and *The Christian Beacon* reveal differences among Rice, Norris, and McIntire, and by extension within the broader world of early fundamentalism. The print conversation among the three men uncovers tensions and disagreements within a world that is often viewed as monolithic and defined by its most strident and extreme elements.

III. THREE NEWSPAPERS

PROTESTANTISM AND PRINT: TWENTIETH-CENTURY TRENDS

Print publishing has been a pillar of American Protestantism since early colonial times, unleashing a flood of books, Bibles, hymnals, newspapers, Sunday School materials, and pamphlets. “The Protestant press,” says Stephen Board with magnificent understatement, “has never lacked for publishing ideas.”⁴¹

In a study of Protestant printing within the larger history of American print culture, William Vance Trollinger notes several trends in Protestant publications between 1880 and 1940 that correspond with increased diversity in the US population. By the end of the nineteenth century, Protestant periodicals had evolved from general dailies containing both religious and secular news to, typically, weekly or monthly publications aimed at a particular denomination or sub-denomination. This segmentation continued to sharpen into the twentieth century, with publications becoming “a critical locus of identity for American Protestants.”⁴²

As periodicals began to focus more on specific subsets within Protestantism, mainline denominational publications declined as a percentage of the total. Trollinger cites figures from the Federal Council of Churches’ *Yearbook of American Churches*,

41 Stephen Board, “Moving the World with Magazines: A Survey of Evangelical Periodicals,” in *American Evangelicals and the Mass Media*, ed. Quentin J. Schultze (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 119.

42 William Vance Trollinger, Jr., “An Outpouring of ‘Faithful’ Words: Protestant Publishing in the United States,” in *A History of the Book in America Vol. 4: Print in Motion: The Expansion of Publishing and Reading in the United States, 1889-1940*, eds. Carl F. Kaestle and Janice A. Radway (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 360.

which in 1915 listed ninety-one Protestant denominations and 389 denominational periodicals. By 1941, there were 140 denominations publishing 430 publications. However, in 1915, 51 percent of Protestant periodicals were published by mainline groups; by 1940, it was only 25 percent—although total circulation of mainline publications was probably still higher.⁴³

Finally, Trollinger found that by the middle of the twentieth century, the more obscure and marginal the sect, the more important publishing was to its survival and growth. Publications were particularly important to African-American denominations, to very decentralized groups whose periodicals often played a critical role in defining theology and group mission, and to the advancement of new movements.⁴⁴

Fundamentalist newspapers of the early- to mid-twentieth century were very much a part of these general trends. They focused on small, distinct sets of believers. They were a part of the growth of non-mainline publications, aimed at those who had left that world and its modernist tendencies. Most important, print publications were a critical part of the network of institutions that gave the independent, generally anti-denominational fundamentalist movement a sense of structure and unity of purpose in the absence of a formal denominational organization. As fundamentalists separated from their denominational roots in the late 1920s and 1930s, periodicals helped establish, reinforce, and spread common doctrine, fueling the growth of fundamentalism across the country.

At the same time newspapers helped to build the larger movement, they also provided communication within and among the many independent subsets of

43 Ibid., 361.

44 Ibid., 362-3.

fundamentalism. In the pre-digital world, newspapers allowed leaders to address their scattered flocks on a regular basis, and often accommodated give-and-take in the form of questions and comments from readers. Newspapers also provided a forum for discussion, disagreement, and sometimes bitter argument between rival groups or individuals.

TYPES OF PUBLICATIONS: WHO CONTROLS THE MESSAGE?

In a 1990 study, Stephen Board attempted to classify evangelical publications based on two principles: 1) the degree of sensitivity toward readership and 2) the degree of control by an establishment, such as a denomination. His proposed matrix divides the majority of publications into four groups, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Independence ⇒	Control by official body	
Agenda that of the owner/editor or his closest supporters	Agenda that of an organization and those who promote it	Less control by readers ↓
Agenda regulated or modified by subscribers or target market	Agenda set by organization’s constituency/membership	↓ More control by readers

Figure 1. Stephen Board’s matrix of evangelical publications.⁴⁵

The *Sword*, the *Fundamentalist*, and the *Beacon* all fall in the upper left quadrant of Board’s matrix—publications in which the message or agenda is solely that of its owner and his closest allies, with no control by an established organization (at least not one not also controlled by the owner) or controlling influence by its readers or a desired market. Board describes the characteristics of these highly independent types of publications: “The independently owned advocacy publishers promote and combat ideas.

⁴⁵ Board, “Moving the World,” 120.

This is propaganda in the best and worst sense of the word. They face the world with a message, pay for its dissemination, and submit gladly to the abuse that has fallen on prophets throughout history.”⁴⁶ These publications are the mouthpieces of their editors, who use them to deliver their message without interference from a controlling body or concern for offense to some desired audience: they are preaching to their own true believers. Thus, the *Sword*, the *Fundamentalist*, and the *Beacon* preserve in print the unvarnished agreements and disagreements among three powerful fundamentalist figures of the 1930s, 40s, and early 50s.

STRUCTURAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In addition to their common role as their editors’ paper pulpits, the structural similarities of these newspapers lend them to comparison. The three papers are roughly contemporary and all cover at least most of the period 1934-1957. Norris’s *Fundamentalist* began publication in the 1920s and had changed names at least twice by 1934, but was well-established by the time Rice founded the *Sword* that year. McIntire began publishing the *Beacon* two years later, in 1936. At the other end of the timeline, Norris’s death in 1952 ended his run at the *Fundamentalist*, while the other papers continued through and past the mid-1950s split with Billy Graham that splintered the fundamentalist movement.

All three papers published weekly, on Fridays. The weekly format allowed the three editors to react quickly to events and to converse or disagree without long gaps in the narrative.

All three papers enjoyed healthy circulations during most of these years, though the *Sword* and the *Beacon* lagged when they were first established. *N. W. Ayer & Son’s*

⁴⁶ Ibid., 121.

Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals for 1939 lists the *Beacon* as having a circulation of 8,500 and *Fundamentalist* 39,799.⁴⁷ In 1947 the *Fundamentalist* still leads at 40,000 to the *Beacon*'s 25,795,⁴⁸ but by Norris's death in 1952 the lead has narrowed at 28,300 to the *Beacon*'s 21,574.⁴⁹ Robert Sumner lists the *Sword*'s paid circulation for 1939 at 5,900, for 1947 at 36,800, and for 1952 at 91,122.⁵⁰ By 1956, the first year the *Ayer* directory lists the *Sword*, it far outstrips the *Beacon* at 107,667 to 22,000.⁵¹

With the exception of the *Sword*'s rapid growth in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the circulations of these papers may not sound impressive. But in comparison, the liberal monthly *Christian Century* had a circulation of 39,114 in 1947, and the *Moody Monthly* 72,153,⁵² even though both were aimed at a wider, more generalized segment of the population than the *Sword*, the *Beacon*, and the *Fundamentalist*. Each of the newspapers developed its own audience of devoted but by no means slavish readers. Just as the editors were free to teach as they believed, readers could and did express their disagreement. For example, the *Sword* suffered a sudden drop in circulation after Rice split with Billy Graham in 1957—from 110,146 in 1957⁵³ to only 78,480 by 1959.⁵⁴ Sumner records the 1956 circulation at 106,592, slightly less than the 1957 *Ayer* figure

47 *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals 1939* (Philadelphia: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1939), 1196, 1199.

48 *Ibid.*, 1254, 1251.

49 *N. W. Ayer 1952*, 1354, 1352.

50 Sumner, *Man Sent from God*, 136-7.

51 *N. W. Ayer 1956*, 1382, 1384.

52 *N. W. Ayer 1947*, 1249.

53 *N. W. Ayer 1957*, 1384.

54 *N. W. Ayer 1959*, 1392.

cited above, then stops reporting paid circulation and gives only the total number of copies printed each year.⁵⁵

In spite of their similarities of purpose and structure, however, the *Sword*, the *Fundamentalist*, and the *Beacon* are very different newspapers, each reflecting its editor's personality, goals, priorities, and shadings of beliefs and revealing some striking differences within the fundamentalist fold.

TONE: THE EDITOR'S VOICE

The general tone of each paper is a distinctive reflection of its editor. In the *Fundamentalist*, Norris speaks with authority on subjects from politics to the Bible, but is often sarcastic and indulges in caustic personal attacks and suspicions of conspiracy against him. Perceived challenges to his authority provoke attacks even on close associates who show too much independence. He often uses aggressive sports terminology, especially from boxing, delivering a "body blow" or a "knockout punch" to his opposition. Like his sermons, Norris's written rhetoric is sensational, militant, and hyperbolic. In one 1935 headline, he invites readers to "Read the Debate That So Thoroughly Annihilated the Opponent that He Refused to Have His Side Published,"⁵⁶ referring to a debate between Norris and Foy E. Wallace, Jr. of the Church of Christ. There is a great deal of swagger and boastfulness to Norris's prose.

While Norris is aggressive and portrays himself as a heroic warrior for God, Carl McIntire in the *Beacon* is militantly separatist and intensely political, virtually equating true Christianity with capitalism and American civilization. McIntire's tone is frequently

⁵⁵ Sumner, *Man Sent from God*, 137.

⁵⁶ "Read the Debate That So Thoroughly Annihilated the Opponent that He Refused to Have His Side Published," *Fundamentalist of Texas*, April 12, 1935, 1.

one of cold self-righteousness and disapproval. He disparages Catholic beliefs in favor of Protestantism, then equally criticizes Protestants who do not hold to strict fundamentalism. McIntire is much less interested than Norris in building a flamboyant personal image, focusing instead on advancing ultra-conservative social beliefs and dismissing as false doctrine all but his own narrow fundamentalist beliefs. McIntire does not tolerate any variation of belief; his deep Presbyterian roots require strict adherence to a formal creed, although he showed no hesitation about modifying the Westminster Confession of Faith to suit his views.⁵⁷ While he argues somewhat ironically that Catholics should not be permitted to transport parochial school students using public school buses because “politics and religion don’t mix,”⁵⁸ McIntire’s political views are completely integrated with his religious beliefs. For McIntire, the fundamentalist opposition to liberalism/modernism and opposition to Communism are one and the same, a fight to defeat the antichrist and spread the Gospel to the godless.⁵⁹

Rice is a contrast to both Norris and McIntire. While he writes with authority and conviction, he is more interested in evangelism and teaching than in setting up a personal or political power base. His tone often resembles that of a strict but loving father who regrets that he must often disagree with or correct others to be true to his faith. He avoids personal attacks and vitriolic comments of the sort Norris indulges in, often working behind the scenes to reconcile arguments and asking his readers to pray for those with whom he disagrees. Even in heated arguments, Rice’s tone remains calm and his arguments logical, with none of the heat or anger of Norris or McIntire.

⁵⁷ Russell, *Voices*, 157.

⁵⁸ Mulholland, “Carl McIntire,” 74.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

CONTENT: ISSUES AND AUDIENCE

Norris's *Fundamentalist* is, at its heart, a vehicle for aggrandizing J. Frank Norris. It regularly includes a sermon from Norris, and often teasers about upcoming sermons. Norris also contributes Bible lessons and Sunday School materials. Articles about Norris's revivals, Bible school, and speaking engagements are featured prominently, as are stories on the growth and fundraising triumphs of Fundamentalist Baptist churches. Stories of Norris battling the forces of evil, which at various times included the liquor interests, Catholicism, allegedly corrupt politicians, labor unions, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and communism, picture him as a fearless crusader against modernism in any form.

Norris's friendships and alliances with the wealthy and powerful were often the subject of stories in the *Fundamentalist*, painting Norris as a sought-after advisor and power broker. He involved himself in a number of political causes, first in Texas and later nationally, and had a history of changing his opinions when it was advantageous to do so. For example, in his early years at First Baptist Church, he often attacked the moneyed and powerful of Fort Worth, and in fact drove out most of the well-to-do members of his church, which became a congregation of the poor and working class with Norris as their advocate. But after also accepting the pastorate of Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, he became friendly with the leaders of the automobile industry and not coincidentally, an enemy of the labor movement and other pro-working class organizations.

Norris writes primarily for an adult male audience, making no special effort to appeal to women and youth. His aggressive and militant tone and constant stories of

religious and political battles and triumphs would have appealed to those who regarded true religion as a manly world.

There are some parallels between the content of the *Fundamentalist* and McIntire's *Beacon*. Both related the political and religious battles of their editors, but in the *Beacon* there is little of the swagger or braggadocio evinced by Norris. The *Beacon* reflected McIntire's conflation of politics and religious belief in its constant harangues on communism and praise of free enterprise and the glories of the true (fundamentalist Protestant) America. McIntire returns again and again to the same enemies: the FCC and its allied international organization, the World Council of Churches (WCC), which he repeatedly describes as "near-communist" in their goals; the Federal Communications Commission for its refusal to grant him free radio time, instead awarding it to mainstream Protestant groups in the FCC; and communists/liberals/modernists—essentially all the same for McIntire—pushing for change in what he believed was the Bible-approved free enterprise system. With its stress on the highly masculine worlds of politics and the war against communist infiltration, the *Beacon* was also aimed at an audience of adult males.

In the *Sword*, Rice shares the spotlight to a much greater extent than either Norris or McIntire, publishing sermons from a wide group of both contemporary and historical preachers. He often comments on the error of too-strict doctrine and too-rigid dispensationalism, a variety of premillennialism that divided scripture into historical eras or "dispensations" that would culminate in Christ's return and was widespread among fundamentalists. While Norris blusters and brags and McIntire predicts the doom of a godless nation, Rice concentrates primarily on evangelism and teaching. His newspaper is more oriented toward a family audience, with features for women and young people.

He often printed photos of his wife and daughters. Rice devoted a great deal of space to warnings about worldly temptations such as movies and dancing, especially for young people, but comparatively little to political subjects.

The *Sword*, the *Fundamentalist*, and the *Beacon* are similar in many respects. They are all one-man pulpits. They cover roughly the same time period, are all published weekly, and all espouse similar fundamentalist beliefs. However, they vary a good deal in tone and general content. An examination of four topics: religious separation, conflicts and disagreements, politics, and social and cultural issues, shows that the differences go much deeper than the surface. These three newspapers reveal some real differences among three fundamentalists of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s.

IV. THE QUESTION OF SEPARATION

The idea that true Christians must separate from infidels was hardly new to the fundamentalist movement. From the beginnings of Christianity, groups believing themselves to possess the real message of Christ have broken away from the mainstream to preserve the purity of their faith and live “true” Christian lives.

The early twentieth century was a time of increasing tension between conservative and modernist factions within denominations. As modernists gained strength, the question for conservatives became whether to try to reform their denominations from within or to condemn and separate from them.⁶⁰ Social and cultural activism became a major point of conflict. While modernists pressed for social reforms and fought to improve living conditions for the poor and working class, conservatives, influenced by the pessimistic views of dispensational premillennialism, saw social activism as a distraction from and denial of the inevitable deterioration of the world. According to Marsden, conservatives believed modernists were rejecting true doctrine for a vision of Christ seen within modern culture: “Christ’s plan rejected the present world and age. . . . The church should not be concerned with the present culture.”⁶¹

While tensions ran high, in the 1910s few conservatives thought separation from the deteriorating culture necessitated separation from the established churches. World War I and the cultural changes it spawned proved a turning point for conservative

⁶⁰ Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 124.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 127.

attitudes toward their denominations. Carpenter believes the social upheaval that followed the war was a significant spur to the transformation of conservative evangelical Christians into militant fundamentalists.⁶² The formation of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association in 1919 signaled a serious effort to drive liberalism from American churches and schools. But perhaps the final turning point pushing conservative factions within denominations to become separatist fundamentalism was the 1925 Scopes trial. While the verdict against the teaching of evolution in Tennessee schools was technically a conservative victory, the trial and its accompanying press coverage made the fundamentalist movement the butt of a national joke and crippled efforts to turn the tide of modernism within denominations.⁶³

By the late 1920s conservatives found themselves very much outside the Protestant mainstream. Efforts to preserve their conservative religious beliefs turned from reform within established religious groups to formation of their own religious institutions and communities outside of the mainline denominations. Simmering conflicts erupted into open schism.

Baptists and Presbyterians, the formative churches of Norris, Rice and McIntire, suffered the most disruption. Baptists, whose polity was based on the alignment of essentially independent congregations, had already seen groups leave the Northern and Southern Baptist conventions in the 1920s, including the Fundamentalist Baptist churches led by Norris. Among Presbyterians, individual churches were not autonomous, but bound by both a representative denominational governing structure and adherence to a

⁶² Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 7.

⁶³ John Corrigan and Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*, 8th ed. (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010), 314.

common creed, making it more difficult for individual congregations to leave the organization. Those who did were often stripped of their church buildings and property by the courts, upholding the denomination's claims that the properties belonged to the denomination, not the congregation. It was not until 1936 that J. Gresham Machen and McIntire split from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to form the Presbyterian Church of America, later called the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In 1937, McIntire again separated to form the Bible Presbyterian Church.

How did separation affect those who left their denominations, and what drove them to leave? Carpenter sees tremendous tension between the fundamentalists' desire to obey the scriptural command to "come out from among them and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6:17) and a sense of obligation to save Protestant America. On the one hand, making the break was energizing, winnowing the merely sympathetic from the truly committed; on the other, outside the familiar bonds of the established churches there were arguments over leadership and the boundaries of fellowship, and lingering doubts about whether to go or to stay was the best path.⁶⁴

Interestingly, Carpenter finds a low correlation between the feeling of being an "outsider" within a denomination—that is, socially isolated by poverty, class, lack of education, living in a rural area or other factors—and the decision to "come out" from the denominations. He concludes that those who left their denominational homes tended to be driven primarily by personal traits and factors rather than simply conservative beliefs or a feeling of isolation.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 34.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

J. Frank Norris is a prime example of a personality type that was drawn to separation—one that provides insight into the tendency of fundamentalist churches to align around strong, often near-dictatorial leaders. Carpenter calls Norris “a violent person who relished agitation and conflict, and he felt driven to build his own empire. . . . Norris was temperamentally unable to be part of any association that he could not dominate. This trait helps explain the highly feudal character of separatist fundamentalism, which is marked more by the empires of regional warlords than by strong networks of cooperation.”⁶⁶

Norris gloried in his separation from the Texas Baptist establishment and later, as pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, his independence from the Northern Baptist Convention. But although he rejected what he saw as control of his churches by a denominational “machine,” Norris firmly embraced personal control of his Fundamentalist Baptist churches and a more doctrinal approach than traditional Baptists. Hankins lists four clear differences between Norris and traditional Baptists, all rooted in a desire for control. Traditional Baptists were anticreedal; Norris advocated that the Southern Baptists adopt a uniform creed. Traditional Baptists strongly advocated separation of church and state; Norris wanted a government that “officially encouraged evangelical Protestantism.” Traditional Baptists believed local congregations should be both independent and democratically governed; Norris strongly embraced congregational independence from a denomination, but he ran his own churches as a virtual dictator. And finally, traditional Baptists embraced the priesthood of the believer and “soul liberty”; Norris controlled every aspect of the teachings not only in his churches and Sunday

⁶⁶ Ibid., 51.

schools, but in his seminary and missionary organizations. Those who wished to exercise their soul liberty to disagree were welcome to leave.⁶⁷

McIntire also exhibited a need for dominance and intolerance for denominational interference. His alliance with J. Gresham Machen in the split from Princeton Theological Seminary and involvement in the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions signaled his willingness to buck the modernist elements in the Presbyterian establishment from within; his eventual expulsion from the Presbyterian Church, taking his congregation with him, enabled him to take control of his own denomination and, like Norris, build his own empire. In contrast to Norris's Baptists, denominational control and a common creed was the norm in the Presbyterian tradition. But McIntire was also clearly the controlling figure in his organizations.

While Norris and McIntire exemplified personalities who would separate to pursue and control their own fundamentalist fiefdoms, Rice did not formally separate from the Southern Baptist Convention until virtually forced to do so. Rice's interests lay in evangelism, not in founding his own group of churches. While he had made enemies in the Southern Baptist fold over his condemnation of liberal teachings at Baylor University, Rice remained a member of a Southern Baptist congregation until the Baptist establishment threatened him over his alignment with Norris. It is possible and perhaps likely that Rice would eventually have separated from the Southern Baptists even without denominational threats. But Rice's separation lacked the stridency and sense of total repudiation expressed by Norris and McIntire. Throughout his life, he maintained a distinction between criticism of the denomination as an organization and wholesale

⁶⁷ Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 2-3.

condemnation of its members who had not separated, in contrast to Norris and, especially, McIntire.

Separation remained an issue throughout the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. What degree of separation was required, and where should the line between fellowship and apostasy be drawn? Norris, Rice, and McIntire left their denominations for different reasons, and their views of separation issues varied. Their newspapers show simmering differences among fundamentalists that eventually contributed to the fundamentalist/evangelical split of the mid-1950s.

Norris, says C. Allyn Russell, “fought indefatigably the ‘denominational machine’ both before and after his successive expulsions from a local pastors conference, the county association of which his church was a member, and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.”⁶⁸ Norris clearly had differences with mainstream Baptists. In the March 9, 1934 issue of the *Fundamentalist* he speaks about a paper written by his former classmate at Baylor, Dr. J. M. Dawson, and accepted by the Texas Baptist Convention. Dawson rejected the supernaturalism of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.⁶⁹ For Norris and other fundamentalists, this was rank modernism.

Norris had been heavily involved in fighting modernist teachings at Baylor University. But he claimed First Baptist Church’s ejection from the fellowship of Texas Baptists actually resulted from its refusal to cooperate with the denomination’s Seventy-Five Million Campaign fundraiser and refusal to use the denomination’s Sunday School materials. He describes a long list of conspiracies and personal injustices inflicted upon

68 Russell, *Voices*, 20.

69 J. Frank Norris, “Why First Baptist Church Declines to Accept New Constitution for Texas Baptists,” *Fundamentalist*, March 9, 1934, 2.

himself and First Baptist Church since long before the church was tossed from the Texas Baptist Convention, but declares that God has had vengeance for these wrongs:

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” What has been the fate of the conspirators? . . .

The District Attorney, who was the tool of the liquor interest and framed and forged the indictment in 1912 [when Norris was charged with arson in the fire that destroyed First Baptist Church] met with a horrible death, driving in an eight cylinder Cadillac . . . with his lady companion, and his automobile full of Budweiser, a head on crash with a streetcar. . . .

One of Fort Worth’s richest citizens was the “expert witness” on hand writing in the framed testimony and later, he walked out on the railroad track near his house, and laid down and a long line of freight cars cut his body half in two.⁷⁰

There follows a long list of gruesome fates divinely dealt to those who opposed Norris and his church. Rebellion against the “machine” and denunciation of perceived conspiracies were important to Norris’s carefully cultivated image as a righteous, divinely approved man of God battling the twin evils of modernism and ecclesiastical control. Though by the 1930s Norris had ceased his frequent run-ins with the law, he clearly still relished his outlaw persona. He wore separation like a badge, inviting dissatisfied Baptists to come out into his own Fundamentalist Baptist churches and building an image as a heroic crusader for “true” Christianity.

Norris dogged the Baptist conventions, often attending conferences to heckle and disrupt the proceedings. A boastful article titled “How J. Frank Norris Runs the Southern Baptist Convention,” (which Norris claimed was a quote from a prominent Baptist layman) implied his power to influence the convention through its determination to defy his wise and righteous counsel. He boasts that he deliberately secured the re-election of SBC president Louie D. Newton, to whom he refers as “little Lord Fauntleroy Louie,” by attacking Newton for his supposed communist leanings. “I knew that it was necessary

⁷⁰ Ibid., 2.

that judgment come to the house of God and for the whole thing [Newton's liberalism] to be brought out into the open."⁷¹

But though Norris was vociferously separated from the mainstream Baptist church, he never claimed that Baptists who remained in the conventions were apostate merely through association with the denomination. In the early 1940s, Norris and his church were associated with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). Although the NAE rejected the liberal FCC, it nonetheless allowed membership of individuals who were members of denominations under the FCC umbrella. It also included members from the Holiness, Anabaptist, and Pentecostal world, indicating that Norris's attitude toward the necessity of separation was considerably less stringent than his fellow fundamentalist Carl McIntire.

A cartoon by Eleanore Wigfield in the October 3, 1947 issue of the *Beacon* nicely summarizes McIntire's belief in separation, depicting two armed, running soldiers, one labeled "ecclesiastical separation from apostasy" and the other "personal separation from sin and worldliness." Its caption is the Bible verse frequently used to argue the principle of separation: "Come out from among them and separate yourselves, saith the Lord, touch not what is unclean; then I will receive you." (2 Cor. 6:17).⁷²

McIntire was an aggressive and strident advocate of separation from any trace of modernist influence. For McIntire, to be a member of a denomination tainted by modernism made one as much an apostate as its most liberal member, no matter the strength of one's personal fundamentalist beliefs. In church polity, McIntire remained

71 "How J. Frank Norris Runs the Southern Baptist Convention," *Fundamentalist*, June 13, 1947, 1.

72 Eleanore Wigfield, "Survival" (cartoon), *Christian Beacon*, Oct. 3, 1946, 4.

Presbyterian to his core: according to a January 16, 1947 *Beacon* editorial, “[McIntire’s] congregation took the name “Bible Presbyterian” because they believed that the controversy was over the Bible and they were going to continue to be Presbyterians.”⁷³ McIntire was no advocate of congregational independence. He believed a true believer was obligated to come out of any modernist-tainted denomination and join a biblically-correct denomination with a fundamentalist creed, such as his own Bible Presbyterian Church.

McIntire’s rigid religious separatism is most obvious in his screeds against the FCC and the NAE and supporting his own organization, the ACCC. The FCC, founded in 1908, included most of the mainline Protestant denominations. It supported social and economic change and often endorsed liberal theology. McIntire repeatedly denounces the FCC as “near-communist” and unchristian, declaring that fundamentalist believers who remain in FCC churches must separate or be apostate for supporting modernism: “Unbelief cannot, in the light of the commands of Scripture, be supported; and God’s people cannot, if they would be obedient to their Redeemer, remain in communion with infidels.”⁷⁴

The American Council of Christian Churches was McIntire’s answer to the FCC. Founded in 1941, the ACCC was deliberately patterned after the FCC as a challenge to the presumption that the FCC spoke for all Protestant churches. A 1947 *Beacon* editorial described the ACCC as “a testimony to separation from apostasy, which includes

73 “McIntire’s Case,” *Christian Beacon*, Jan. 16, 1947, 8.

74 “American Council Starts 6th Year: Receives New Bodies: Invites N.A.E. Men: Ketcham Named President,” *Christian Beacon*, Oct. 2, 1946, 8.

separation from the Federal Council” and as “standing for the purity of the church.”⁷⁵

McIntire claims that the NAE was organized in 1942 because its founders refused to stand for full separation from modernism:

The National Association of Evangelicals does not profess to be a testimony in behalf of separation of ecclesiastical apostasy. . . . it was this issue that led to the organization of the NAE. Because the men in the American Council insisted that the position be taken, the Sanhedrin be named, men in the NAE declined to go along, and they organized their Association. . . . No call is issued; no testimony is given for the Lord’s people to refuse to co-operate with the unbelief of the Federal Council or in its local church federations. No testimony as to separation is given at all.⁷⁶

McIntire considered the NAE fatally tainted by its acceptance of members still unseparated from denominations associated with the FCC. In 1946, McIntire described the three positions he found in American Protestantism:

[T]he Federal Council representing modernism; the American Council representing out-and-out, uncompromising position of the Word of God; and the N.A.E. representing the attempt to compromise between the two and to be another group without opposing the Federal Council or facing the issue of separation from unbelief.⁷⁷

In the same article he declares that the NAE, “instead of being on the side of the forces that believe it is wrong, according to the Bible, to support unbelief, actually aids those who want to continue in fellowship and cooperation with such unbelief.”⁷⁸

McIntire’s opposition not only to the FCC but to his fellow fundamentalists in the NAE clearly shows that he is far more radical on religious separation than either Norris or Rice, both NAE members. McIntire’s stringent separatism is also closely interwoven

75 “An Editorial,” *Christian Beacon*, May 22, 1947, 5.

76 *Ibid.*, 1, 5.

77 “Why Evangelicals Cannot Co-operate in the FCCCA,” *Christian Beacon*, Sept. 16, 1946, 1. McIntire uses the acronym FCCCA for the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America throughout the article, rather than the more common “FCC.”

78 *Ibid.*, 4.

with his extreme anti-communism. McIntire's was a Manichean worldview: one was either a bible-believing, American liberty-loving capitalist or an apostate. It was not enough to separate from a church or denomination tainted with modernism; in McIntire's view the true believer was required to separate from churches or denominations that had any affiliation or fellowship with modernists in organizations such as the FCC.

Norris used his loudly-expressed belief in separation as a tool to build his own network of Fundamentalist Baptist churches, but was still comfortable with membership in the NAE alongside fellow-believers who were still members of mainline denominations. McIntire insisted on rigid separation from any group tainted by modernism, including any church affiliated with the FCC and any group, including the NAE, that permitted membership for unseparated believers. Rice, while he came out from the Southern Baptist Convention, indulged in neither the hateful rhetoric Norris employed against the Baptist "machine" and its members nor McIntire's rigid insistence on total separation and maintaining the purity of the "true" church.

Rice's writings often spoke the rhetoric of separation. In January of 1936, he wrote dramatically of his own decision against modernism in 1921 at the University of Chicago:

If God gives me grace and I have the opportunity to smite this awful unbelief that wrecks the faith of all it can, then SMITE IT I WILL, SO HELP ME GOD! . . . I little knew then that the keeping of my vow would lose me some of the dearest friends I ever knew, and brand me as an outcast, a fanatic, a "non-cooperating Baptist," "a disturber," "a Bolshevik." But I never regretted it. . . . When I saw [modernism] was entrenched in Baptist Conventions, and embraced or defended by Baptist leaders, then I got out.⁷⁹

Rice did indeed work against modernist elements in the Southern Baptist Convention and made enemies in the denomination. But he misstates the circumstances

79 John R. Rice, "Southern Baptist Modernism," *Sword of the Lord*, January 10, 1936, 4.

of his exit slightly, perhaps for dramatic effect; Rice did not leave the convention until 1928, and then only after threats by Baptist leaders. But his experiences had convinced him that those who were “sound in the faith” would never gain control of the conventions and “bring the leadership back to the Word of God.”⁸⁰ Rice believed in the Biblical prohibition against yoking up with unbelievers, and that “Christians are not to receive into their houses (nor church houses, certainly) those who are wrong on the doctrine of Christ.”⁸¹ But Rice endorsed neither Norris’s heated diatribes nor McIntire’s rigid standards of separation.

For Rice, a Christian who upheld fundamentalist beliefs and had trusted Christ as savior was to be received in fellowship without regard to his or her church membership. He often sympathized with fundamentalist believers who remained in their denominations for various reasons. In the article quoted above, one of a long series on modernism in the Southern Baptist Convention, Rice dissects a sermon delivered by Dr. John W. Phillips at the Southern Baptist Convention on May 13, 1931. Phillips’ sermon disputed the Bible’s authority, denied blood atonement, portrayed Christ as human, and advocated seeking personal righteousness rather than salvation through substitutionary atonement. Though no one protested the sermon, Rice says he believes without doubt that many Baptists knew that Phillips’ assertions were wrong and “longed to speak . . . yet didn’t, because they know what happens to preachers who oppose the denominational machine. They know the pitiless pressure brought on any man who is branded as ‘disloyal,’ or ‘a destructive critic,’ or a ‘Norrisite.’ They have seen men’s hearts broken,

80 Ibid., 3

81 Ibid., 3.

their churches split, their reputations blackened.”⁸² Rice’s comment hints at some bitterness over his own departure from the Southern Baptist fold as an accused “Norrisite,” but also shows an understanding of many church members’ reluctance to buck the denomination and leave the church home of a lifetime.

Rice seems to have become more conciliatory and inclusive as he grew older. In 1949 he ran a series of transcriptions of McIntire’s radio addresses in the *Sword*, which included McIntire’s usual scathing criticism of apostasy in the FCC and its modernist leadership. Rice received many letters from readers reacting both positively and negatively to the McIntire series, and apparently lost a number of subscribers who objected to McIntire’s strong words about the FCC. There are three interesting aspects to Rice’s resulting address to readers about McIntire and his views. The first is the number of *Sword* subscribers who apparently defended the FCC, an indication that Rice’s subscribers were not limited to separatist fundamentalists, but reflected Rice’s own broader outreach as an evangelist. The second is his articulation of his own stand on fellowship with those who are not separated from FCC churches. Those who dropped subscriptions did so, he says, over McIntire’s strong criticism of the FCC. Although Rice restates his own rejection of the FCC and its modernist leadership, he says emphatically that he is not aligned with McIntire’s stringently separatist ACCC, but is a member of the National Association of Evangelicals. “I do not break fellowship,” he says, “with all the good men in denominations which fellowship with the Federal Council of Churches, I am

82 Ibid., 1-2.

regularly involved in large union revival campaigns and I work with all the people of God who believe the Bible and preach salvation by the blood of Christ.”⁸³

The third important aspect of Rice’s article is his stated rejection of McIntire’s extreme stance on separation:

I may say very frankly that I have sometimes been irritated by the extreme to which Mr. McIntire sometimes goes, particularly in labeling some of us as “compromisers” who strive for unity and who have good fellowship with good, solid, Bible-believing Christians who remain in denominations where there is modernism. I feel I must maintain my fellowship with all those who truly love the Lord Jesus and believe His Word, even though they may do wrong, and I believe they do, in being yoked up with unbelievers . . .⁸⁴

This statement draws a clear line between Rice and McIntire. For McIntire, Christians who did not separate from tainted denominations were themselves apostate. Rice believed that, while they *should have* separated, those who maintained fundamentalist beliefs within a denomination were not personally apostate and were deserving of fellowship.

Rice’s openness to association with fellow believers outside the narrow bounds of separated fundamentalists became most apparent in his support for and association with Billy Graham, which eventually entangled him in the fundamentalist/evangelical schism of the 1950s.

When Billy Graham first appeared on the evangelical scene in the 1940s, Rice was thrilled with the success of his revivals. Rice’s main interest was soul-winning, and he was always generous with praise for successful revivalists. In reporting on Graham’s enormously popular 1947 Youth for Christ revival tour of Europe, Rice gushed, “What intelligent Christian has not been thrilled by the reports of the great work done by Youth

83 “The McIntire Articles,” *Sword of the Lord*, April 8, 1949, 1.

84 *Ibid.*, 1.

teams sent to England, Scandinavia, and Holland!”⁸⁵ His close association with Graham, a longtime *Sword* board member, is itself evidence of Rice’s willingness to “fellowship” with those who held fundamentalist beliefs but remained in denominations that harbored modernists: Graham was an unseparated Southern Baptist.

When other fundamentalists, including Norris and McIntire, began to express doubts about Graham’s orthodoxy and his association with too-liberal groups in union revivals during the early 1950s, Rice continued to praise his success on the platform. In 1955 Rice joined Graham on his tour of Scotland. His reports from the trip are obviously reactions to criticism of Graham and accusations of liberal involvement in his campaigns. Rice continues to defend Graham’s orthodox message. He notes that Graham was invited to Scotland by the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, and continues, “There is much liberalism in the Church of Scotland, I am told. Yet the Scottish ministers were deeply moved by the London Crusade of Billy Graham. . . . It was nobly agreed that Billy Graham would have absolutely free hand about the preaching, that he would choose his own assistants, follow his own methods.”⁸⁶ Yet before Rice left Scotland he promised his readers answers to their questions about Billy Graham in an upcoming issue, an indication of a bubbling controversy.

Rice walked a tightrope in defending Graham. Himself a veteran of union revivals sometimes sponsored in part by Holiness and Pentecostal groups, Quakers, rescue missions, and even local civic groups, Rice believed that it was possible to cooperate with

85 “Billy Graham Winning Thousands in England: American Youth for Christ Team Including Billy Graham . . . Marvelously Used in Great Britain,” *Sword of the Lord*, Feb. 28, 1947, 1.

86 “7 Miracle Days with Billy Graham in the All-Scotland Crusade,” *Sword of the Lord*, May 13, 1955, 4.

non-fundamentalists and denominations that included modernists in organizing revivals, so as long as the message was pure and fundamentalist and delivered by fundamentalist preachers. Sumner cites an invitation to Rice to hold a revival in Dayton, Ohio in 1946. The invitation was issued by the Christian Business Men's Committee, but Rice refused to go unless "Bible-believing pastors and churches came in and officially sponsored the campaign. These pastors and churches were invited separately to unite, and the crusade was limited, as all of the Rice crusades have been, to the fundamental, evangelical churches."⁸⁷ As Rice's close associate, Sumner would naturally be expected to defend the purity of his message, but Moore agrees that Rice insisted "orthodox or Fundamentalist Christians . . . should never allow modernists a share of leadership in revivals. Leadership included planning, preaching, guiding the congregation in prayer, singing, etc. A modernist should never be 'on the platform,' as that gave the impression of spiritual parity with Fundamentalists."⁸⁸

In the June 17, 1955 issue of the *Sword*, Rice steps onto the tightrope. Graham's theology is sound, he insists: "[Billy Graham] has definitely pledged that he will not have any man in leadership in his campaigns to represent him officially who is not true to the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, His blood atonement and such fundamental truths."⁸⁹ But in arguing the purity of Graham's platform, Rice appears to be trying to convince himself as much as his readers. Responding to rumors that liberal Presbyterian John Sutherland Bonnell of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City was

⁸⁷ Sumner, *Man of God*, 122.

⁸⁸ Moore, *Emergence of Moderate Fundamentalism*, 204.

⁸⁹ "Questions Answered About Billy Graham," *Sword of the Lord*, June 17, 1955, 9.

invited to share in the program by Graham, he attributes Bonnell's invitation to Scotland to leaders of the Church of Scotland who were hopeful of counteracting opposition to the revival by liberal Scottish churchmen. Rice admits that Bonnell was actually on the platform with Graham for several nights but brushes off his presence as of no consequence. "[Bonnell] was on the platform several nights and Dr. Graham did not even introduce him to the crowd," he says, but then continues, "One night after the sermon, I think when Dr. Graham went to the counseling room to help deal with the converts, Dr. Tom Allen, chairman, asked Dr. Bonnell to dismiss the congregation in prayer."⁹⁰

A modernist leading the closing prayer should have been a red flag for Rice, but he brushes it aside while admitting that Graham had sometimes been too friendly with liberals:

I think he has unwisely had fellowship with modernists on some occasions. I do not mean that he supported the modernistic program . . . or that he ever let his own position be misunderstood about the great doctrines of the Bible. But I think he has some friends who are modernists and who have done him great harm. And I think association with them has done the cause of Christ harm.⁹¹

Rice the fundamentalist and Rice the evangelist thrilled by Graham's success struggled with the line between cooperation and outright collaboration with modernists. Rice had been one of the young Graham's mentors, had supported Graham's crusades and trumpeted his successes in the *Sword*. In 1955 he was clearly troubled by Graham's associations but couldn't bring himself to condemn his onetime protégé.

Interestingly, Rice mentions both Norris and McIntire as possible influences on Graham's growing reluctance to clearly identify himself as a fundamentalist. In referring

⁹⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁹¹ Ibid., 9.

to a statement Graham made that he was “neither a fundamentalist nor a modernist,” Rice says he believes that Graham ought to have been able to say “I am a fundamentalist. I am not a modernist,” but that as a Southern Baptist, Graham may have been uncomfortable with that statement because “among Southern Baptists, Dr. J. Frank Norris brought the term ‘fundamentalist’ into great disrepute.” Rice goes on, “He may also have been influenced somewhat by the fact that *The Christian Beacon* and Dr. Carl McIntire and the others of the American Council of Churches who are strong fundamentalists, have radically attacked Dr. Graham, and not always wisely and, I think, not always accurately.”⁹²

By 1957, Rice was forced to admit that Graham had crossed the line, not only cooperating with questionable groups but actively seeking them as preferred sponsors for his crusades. He criticized an article by Graham associate Paul Rees, complaining that Rees was not forthcoming about the depth of Graham’s association with liberals and the National Council of Churches (formerly the FCC). Graham’s recent New York crusade, says Rice, was at the invitation of the Protestant Council, the “New York City division of the National Council of Churches.”⁹³ He notes with some bitterness that “fundamentally sound Christians” had earlier invited Graham to come to New York, but that he had refused to come unless modernist groups also invited him: “He wanted the prestige, the financial backing and worldly influence of the Protestant Council and would not come without them.”⁹⁴

92 Ibid., 10.

93 “The Billy Graham New York Crusade: Dr. Rees Defends Billy’s Unequal Yoke,” *Sword of the Lord*, April 20, 1957, 3.

94 Ibid., 6.

Rice, always more willing to reach out to true believers within less orthodox groups than many of his fellow fundamentalists, perhaps allowed his desire to win souls to overrule his basic belief in not yoking up with unbelievers. When he finally split with Graham, it was painful both on a personal level and to his ministry through the *Sword*, which as previously noted lost a substantial number of subscribers after the split. By hesitating to cut loose from Graham, Rice had also damaged his fundamentalist credentials with many more rigid separatists, including McIntire. Yet Rice never lost his comparatively inclusive views. An incident near the end of Rice's life illustrates his continued desire to reach out to people of imperfect belief. In August of 1980, at age eighty-four, Rice spoke at the National Sword of the Lord Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, taking as his text John 10:16, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Rice had planned to have the assembly join in singing a well-loved evangelical hymn, "The Family of God," which advocated loving *all* of God's children. Rice's successor as editor of the *Sword*, Curtis Hutson, apparently felt the song contradicted separatism and refused to allow the words to be distributed to the audience or the song to be sung. Rice, sitting in his wheelchair among three of his six daughters, later wept with disappointment.⁹⁵

Separation was a defining characteristic of the fundamentalist movement, beginning in the late 1920s when conservative Christians began to "come out" of denominations that they considered fatally infected with modernism. But Norris, McIntire, and Rice demonstrate real differences on the issue. Norris gloried in being

⁹⁵ Andrew Himes, "*The Sword of the Lord*": *The Roots of Fundamentalism in an American Family* (Seattle: Chiara Press, 2011), 289-90.

thrown out of every Baptist organization in Texas and used separatism as a badge of honor to build not only his well-burnished image, but his own Fundamentalist Baptist empire—though Norris’s NAE membership indicates that he was less extreme than McIntire. McIntire took separatism to the most stringent degree, insisting that anyone who remained in a denomination that supported any trace of modernism was apostate, no matter the purity of his personal beliefs. His rigidity on the subject led to his founding the Bible Presbyterian Church and the ACCC, which also took on the NAE over its failure to uphold strict-enough separation.

Rice’s more inclusive views stand in contrast to Norris and McIntire. Rice believed in separation from unbelievers, but his lines were drawn more softly. He, like Norris, was a member of the NAE, and publicly disagreed with McIntire on the degree to which separation must be maintained. He repeatedly said that even individuals in modernist-infected denominations could hold sound fundamentalist beliefs—and if they did, they were worthy of fellowship. Rice’s personal interest was always evangelism, not empire-building, and he participated in union revivals as long as the message was clearly fundamentalist. He was willing to overlook what he considered unimportant details such as errors of belief on baptism or differences on dispensationalism if a person upheld the central doctrines of Bible inerrancy, supernaturalism, and blood atonement. Within the fundamentalist spectrum, Rice represented a moderate stance on separatism, and continued to do so until his death.

V. CONFLICT AND DISAGREEMENT

Like others of strong religious conviction, J. Frank Norris, Carl McIntire, and John R. Rice sometimes found themselves in vigorous opposition to those whose religious convictions differed from their fundamentalist beliefs—and sometimes to each other. Their respective newspapers provided platforms from which doctrinal and personal conflicts were fought out. The three men’s differing ways of disagreeing and handling conflicts reflect differences in their personalities, and differences in their visions of themselves and their roles as religious leaders.

Norris’s aggressiveness and apparent love of conflict has been noted previously, and are no less factors here. A need for control and attention fed his reactions to perceived attacks, making him a deadly enemy. According to Hankins, Norris was an example of the “Manichean mind-set of fundamentalism” identified by historian Richard Hofstadter,⁹⁶ a dualistic view that sees events as the conflict of distinct opposites: black/white, light/dark, good/evil. Norris’s paranoia and ready perception of conspiracies in both politics and religion epitomize Hofstadter’s “paranoid style.”⁹⁷

While he perceived conspiracies everywhere, Norris seemed to welcome them, using them to build his fame and power. Hankins says it is unclear whether Norris was

⁹⁶ Hankins, *God’s Rascal*, 108.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

more interested in the actual conspiracies he believed surrounded him or “in the mileage he could get out of them in his never-ending quest to make himself famous.”⁹⁸

Norris also had no compunctions about publicly embarrassing or humiliating others, including other preachers. Norris once offered his close associate Luther Peak a position as his assistant at First Baptist Church, then hired another man after Peak had already found a replacement for himself in his previous job. No explanation was given.⁹⁹ Peak also witnessed an inconsiderate incident at Norris’s school. Preacher B. B. Lakin was addressing the students as Norris walked into the auditorium, stopping behind a student with an elaborate 50s hairstyle. He conspicuously mussed the student’s hair, completely pulling the audience’s attention away from the speaker as they laughed at Norris’s joke. Peak ascribed Norris’s actions to “inability to accept someone else in the limelight.”¹⁰⁰

Norris could be ruthless and cruel in his personal attacks, dragging in unsavory or questionable personal situations involving his target or the target’s family members and using dramatic and exaggerated language to imply imagined wrongdoing. Using testimonies from friends and allies to support one’s argument was not unusual in newspaper arguments, but Norris actively used his allies as agents in direct actions designed to smear the reputations and credibility of his enemies.

McIntire shared Norris’s black-and-white worldview and perception of conspiracies afoot. But McIntire’s conflicts tended to be less personal, less about attacks on his own personal power and status and more about attacks on true religion. This may

98 Ibid., 5.

99 Ibid., 121-2.

100 Ibid., 124.

have reflected both differences in personality and in the polity of Norris's and McIntire's organizations. Though Norris kept tight control over his Fundamentalist Baptist churches, as a Baptist he was dealing with fellow preachers who were traditionally independent operators with a long history of challenging authority, as did Norris himself. McIntire's Bible Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, was built on the Presbyterian model, in which the denomination exercised some measure of control over individual ministers and congregations: McIntire was accepted as the leader of the denomination, and his total confidence in himself and his position may have made him less likely than Norris to see challenges to himself in every shadow.

The subjects of McIntire's disagreements were, instead, those who did not uphold his stringent religious values. McIntire equated modernism with communism and attacked proponents of both with vigor. Although he promoted his doctrine and his organizations constantly, McIntire was less interested in making himself the center of attention than in winning his argument. He used none of Norris's hyperbolic language and little personal mud-slinging, although he certainly used the familiar methods of Red-baiters, implications of wrongdoing based on often-tenuous associations or alleged memberships in suspect organizations.

McIntire's style in conflicts was to make relentless, repeated accusations of wrongdoing, wrong doctrine, or wrong associations, often repeated over periods of weeks, months, or even years. He most frequently targeted modernist church leaders or officials of the FCC, including Methodist bishop G. Bromley Oxnam and liberal Baptist minister Harry Emerson Fosdick. McIntire's arguments were scathing and focused on

discrediting the views and motives of those who disagreed with him and proclaiming the righteousness of his own position.

Rice was far less aggressive than either Norris or McIntire. He sought to avoid public disagreements, working behind the scenes to settle disagreements when possible rather than arguing from his print pulpit. When Rice found it necessary to take his argument to the pages of the *Sword*, his style of confrontation was much cooler than either Norris or McIntire. He laid out his arguments in a structured, unemotional manner, without Norris's hyperbole or McIntire's shrillness.

In part, Rice's different approach resulted from his primary role as an evangelist. Rice was accustomed to working with preachers from many backgrounds. The ability to negotiate disagreements would have been a necessary skill for one working in large union revivals. Rice had no interest in or need to maintain a personal power base that compared with Norris's or McIntire's. Rather than trying to dominate those with whom he disagreed, he used conciliatory language and asked his readers with apparent sincerity to pray for those on the other side of the argument. As he did on issues of separation, Rice called for tolerance of minor differences among believers, so long as there was agreement on essential points of doctrine.

As the mouthpieces of men involved in a notably volatile religious movement, the three newspapers offer frequent examples of conflict. A June 1934 *Fundamentalist* article, "Conspiracy Against J. Frank Norris Exposed," illustrates well the features of a typical Norris attack. He frames the conflict as an evildoer assaulting the good character and actions of God's defender, J. Frank Norris, then attacks the perceived enemy's character, calling him names, making implications about the enemy's associations, and

using past incidents involving the enemy or his family members and associates. He then threatens God's retribution with stories of disasters suffered by others who attacked him and praises his own forbearance and long-suffering patience with his attackers.

Norris describes charges made by two men he refers to as "Pitchfork Smith," identified only as a supporter of Fort Worth gambling and liquor interests, and "The Rubber Stamp," identified as a Baptist preacher. His disrespectful nicknames immediately diminish the men and their written accusations, which include unpaid debts; taking money donated for memorial windows, substituting plain windows, and pocketing the difference; insurance fraud; and implications that Norris was involved in the murder of his own father-in-law.¹⁰¹ Norris begins his own attack with the text of a telegram from Norris to the Rev. Morris Roberts of the First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Texas. Roberts had no hand in the original accusations, but was believed by Norris to have circulated them among his fellows. In the stilted language of telegrams, Norris's wire reads, "Rev. L. S. Ballard [a Norris ally] makes serious charges concerning your handling missionary funds while secretary BMA [Baptist Missionary Association] I am going to broadcast and publish this, please answer."¹⁰² Here Norris goes after a man who is only on the periphery of the situation, making the same type of vague accusation others have leveled against Norris. He issues this threat to his enemies:

Notice is served here now, I am going after every fellow who puts his bill in my business like I did in the old days . . . and every man who monkeyed around in my backyard, I took a pass key, opened his closet, and brought out every skeleton in his family history.

101 "Conspiracy Against J. Frank Norris Exposed," *Fundamentalist*, June 22, 1934, 6-7.

102 *Ibid.*, 6.

No use to go around and holler ‘persecution.’ If they don’t want their records aired in this paper which covers the continent, and broadcast over a radio that goes from coast to coast, they had better stay out of my backyard.¹⁰³

This pugnacity is typical of Norris, as are threats of retribution. Another characteristic tactic is claims of repeated slanders against him by those involved in the vices he fought. This, says Norris, is the case with whispers that he played some part in the death of his father-in-law, the Rev. Jim Gaddy. While on a train trip accompanied by Norris, Gaddy apparently jumped from the moving train. Norris was asleep at the time, having charged a porter with watching Gaddy, who was suffering from deep depression. The death was ruled a suicide. And yet, says Norris, “[T]his slander was never whispered until years afterwards [when] I was in the midst of the thickest fight against liquor, gambling and ecclesiasticism. No question was raised at the time of the death of Bro. Gaddy, and for several years afterwards, and now the Rubber Stamp-Pitchfork attack brings up this old slander.”¹⁰⁴

Norris then returns to “The Rubber Stamp,” whom he never identifies by name, though details he provides were probably sufficient for many of his readers to deduce his identity. He is described as a former pastor of East Dallas Baptist Church, who left his pulpit “after a row,” and “jumped over into the Fundamentalist pasture” aided by Norris, who paid him a salary of \$310 per month. Norris accuses him of making a vicious attack against John R. Rice, then the pastor of a Fundamentalist Baptist church, then returning

103 Ibid., 6.

104 Ibid., 7.

to the Southern Baptist Convention, associating with Baptist philanthropist W. H. Wolfe, who “dropped him.”¹⁰⁵

Having laid out the man’s offenses, Norris moves on to another typical theme, bemoaning the jealousy of “some small preachers against successful ministers!” Norris often claimed he was attacked due to envy of his success, power, and influence. Here he praises his own forbearance of his enemies’ envy and plays up his crusades against evil:

I have ignored through the years the many vicious slanderous attacks and have been willing to rest my case with the blessings of Almighty God on my labors and, and [sic] Oh how abundant those labors have been. Eternity alone will reckon, the great multitudes of souls that have been saved, campaigns that have been fought, homes that have been blessed—long after the shining stars have ceased to roll in their courses, multitudes will sing the praises of their redeemer because of the ministry of this minister, and perhaps the most maligned minister of his age.¹⁰⁶

Norris returned to these themes again and again in disagreements and perceived attacks by others—and he had many opportunities to do so, given his ready perception of conspiracies and need for control. In 1950, only two years before Norris’s death, he made similar accusations and threats in an argument with associate G. Beauchamp Vick, in which Norris accused Vick and others of trying to wrest away control of his seminary.

McIntire’s style of attack is illustrated by his accusations and implications against G. Bromley Oxnam, a liberal Methodist bishop who served as president of the FCC (1944-46) and the WCC (1948-54), both organizations abhorred by McIntire. In the August 29, 1946 issue of the *Beacon*, McIntire devoted multiple articles to Oxnam, who was scheduled to speak before the East Tennessee Education Association in November 1946. McIntire’s lead article declares that “even the world” is alarmed by Oxnam’s

105 Ibid., 8.

106 Ibid., 8.

radical views, as evidenced by protests over Oxnam's scheduled appearance before Tennessee educators. McIntire describes spreading apprehension about Oxnam's radical views and leadership in the name of American Protestantism, while simultaneously touting the views of McIntire's own ACCC:

The American Council of Churches, founded 1941 to expose this very condi- [sic] in the Federal Council, has been faithfully denouncing Dr. Oxnam's unbelief, his calling of the Almighty God, the God of the Bible, a 'dirty bully,' and his un-American, unchristian, and near-communistic social views which he offers in the name of Christ, and in his Methodist "Crusade for Christ."¹⁰⁷

McIntire often used reproductions of articles from other publications to reinforce his arguments, and here two articles from the *Knoxville Journal* strongly imply Oxnam's involvement with communism based on his associations. "Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam . . . is not a member of the Communist Party so far as is known," one article begins, but then continues, "A study of his record, however, reveals a remarkable affinity between his activities as a churchman and political causes directly or indirectly moving toward objectives espoused by American Reds and World Communism." The article notes that Oxnam was an executive of the American Civil Liberties Union and affiliated with a long list of named "radical or Communist front" groups.¹⁰⁸

Another reproduced article names Oxnam as "one of several hundred" signers of a message to Congress "demanding" the abolition of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, an extension of the Dies Committee. The implications are identical to those in the first article, noting that Oxnam will be speaking to Tennessee educators in

107 "Federal Council President Meets Difficulty In Coming [to] Tennessee State Teachers' Convention: Citizens Protest: Bishop Oxnam's Radicalism Becomes Big Issue," *Christian Beacon*, August 29, 1946, 1.

108 "Bishop Oxnam's Record Shows Friendliness for Red Goals," *Knoxville Journal*, August 11, 1946, photographically reproduced in *Christian Beacon*, August 29, 1946, 1.

November and emphasizing that his relationships with allegedly communist-leaning groups “are **not** included in the biographical sketch contained in *Who’s Who*.”¹⁰⁹

Where Norris’s attacks were intensely personal, McIntire’s were most often directed at individuals he regarded as modernist apostates and focused on incorrect belief and politics. McIntire was strongly aligned with secular anticommunists and an ally of Joseph McCarthy, and he employed many of their common smear tactics. But McIntire equated the fight against communism with the fight against the antichrist. His total conflation of fundamentalist Christian and American values made fighting modernism and fighting communism identical obligations of true Christians. McIntire shunned Norris’s drama and image-building for scathing, focused political attacks designed not to enhance his personal image, but to destroy his opponent.

Rice’s calmer, more cerebral way of dealing with personal attacks and disagreements is revealed in a pair of incidents covered in the *Sword*. The first was Rice’s handling of the controversy inspired by the 1949 McIntire articles published in the *Sword*, when a number of readers wrote to protest or agree with McIntire’s harsh criticism of the FCC. The letter published by Rice explaining his thoughts about McIntire illustrate his straightforward, logical approach to disagreements.

In his letter, Rice first lays out his disagreements with McIntire, stating that he is not a member of McIntire’s ACCC, but of the NAE, which permitted membership of persons belonging to FCC-affiliated denominations. Rice says McIntire has “sometimes criticized” his refusal to break fellowship with Bible believers in FCC denominations, but Rice feels he must maintain that fellowship “even though [Christians in denominations]

¹⁰⁹ “Bishop Oxnam Sought Abolition Of Dies Committee,” *Knoxville Journal*, August 16, 1946, photographically reproduced in *Christian Beacon*, August 29, 1946, 1.

may do wrong, and I think they do, in being yoked up with unbelievers.” Rice expresses his irritation with McIntire’s extreme views and his labeling of those who maintain fellowship as “compromisers.”¹¹⁰

Rice then states his points of agreement with McIntire, beginning with his strong stand for fundamentalism: “Whatever else can be said for Mr. McIntire, it surely is true that he loves the Word of God and defends it.”¹¹¹ He agrees that G. Bromley Oxnam, Harry Emerson Fosdick, and others “are really infidels” who betray their ordination vows by teaching modernism. Says Rice, “Mr. McIntire is against that kind of moral insincerity and double dealing, and so am I. What Mr. McIntire is saying . . . needs to be said, and I am for him saying it and frankly and honestly back him up in a necessary protest.” While he agrees that many Methodist teaching materials are Marxist-influenced and that Methodist leaders support a controlled economy based on Marxist principles, Rice draws a line at characterizing Methodist leaders as supporting Russia over the United States. The liberal slant “does not mean that [Methodist missionary and theologian] Dr. E. Stanley Jones favors Russia nationally as against America. . . . I think [Jones] is a good man, a lover of Christ, but definitely a compromiser and a fuzzy-thinking companion of unbelievers.”¹¹²

Concluding his simple, well-organized explanation of his position, Rice says he would be grieved to lose his correspondent as a reader, but cannot turn his back on friends of the Gospel to gain the friendship of anyone else. Rice says, “[Y]ou who love

110 “The McIntire Articles,” *Sword of the Lord*, April 8, 1949, 1.

111 *Ibid.*, 4.

112 *Ibid.*, 4.

the Lord . . . ought to be tolerant toward others who are glad to suffer for this holy faith.” He hopes the reader will continue to receive the *Sword* “in brotherly tolerance,” and will “counsel with me” on any matter.¹¹³

The second incident is one of the best and most extensive examples of an argument on paper between two fundamentalist preachers and draws a sharp contrast between Rice and Norris. In early 1936 there was a public and acrimonious split between the two men. Trouble had been brewing since at least 1934. That year, Rice began publishing the *Sword*, which gave him an independent voice; this could not have pleased Norris, who preferred to control the actions and messages of those around him. Also in 1934, Norris accepted the pulpit of Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, beginning his double ministry in Detroit and Fort Worth and requiring arrangements both to fill his churches’ pulpits when Norris was absent and to expand Norris’s evangelical efforts in the North. A letter from Norris to Rice during this period makes it clear that Norris regards himself as Rice’s superior and expects Rice to go where he directs him: “I want you at Memphis as I told you and I want you to make your arrangements to go. . . . I want you to come to Detroit before the summer is over for a series of meetings. . . . I want you for August. Will go over the matter with you more particularly when I see you.” Norris continues that his associate Louis Entzminger will be in charge in Norris’s absence and will be writing to Rice about the work they are doing in the North: “Your messages will go over great here. Of course you know Entzminger and you love him and he loves you. He believes in you and you can work with him.”¹¹⁴

113 Ibid., 4.

114 “A Letter from Dr. J. Frank Norris,” *Sword of the Lord*, May 3, 1935, 3.

Refusing Norris's efforts to direct his ministry, Rice published the letter in the *Sword*, effectively and publicly declaring himself an independent agent. His rejection is polite but firm. Introducing the letter, he writes:

It is always refreshing to hear from Dr. Norris. . . . While Dr. Norris and I have no official connection in the world, and each works independent of the other, yet I have greatly enjoyed his friendship and fellowship in the gospel.

I cannot conscientiously go as far as Dr. Norris goes with our traditionalist Baptist brethren [referring to Norris's constant harsh criticism of the Southern and Northern Baptist conventions—Rice, as always, was far more conciliatory in his attitude] but all of us greatly rejoice in the blessing of God upon his ministry.¹¹⁵

At the conclusion of Norris's letter, Rice turns down the "invitation" to Memphis and reinforces his intention to be an independent revivalist. "As much as I would like to be with Dr. Norris," says Rice, "it now seems likely that I will not be able to go. . . . There are many calls for revivals and I trust the Lord will lead where He can most bless and where the greatest number of souls will be saved."¹¹⁶

The two men continued to work together and each often featured the other in his newspaper, but Rice's rejection must have infuriated Norris, who soon struck back. In the December 6, 1935 issue of the *Sword* Rice referred humorously to "rumors" of his unorthodox teachings on baptism and other issues, but in January those rumors brought serious consequences. Rice received a wire rescinding an invitation for him to preach at a planned revival at Binghamton, New York later in the month. Setting out to Binghamton anyway, Rice wrote in the *Sword*, "Attempts have been made to block the revival [in

115 Ibid., 3.

116 Ibid., 3.

Binghamton]. The pastor and deacons very kindly wired me about it. It is sad that any man should wish to hinder a revival.” He identified no source for the “interference.”¹¹⁷

“Hinderers Fail to Stop Revival at Binghamton,” read the January 17 *Sword* headline. Rice recounts communications from Fred R. Hawley of Binghamton saying Rice’s “friends” had accused him of teaching “McPhersonism”—referring to famed Pentecostal healer Aimee Semple McPherson of the Church of the Foursquare Gospel—and “Pentecostalism,” and that the pastors who had invited Rice to hold their revival had had no choice but to cancel.¹¹⁸ After examining copies of Rice’s own publications and receiving assurances from other preachers of his orthodoxy, Hawley and his fellows decided to proceed. Rice says that the Binghamton pastors agreed he “had been done an injustice, that it was an attempt by the Evil One to block a revival.”¹¹⁹

But who was the Evil One’s agent? On January 24, Rice declared in the *Sword*:

When those who dislike [Rice’s] Dallas Bible School and the rapid growth and circulation of *The Sword of the Lord* and *The Sword of Truth* [another Rice publication with some of the same content as the *Sword* but distributed free] and were offended at my independence, began to attack this humble editor and pastor, they reckoned without the testimonies of many, many men who knew the facts in the case.¹²⁰

Though obviously angry, Rice remains controlled and polite. While he implies a jealous fellow-preacher and many of his readers must have realized who was behind the incident, Rice does not name his attacker. In the *Fundamentalist* of the same date, Norris was not so restrained.

117 “Pastor John R. Rice Enroute to Binghamton, New York, Revival,” *Sword of the Lord*, January 10, 1936, 1.

118 “Hinderers Fail to Stop Revival at Binghamton,” *Sword of the Lord*, January 17, 1936, 1.

119 *Ibid.*, 4.

120 “Pastors Refute Wicked Attack on John R. Rice,” *Sword of the Lord*, January 24, 1936, 1.

The front page of the January 24 *Fundamentalist* included a small box headlined “Western Union Telegram.” The text was part of a telegram sent by Norris to his own Fundamentalist Publishing Co., beginning, “It is with deepest personal sorrow that a sense of loyalty to the truth compels me to publish the platform of Holy Rollerism as advocated by Rice Stop.” Norris claims he has reviewed Rice’s writings and finds evidence of Pentecostal beliefs:

[Rice] takes hundred percent platform of Holy Rollerism. . . . Because this paper and my radio have given his teachings and writings free and unrestricted circulation for many years it therefore becomes my painful duty to admit my mistake and correct evil effects by same method of publicity. . . . No sound Baptist would teach that we can today take up snakes and drink poison, anoint with oil and by baptism of Holy Ghost speak Chinese as Brother Rice claims.¹²¹

Norris claims he has received complaints about Rice from orthodox brothers for years but trusted him and had been so busy that he had never actually read his writings or heard Rice speak, although his own newspaper had been Rice’s platform for many years. Considering that the two men had preached together and Rice had taught at Norris’s Bible school, filled the pulpits of Norris’s churches in Fort Worth, and broadcast his sermons on Norris’s radio station, Norris’s claim of ignorance of Rice’s teachings defies credibility. But by rejecting Norris’s control, Rice had become an enemy to be destroyed by whatever means possible.

Other articles continued the attack on Rice. Louis Entzminger, who had “loved” Rice in Norris’s letter eight months earlier, contributed a multi-page article claiming miracles had ended with the apostles and arguing against “the present day claims of the Pentecostals, the McPhersonites, the Spiritualists, the Christian Scientists so-called,

121 “Western Union Telegram,” *Fundamentalist*, January 24, 1936, 1.

and all of these other cults and isms.”¹²² An anonymous article, probably written by Norris, claims to prove Rice’s Pentecostal beliefs using his tract “Speaking in Tongues.” In the passages quoted, Rice affirms his belief that with sufficient faith Christians could undoubtedly drink poison without harm or speak Chinese. However, even in the passages quoted by Norris, Rice distinguishes between his beliefs and those of Pentecostals. These miracles, Rice says, “are not . . . evidence either of conversion, or of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor as being connected with either one! They are simply promised as all miracles were, to those who had faith for them.”¹²³

In “A Sad Letter Concerning a Friend,” Norris casts himself as an overly generous and trusting friend who has been betrayed: “I have many faults, and perhaps the greatest is when I am the friend of a man, I go too far—I will throw the mantle of charity around him, and allow no criticism, and perhaps that’s been my mistake in reference to Rice.” He says he hopes Rice “will yet see the error of his way and come out full fledged one hundred per cent for the doctrines and practices held by Fundamentalist Baptists.”¹²⁴

Norris admits that he once believed miracles could be performed today, but dismisses the idea, along with postmillennialism and membership in the “denominational machine,” as youthful errors. He says he believes in Scriptural teaching on healing and that he had himself been healed by divine power in his youth—but that he has never believed in or practiced anointing with oil, a central focus of his argument against Rice. He describes Rice as “going around with a bottle of oil” and claims with characteristic

122 Louis Entzminger, “Are Miracles to Be Performed Today as in the Bible Times?” *Fundamentalist*, January 24, 1936, 1.

123 John R. Rice, “Speaking With Tongues,” 9, in “Can True Fundamentalist Baptists Fellowship the Snake-Poison-Oily Crowd?” *Fundamentalist*, January 24, 1936, 1.

124 “A Sad Letter Concerning a Friend,” *Fundamentalist*, January 24, 1936, 7.

drama that “everybody who fools with a bottle of oil, regardless of what he says . . . is a Pentecostalist or a McPhersonite.”¹²⁵

Norris also criticizes Rice’s attitude toward the “local church,” accusing him of associating with those who belong to no church and do not believe in “the sovereign importance of the local body of baptized believers as opposed to machine rule on the one hand, and . . . religious anarchy on the other.”¹²⁶ Norris’s statements highlight a fundamental difference between Rice and Norris. Rice was primarily an evangelist who was willing to reach out beyond a narrowly defined group to win souls. He was open to working with those outside of strict fundamentalist separatism, and certainly outside of Fundamentalist Baptist churches, and believed it possible to adhere to fundamentalist beliefs in any church, or perhaps in no church. Norris saw himself primarily as the leader of Fundamentalist Baptists. His interest was in building his “sovereign local” churches, bringing in new members who would then adhere to strict orthodoxy under his leadership.

After Norris’s dramatic charges hit print, Rice finally revealed the identity of his attacker in the *Sword* and fired back, publishing testimonials from other preachers confirming his own orthodoxy and casting Norris’s attacks as anger over his inability to control Rice. In the January 31 *Sword*, Rice published another Norris letter from November 25, 1935 in which Norris declares, “I am dead certain . . . that no man will get anywhere in the cause of Fundamentalism in the North, East, or outside of Texas if he

125 Ibid., 7.

126 Ibid., 7.

fails to have the love and confidence of the First Baptist Church.”¹²⁷ The letter is clearly a threat by Norris to preachers who do not toe his line, and was followed by another letter in which Norris implies his power over the career of Sam Morris, a temperance preacher who had worked alongside both Norris and Rice for many years, stating, “Sam needs, me, and I don’t need him.”¹²⁸

Rice also published his reply to Norris, praising him for his success and influence among fundamentalists and telling him that he has earned that influence through his defense of the faith, but that he disagrees that his endorsement is necessary to Sam Morris or any other preacher:

I do not agree that Sam would get nowhere without your endorsement. . . . [Y]ou say, ‘Sam needs me and I don’t need him, but I want him for the common cause.’ I know that I need you, I need Sam, and I need every other good man, humanly speaking. . . . But . . . it was settled a long time ago that the only one who was absolutely necessary to me or any man is the Lord. . . . [I]t is conceivable that Sam could be right without the love and confidence of the First Baptist Church, and it is certain that if he pleases God he can succeed just as well without your help as with it.¹²⁹

Rice states baldly that he has loved Norris and admires his work, but he does not consider himself to be in need of Norris to be successful in his own ministry.

Through many years I have loved you devotedly and revered you as a father, but you will bear witness that I served the Lord Himself and looked to Him for whatever blessings I needed. I never dealt with you on the basis that I need you and you did not need me, and I never will. . . . I have loved you, labored with you, and been happy in your fellowship for many years. . . . But I did it because it was right, not to gain your endorsement. If I do what is pleasing to God, then He will give me what endorsement I need.¹³⁰

127 “‘No Man Will Get Anywhere in the Cause of Fundamentalism in the North, East, or Outside of Texas If He Fails to Have the Love and Confidence of the First Baptist Church’—Dr. J. Frank Norris” *Sword of the Lord*, January 31, 1936, 1-2.

128 Ibid., 2.

129 Ibid., 2.

130 Ibid., 2.

Rice's reaction to Norris's manipulations was characteristic in several ways. First, Rice's reply to Norris, while clearly angry, is tightly controlled and logically presented. Second, though Rice makes use of supportive letters from other preachers, he makes his riposte to Norris alone, without loading the *Sword* with anti-Norris rhetoric from supporters. Third, Rice makes it clear that he has attempted to settle this argument without making it public. Rice had known who was behind the Binghamton interference for some time; he outlines the steps Norris had taken to stop Rice from appearing, including having sent hundreds of copies of the *Fundamentalist* containing attacks on Rice to Binghamton for distribution there. He includes the text of letters he had written in mid-January to both Entzminger and Norris, taking them to task for their attacks and inaccurate portrayal of Rice as a Pentecostal and McPhersonite. Rather than going directly to the pages of his newspaper and a public battle, Rice had attempted to settle the matter privately: "I write you as one Christian should write another after being grievously wronged. You are my brother in Christ, and I take the matter up with you privately as a Christian should," he tells Entzminger.¹³¹ Norris had already begun attacking Rice in print by the time the letters were written. Rice's challenges to Norris and Entzminger to come to New York and produce proof of their charges went unanswered except in the pages of the *Fundamentalist*.

While Norris continued his attacks on Rice, directly and via article after article on the evils of Pentecostalism, McPhersonism, and "Holy Rollerism," Rice wrote an article in the February 7 issue of the *Sword* titled "Peace Among Fundamentalists: How to Have It." He says:

131 Ibid., 2.

Peace is greatly to be desired among Fundamentalists. . . . In Dr. Norris' foolish and unjust attack on me . . . my greatest grief has been that there should be trouble among Fundamentalists. . . . [T]he worst thing about it is that unavoidably good men's influence will be hurt and the cause of Christ injured whenever such malice attempts to block or hinder revivals and assassinate a brother who cannot be controlled.¹³²

Rice again requests prayers for Norris, praises his work, and even claims to rejoice in Norris's attempt to block the Binghamton revival since the result proved preachers could accept invitations to preach and win souls without Norris's endorsement. But the way to have peace, says Rice, is for fundamentalists "to love each other, in honor preferring one another, and for no man to think more highly of himself than he ought to think." He calls again for tolerance of minor differences and recognition of the independence of individual preachers and churches:

By acknowledging the independence of every church and preacher, by setting the Bible as the standard of orthodoxy instead of tradition or the leaf of one man and church and paper, by leaving it to the Holy Spirit to guide churches and communities in revivals, instead of having certain "leaders" or headquarters dictate about them or interfere with them, we can have peace among Fundamentalists.¹³³

In March Rice returned to how peace could be made among fractured fundamentalists after hearing comments from many who desired that the men could settle matters between them. Again he is polite and controlled, but firm on the point that the break was caused by Norris and is Norris's to heal. "I am at peace with God, at peace with my conscience, and at peace with Dr. Norris. I do not have to do anything to make peace," says Rice.¹³⁴ To heal the split, he repeats that Norris must retract his boast that no preacher could succeed without his endorsement, retract the false charges of

132 "Peace Among Fundamentalists: How to Have It," *Sword of the Lord*, February 7, 1936, 1.

133 *Ibid.*, 3.

134 "Peace-How?" *Sword of the Lord*, March 13, 1936, 3.

Pentecostalism laid against Rice, and cease his attempts to fully control the theoretically independent Fundamentalist Baptist churches, closing the article with a quotation from Paul's letter to the Ephesians: "And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.—Ephesians 4:32."¹³⁵

Norris, McIntire, and Rice, whose beliefs had so much in common, differed greatly in their handling of disagreements and conflict. Personality differences—Norris's need for control, McIntire's rigidity of belief, and Rice's more open and tolerant style—played a large role in the distinctions among them. But the variation also reveals differences in their visions of their roles as fundamentalist preachers.

Norris and McIntire, both leaders of their own denominations (although Norris's Fundamentalist Baptist churches were theoretically independent entities), were consistently concerned with doctrinal orthodoxy and with building and maintaining power. For Norris this manifested itself in attempts to control not only his churches but other preachers, and in attacks on denominational Baptists and others who disagreed with his views. Failure to dance to Norris's tune could bring on blistering attacks such as that made on Rice in 1936.

McIntire, while firmly in control of the Bible Presbyterian Church, was driven to maintain strict separation from churches and individuals deemed apostate through even distant association with unacceptable groups, and to build his own organizations untainted by incorrect belief. His stringent standards led him to sharply criticize any person or group that did not conform to his standards, sometimes to the point of alienating even his fellow fundamentalists.

135 Ibid., 3.

As an evangelist, Rice saw his role as reaching out to win souls for God. He was open to working with those of differing belief so long as the revival message was fundamentalist, and had no interest in enforcing strict doctrine on what he considered minor points such as baptism and communion practices. Rice was a gatherer of souls, while Norris and McIntire drew exclusionary lines around their personal fiefdoms.

Norris and McIntire aggressively sought to increase and consolidate personal power. Norris was highly volatile and obsessed with control and image; in an argument he would go to almost any length to support his image as God's righteous warrior and the most powerful and influential man in fundamentalism. McIntire appeared less concerned with bolstering his own image than with imposing his stringent separatist views and advancing his conflated vision of religion and the American economic and political ideal.

Rice differed from both. As with his views on separation, Rice was far more open to differences among his fellows. While Rice's inner compass was strong, he never sought to impose his vision on others, but to lay out his positions and reasoning for others to consider. He sought to settle differences privately if possible, and his style in disagreements was cool, consistent, and logical, never pushing his arguments to extremes of rigidity and rhetoric—a voice of moderation and conciliation within the fundamentalist world.

VI. POLITICAL RHETORIC AND THE PLACE OF POLITICS

In his book *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, George Marsden discusses “the great reversal,” in which American revivalist evangelicals moved from the forefront of social reform to political conservatism. By the 1910s, says Marsden, evangelicals who emphasized social issues had aligned with liberal theology and politics, while revivalists tended to be theologically and politically conservative. The two groups were essentially two separate parties within American Protestantism.¹³⁶

While Marsden’s generalization does not hold true in every case, Norris, McIntire, and Rice all fit the pattern, aligning conservative theology and conservative political views. But however similar their views may have been, they differed in the treatments political topics received in the pages of their newspapers. In many ways the differences parallel differences in other areas, but the heart of the issue was the degree to which politics should be part of a Christian ministry at all. A comparison of statements made by the three on several politically important issues of the day shows the similarity of their views.

THE NEW DEAL

Norris, McIntire, and Rice all opposed the New Deal’s emphasis on government social programs as dangerously socialistic and often antichristian. In early 1934, Norris actually supported Roosevelt’s programs. Although he viewed Roosevelt’s administration as the beginning of a dictatorship, he accepted it as God’s will and the inevitable

¹³⁶ George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991), 30-1.

fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. He was also sympathetic to those who were struggling during the Depression: “[T]his country has come to the point where we won’t have the hungry and unemployed,” he says. “You say, ‘Who on earth will pay for it?’ The man who has got a wife and five children is not concerned about who will pay for it, what he wants is something to eat today.”¹³⁷ In encouraging support for the government’s efforts to care for its citizens, Norris makes the same point as many social gospel activists when he says, “There is no use to talk about the destiny of the soul to a man who is shivering in rags, and who hasn’t a crust of bread for his hungry children.”¹³⁸

By 1936, however, Norris had done an about-face. The June 12, 1936 *Fundamentalist* included a *Washington Herald* article in which Norris declares, “The New Deal is simply an American term for communism.”¹³⁹ In the same issue, Norris objects to Roosevelt’s taxes and spending, concentration of power in the executive branch, and executive contempt for the judiciary. And, although two years earlier he had endorsed a Biblically-ordained “dictatorship,” he complains that the New Deal “had sought to give the President the powers of a dictator.”¹⁴⁰

Given McIntire’s strident dislike of liberal social gospel programs, objection to government interference with business and hatred of any form of collectivism, it is reasonable to suppose that he disapproved of New Deal programs. Although no early

137 J. Frank Norris, “The Revolution in America—Are We Passing Under a Dictatorship?” *Fundamentalist*, February 2, 1934, 6.

138 J. Frank Norris, “Fifteen Bible Reasons Why Support Roosevelt’s Recovery,” *Fundamentalist*, March 23, 1934, 2.

139 “New Deal Held Communism by Texas Pastor,” *Washington Herald*, no date given, reproduced in *Fundamentalist*, June 12, 1936, 5.

140 “28 Facts about the New Deal,” *Fundamentalist*, June 12, 1936, 5.

editions of the *Beacon* were found for examination for this paper, a 1947 address to the ACCC published in the *Beacon* confirms his objections, referring to the “legacy” of the New Deal when he asks his audience, “Is America to continue to be a land of equal opportunity, freedom of enterprise, or is it to be a land of control by Government officials, commissars, and social planners from Washington?”¹⁴¹

Rice opposed the New Deal for many of the same reasons as Norris and McIntire—dislike of collectivism, objection to higher taxes to pay for relief programs, and the belief that the nation’s ills could not be cured through social programs. A 1935 article outlining his objections to the Townsend Plan, a proposed revolving pension plan for the elderly, includes many of his arguments against the New Deal in general. He found the plan unbiblical because the command to honor one’s father and mother meant children, not the government, were to be responsible for their elderly parents: “The Townsend Plan,” he says, “proposes to let the government honor father and mother and have the individual son and daughter to quit honoring them in the way that the Lord commanded.”¹⁴² Providing the elderly with money they did not earn was also unbiblical: “Old people ought to have the joy and safety of doing such honest work as they can to earn their way. This is the plan of God.”¹⁴³

141 “How and Why the Federal Council of Churches Is Leading America into Socialism,” address to 1947 meeting of American Council of Christian Churches at Cleveland, Ohio, *Christian Beacon*, April 24, 1947, 2.

142 “The Townsend Plan Weighed By the Bible,” *Sword of the Lord*, December 13, 1935, 2.

143 *Ibid.*, 3.

Rice's objections were not all Bible-based. He also found the claim that the plan was good for the economy to be wrongheaded because "higher taxes and increased Government spending do not mean prosperity."¹⁴⁴

Rice thought social programs missed the real problem, the need for the nation to turn back to God: "Our problems have been brought upon us by sins. . . . The Townsend Plan now proposes that we get out of trouble without repentance. . . . that men need only a proper environment, not individual regeneration. . . . that our trouble is economic, not moral."¹⁴⁵

WORLD WAR II

As the New Deal segued into World War II, Norris, McIntire, and Rice continued to be in substantial agreement politically. All discussed the war in terms of Biblical prophecy. All believed in the necessity of American involvement in the fight against evil and totalitarianism. And all urged their followers to support their God-ordained government if called upon to fight.

Norris often commented on the war in the *Fundamentalist*, haranguing those whose support he found lacking, such as labor leaders who disrupted wartime manufacturing. He reported on the military action with enthusiasm and breathless description: "Wherever our boys have met the Japs in the air, even being outnumbered ten to one, they have come out victorious. . . . [I]n the Burma area the Japs lost 245 planes and our boys only 48, and our forces were outnumbered ten to one."¹⁴⁶ He often

144 Ibid., 3.

145 Ibid., 4.

146 J. Frank Norris, "Shall Radical Labor Leaders Be Permitted To Wreck Our National Defense and Leave our Boys in Australia and Europe Without Tanks, Planes and Guns?" *Fundamentalist*, April 3, 1942, 1.

discussed the religious and prophetic implications of the conflict, but also published straight news or editorial comment with no discernible religious content, such as “Why the War Will Be Over This Year,” in which he argues the Hitler has lost “major and decisive” battles in Britain, Russia, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean and his defeat is imminent.¹⁴⁷

McIntire was also an enthusiastic supporter of American involvement, seeing the war as not only a battle *against* Hitler and the Japanese, but *for* America and God. A *Beacon* article taken from one of McIntire’s ACCC brochures pledges the council’s “opposition to all forms of Totalism, whether they be Nazi, Fascist, or Communist, and affirm [sic] its allegiance to the principles of democratic, representative government as expressed in the Constitution of the United States.”¹⁴⁸ McIntire regards the war as “just and righteous” and serving the purposes of God, while pacifism is “anti-Biblical, unchristian, and disloyal to the United States in this time of crisis.”¹⁴⁹ In support of the war, he calls for a national day of prayer and revival.¹⁵⁰

Rice also supported the war, although perhaps less enthusiastically than Norris and McIntire. In the years before America entered the fighting, he appears conflicted about Christians serving in combat. In a 1939 article discussing whether Christians should go to war, he concedes that sometimes “when commanded by a good government, in a righteous cause,” Christians must fight the wars of their earthly governments to

147 “Why the War Will Be Over This Year,” *Fundamentalist*, May 15, 1942, 1.

148 “Which Council?” *Christian Beacon*, April 1, 1943, 8.

149 *Ibid.*, 8.

150 *Ibid.*, 9.

enforce what is right, but his advice to young men considering the possibility of combat is to avoid it if possible:

“[T]he great mass of soldiers have been bloody, vengeful, wicked men. . . . I advise every boy to stay out of the army and navy even in peace time unless conscripted. If drafted by the government, I advise young men to seek non-combatant work. If conscience will not allow one to fight, then follow conscience and serve God at any cost.”¹⁵¹

Avoiding military service, however, did not justify joining up with unsavory elements to do so. He cautions young Christians that “an enlightened Christian conscience would never lead one to join with Communists and other such unchristian elements as usually lead pacifist organizations.”¹⁵²

By 1941, Rice was clearly anticipating the necessity of fighting Hitler and agreed it was the duty of Christians to participate in the war, declaring “If American boys are called upon by their government to stop the rapine, the slaughter, the horrible oppression of that madman of Europe, Hitler, then let them prayerfully go as agents of the government and the agents of God, to do righteousness in God’s name.”¹⁵³ As the war ground on, he became fully convinced that the war was just and necessary. “Government authorities are ordained by God,” he says in 1946. “For the government to wield the sword . . . is right when necessary. Sin must be punished. It would have been a sin . . . to let Hitler go on with his murder and enslaving of millions.”¹⁵⁴

151 “Should Christian Young Men Go to War?” *Sword of the Lord*, November 24, 1939, 2.

152 *Ibid.*, 2.

153 “Duties of Christians Concerning Hitler and World War,” *Sword of the Lord*, August 22, 1941, 2.

154 Editor, “Christians and War,” *Sword of the Lord*, February 8, 1946, 6.

LABOR ISSUES

Labor unrest was a frequent topic of articles by Norris, McIntire and Rice. All opposed strikes and actions involving property damage or threats to other workers, considering them to be unlawful, unchristian, and opposed to the American ideals of free enterprise and private ownership of property. John L. Lewis and his Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) were frequent targets, considered far too close to communism.

Norris frequently attacked Lewis in the pages of the *Fundamentalist*, calling the CIO part of a “nation-wide conspiracy to destroy the present civilization and build a communistic state.”¹⁵⁵ Norris blamed the influence of unnaturalized aliens for rallying workers for the CIO, and called the “leveling” effect of the great industrial labor union the “Moscow plan for America.”¹⁵⁶ He was especially incensed by labor actions during World War II:

Fighting for our existence, yet we find labor leaders wrangling over, not increase in wages but over the fundamental issue as to whether labor will take charge, run, control, and dominate industry. . . . John Lewis . . . is doing everything at his command to rule or ruin while millions of our boys are fighting and giving their all on a small pittance of a little more than a dollar a day.¹⁵⁷

It is interesting that Norris was such a vocal opponent of radical labor actions, given the apparently working-class makeup of his congregations. However, Norris also became friendly with many of the leaders of the automotive industry during his tenure at Temple

155 J. Frank Norris, “The Conspiracy of John L. Lewis to Destroy the American Federation of Labor and Become Dictator of the Government,” *Fundamentalist*, January 22, 1937, 6.

156 *Ibid.*, 5.

157 J. Frank Norris, “Shall Radical Labor Leaders Be Permitted To Wreck Our National Defense and Leave our Boys in Australia and Europe Without Tanks, Planes and Guns?” *Fundamentalist*, April 3, 1942, 1.

Baptist in Detroit. Always a shameless name-dropper, Norris used those acquaintances to demonstrate his powerful connections. A favorite—and surprisingly frequent—photo feature in the *Fundamentalist* was a shot of Norris and his wife accepting the keys to a new car bestowed by one or the other of the Detroit automakers. It is possible that Norris’s congregants simply did not perceive his vocal anti-union stance as antagonistic to their interests; certainly it did not seem to cost him popularity with his flock.

McIntire also opposed the perceived socialism of organized labor. He often couched his attacks against labor in attacks on the FCC, which he accused of supporting the same communist program as the CIO’s Political Action Committee. He chides the churchmen for being involved in politics at all since in America, “The Church is not to engage in politics.”¹⁵⁸ With no apparent sense of irony, less than a month later McIntire argues for political action *against* labor. “Irresponsible labor action is leading the nation into numerous violations of the ten commandments in disregard of life, property, and civil order,” he says. “Unless the State exercises its God-given responsibility in this hour, we are going to lose our cherished and blood-bought freedom.”¹⁵⁹ In May 1947, McIntire strongly attacked a comic book-style CIO “skit” for twisting the Bible to make it appear that the CIO’s programs would help bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. McIntire blames the FCC’s modernist propaganda for making such an idea possible and expresses fear that if the modernist politics of the FCC and CIO become a reality, there will be no freedom for those churches who consider their programs ungodly. The comic-book

158 “Federal Council and CIO-PAC,” *Christian Beacon*, September 12, 1946, 4-5.

159 “Church Group Says Radicals Hurt Labor,” *Christian Beacon*, October 3, 1946, 5.

presentation, he says, “reveals that the CIO is out to use every means at its command to undermine our present free system and to bring more workers under control.”¹⁶⁰

Rice also spoke against violent labor actions, but in typical Rice fashion, tried to steer a conciliatory course between labor and owners. In a 1946 reprint of an article originally written in response to Detroit sit-down strikes in the early 1940s, he quotes the Bible on the roles of servants (workers) and masters (employers). Speaking to workers, he quotes Ephesians 6:5: “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.” To employers, he quotes Ephesians 6:9, “And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven,” and Colossians 4:1, “Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”¹⁶¹ He presents himself as a friend to laborers and common people, noting that his ministry “has always been largely with and for laboring people. . . . Recent strikes and labor troubles indicate that the best friends of labor should express themselves, and so I speak kindly and lovingly to laboring friends everywhere.”¹⁶²

However, Rice condemns sit-down strikes as “criminal lawlessness, contrary to Christianity, morals and patriotism” and calls those who participate “lawbreakers.” Although he says workers have a right to strike, he defines striking as the right “to quit work in a body if they like,” and supports collective bargaining only “provided it is voluntary on both sides and free, preserving the liberty of both employer and

160 “CIO Claims Bible Backs It: Wrests Scripture for Its Own End,” *Christian Beacon*, May 15, 1947, 8.

161 John R. Rice, “Strikes, Labor Unions and Lawlessness,” *Sword of the Lord*, February 8, 1946, 1.

162 *Ibid.*, 4.

employee.”¹⁶³ Though presented more gently, Rice’s basic view of labor issues does not differ substantially from Norris or McIntire. He questions whether Christians should belong to labor unions at all:

Certainly no Christian should belong to a labor union if it would involve giving his approval to lawlessness and godlessness. . . . [I]f Christians are to remain in labor unions they should take charge of them and see that the activities of labor unions stay within the bounds of right and law abiding citizenship.¹⁶⁴

Given the level of labor unrest of the time, Rice’s suggestions seem naïve and, in effect, forbids Christians to participate in any but the mildest—and least effective—labor actions.

COMMUNISM

The threat of communism was a constant concern of political conservatives of all religious persuasions during the late 1930s, 40s, and 50s. Norris, McIntire, and Rice agreed not only that communism was a serious threat to the United States, but that modernist Christian beliefs paralleled and supported communism, which Rice called “the foe of Christ himself.”¹⁶⁵

Norris wrote frequently on the dangers of communism, sometimes in attacks on liberal church leaders and sometimes from a straight political perspective. In a 1946 article he rang both religious and political alarms, attacking Dr. J. H. Rushbrook, president of the Baptist World Alliance (which Norris erroneously refers to as the World Baptist Alliance), Dr. Louis Newton of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Wallace Bassett, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The House Committee on

163 Ibid., 4.

164 Ibid., 4.

165 “Hitler’s American Friends,” *Sword of the Lord*, August 29, 1941, 2.

Un-American Activities had charged that there was a communist conspiracy within the government planning its overthrow, and that communists then dominated seventeen labor unions and had plans to bring about a general strike and industrial sabotage in a war between Russia and the United States.¹⁶⁶ Norris contrasts these charges with statements made by the three Baptist leaders, such as Rushbrook's statement that "We should change our attitude . . . we should have a sympathetic attitude toward Russia."¹⁶⁷ He implies that any stated sympathy with Russia meant that these Baptist leaders must support the alleged plots and are part of what Norris terms "the Communistic conspiracy in our midst."¹⁶⁸

The communist threat was a perpetual McIntire theme; whether he discussed it explicitly or implicitly, it was the dominant topic of the *Beacon*. His anticommunist diatribes were frequently approached through attacks on the FCC and liberal Christian ministers, and his statements of policy and belief for the ACCC often attacked communism in the secular sphere. For McIntire, communism was not only the enemy of capitalism, but the ultimate Christ-denying result of modernist thought. A 1946 *Beacon* article summarizing ACCC resolutions presented at its 1946 conference illustrates McIntire's conflation of religion and politics on the topic of communism:

The American Council of Churches lifts its voice in behalf of the Christian doctrines which have given to the world liberty, and are now challenged as never before by an atheistic aggressive communism, attacking all our institutions of life, liberty, and property. . . . The [ACCC] warns the Christians of America not to be deceived by the Marxian ideas which are being presented to them by the Federal

166 "Congress Gives Knockout Blow to Endorsement of Sovietism by J. H. Rushbrook, President World Baptist Alliance, Louie Newton, President Southern Baptist Convention, and Wallace Bassett, President Baptist General Convention of Texas," *Fundamentalist*, January 10, 1947, 1.

167 *Ibid.*, 1.

168 *Ibid.*, 3.

Council of Churches of Christ in America in the name of Jesus Christ and “The Kingdom of God.” We call upon the authorities of our government to identify every communist in this land, and to take necessary steps to protect the nation against sabotage. . . . The only antidote to combat Russian communism arising in our beloved country is the acceptance and practice of the Bible as God’s Holy Word, upon which the individualism, freedom of conscience, and the freedoms of our Bill of Rights are founded.¹⁶⁹

Rice too saw communism as the enemy of both Christianity and America. In a 1941 article, he says, “Every communist is an enemy of American ideals. Every communist is the enemy of our Constitution. Every communist is the enemy of Christianity.” Rice saw the threat of American communism as weakening the nation’s ability to resist Hitler’s onslaught, and the success of either Hitler or communism as the end of both American freedoms and of true Christianity.¹⁷⁰ But while Rice saw communism as a serious threat, he devoted much less space to it than either Norris or McIntire—and from 1945 on, *Sword* articles on the topic were often transcriptions, excerpts, or reprints from McIntire.

MINISTRY AND THE PLACE OF POLITICS

Given the essential agreement of Norris, McIntire, and Rice on the political issues, how did the position of politics differ? How did each incorporate political topics into his message, and how important a place did politics hold?

Norris showed an interest in politics from the early days of his ministry, when he frequently portrayed himself fighting against corrupt local politics and the political powers behind liquor interests and gambling. He frequently called out politicians by name in the *Fundamentalist*, and used its platform to praise those who agreed with his

169 “American Council Resolutions,” *The Christian Beacon*, October 10, 1946, 5-6.

170 “Hitler’s American Friends,” *Sword of the Lord*, August 29, 1941, 2.

views. The *Fundamentalist* also accepted and ran campaign advertisements for everything from local Fort Worth races to Lyndon B. Johnson's run for the US Senate.

Norris sometimes became personally involved in election politics. He campaigned furiously against Roman Catholic presidential candidate Al Smith in 1928. But the vehemently anti-Catholic Norris also made political allies where he found them: in 1947, he met with Pope Pius XII as an ally, "the common enemy of Communism."¹⁷¹

As always, Norris used political coverage to build his own power and image. He was a name-dropper and liked to play up the respect he enjoyed from the famous. When Texas elected James V. Allred governor in 1934, Norris wrote about the "two hours' heart-to-heart talk" he had enjoyed with then-Attorney General Allred a few weeks before.¹⁷² Later in his career he spoke of meetings with prominent national politicians and, of course, his audience with the Pope. A few months before his trip to Rome, Norris published a letter from a friend who told a story of meeting a soldier who had had an audience with the Pope. "The Pope asked them what was their religion," the letter read. "Those soldiers said, 'We are Baptists from Texas.' The Pope said, 'Ah, Dr. Frank Norris.'" Norris notes that he had actually met Pius XII when he was still papal secretary to Pius XI, adding humorously, "It may be that some of the 'Baptist Popes' do not give full recognition to the First Baptist Church, but what if we have the recognition of his highness Pope Pius XII!!!!"¹⁷³ Even jokingly, Norris made his connections known.

171 "The Private Audience with Pope Pius XII, *Fundamentalist*, September 26, 1947, 1.

172 "Texas Elects an Anti-Liquor and Anti-Gambling Governor," *Fundamentalist*, September 7, 1934, 1.

173 "The Pope at Rome Takes Note of the Work of the First Baptist Church, Fort Worth," *Fundamentalist*, January 24, 1947, 1, 3.

Norris liked to demonstrate that his political pronouncements were widely published and read, often reproducing copies of clippings from national and international news outlets quoting him on political topics. He enjoyed implying that powerful political figures courted his influence and advice. However, Norris was careful not to be associated with the wrong figures. He rejected any implication of a political alliance with anti-Jewish politician Gerald L. K. Smith after allowing Smith the use of the First Baptist auditorium for an address and fundraiser in 1948. Allowing Smith to use the auditorium was not unusual; Norris often allowed religious and political figures with whom he disagreed to use the space. After the speech Norris notes in the *Fundamentalist* that he strongly disagreed with Smith's statement that Jesus was not a Jew and that, indeed, Smith had promised him that he would not make that statement during his appearance at First Baptist. He then quips, "However, it is very nice of Gerald to give 'J. Frank Norris' additional publicity."¹⁷⁴ A few months later, a small article appeared implying Smith was using Norris's name to lend himself credibility. Under the headline, "Poor Gerald L. K. Smith—He Keeps Referring to Dr. J. Frank Norris," Norris reiterates that he finds Smith's statements on Jews to have absolutely no credibility and that those statements destroy his credibility on all other matters as well: "[W]hen Gerald Smith comes out in his paper and publishes 'Jesus was not a Jew,' he is not worthy to be believed on any other issue or proposition."¹⁷⁵

174 "Gerald L. K. Smith Greatly Compliments 'J. Frank Norris,'" *Fundamentalist*, January 23, 1948, 3.

175 "Poor Gerald L. K. Smith—He Keeps Referring to Dr. J. Frank Norris," *Fundamentalist*, September 3, 1948, 5.

For Norris, politics were a vital part of his ministry and his image. He wrote on political topics, courted alliances with the powerful, backed or opposed local and national politicians, and delivered sermons on political topics. The pages of the *Fundamentalist* included political advertisements among Norris's frequent articles on corruption and communism. Though he never ran for office—perhaps even a man who carried on a decades-long dual pastorate in Fort Worth and Detroit among his other duties had to draw the line somewhere—for Norris the rough-and-tumble of Texas and national politics was a valid arena for spreading the teachings of the Bible and the Fundamentalist Baptist Church.

For McIntire also, politics played an important part of his religious message, but his approach was much different from Norris's dirty-hands politics. For McIntire, the religious *was* the political, and as a minister of God, he was charged with opposing modernism in all its forms. His background in Reform Protestantism influenced his view of religion and politics considerably. Markku Ruotsila says McIntire synthesized Reformed Christianity and dispensationalism into a worldview that “pivoted on an overarching anticollectivism, on a faith-based opposition to most of the uses to which the State had been chained in his moment of history.” Ruotsila calls McIntire a political libertarian, but “in the context of the broader Reformed urge to conquer all areas of life, politics included, under the lordship of Christ.”¹⁷⁶

But though McIntire saw religion and politics as inextricably bound, he stated many times that in America, religion and politics didn't mix. McIntire avoided direct, personal political involvement. In any case, his strict separatism and insistence on

¹⁷⁶ Markku Ruotsila, “Carl McIntire and Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right,” *Church History* 81, no. 2, (June 2012), 382.

absolute doctrinal correctness would likely have precluded political action requiring allies outside of fundamentalism, or even outside his own church. In a 1947 reaction to an editorial by Henry Luce in praise of the Catholic attitude toward divorce, McIntire barely brings himself to admit the virtue of the Catholic position, even though he agrees with it:

The Protestant position had always been that the Bible is God's infallible word. It is not the authority of canon law. . . . Certainly we are having an appalling and disgraceful breakdown in the family . . . because Protestants have turned away from their authority, the Bible, as God's infallible word. . . . [Divorce] is not just a contract broken, it is adultery committed. It is the absence of the truly Protestant position from the editorial page . . . that is the tragedy. And in the absence of this truly Protestant position the Roman Catholic position seems to be one to be commended and of advantage.¹⁷⁷

Though the end position is correct, he argues that Catholic reliance on canon law rather than the infallible Bible in arriving at its stand is wrong and the Protestant position is superior.

A man who cannot simply agree with a position that is the same as his own without arguing with the reasoning behind it is not likely to be successfully involved in electoral politics. In a *Christianity Today* article written shortly after McIntire's death in 2002, Randall Balmer quotes John Woodbridge, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and the son of McIntire ally Charles Woodbridge. "Purity of doctrine was something he took seriously," says Woodbridge. But in the world of separatist fundamentalism, he says, "They were often so true to their views that they separated from other separatists."¹⁷⁸

With the notable exception of cooperation with the anticommunist crusade of US Senator Joseph McCarthy, McIntire's political rhetoric, though central to his ministry,

177 "The Family," *Christian Beacon*, April 3, 1947, 4.

178 Randall Balmer, "Fundamentalist with Flair," *Christianity Today* 46, no. 6 (May 2002), 54-5.

was a drumbeat reflecting McIntire's rigid correctness, but without significant, direct action. McIntire's politics were as separated as his religious doctrine, with which they were tightly intertwined.

Rice showed less interest in politics than either Norris or McIntire. The early issues of the *Sword* bristled with indignation over vice and local politics, much like Norris's *Fundamentalist*. But headlines such as "Vote Beer Out Nov. 6!"¹⁷⁹ and "Booze Government, Saloon Keeping Officers, 16 Year Old Barmaids and Drug Store Bootleggers"¹⁸⁰ mostly faded away as Rice found his own voice and focused more tightly on evangelism. Much of Rice's political writing concerned the Christian's duty in regard to various issues, including previously-quoted articles debating the duties of Christians in wartime. He also sometimes wrote on the morality of politicians. In 1949 Rice took Harry Truman to task over his foul language and general lack of decorum as President. He reminds his readers that, as the head of the United States government, Truman is a minister of God and thus not to be lightly criticized, then quotes Truman's statement at a recent dinner given by the Reserve Officers' Association: "If any s.o.b. thinks he can get me to discharge any of my staff or cabinet by some smart aleck statement over the air he has got another think coming."¹⁸¹ Rice writes at length about Truman's poor example, lack of respect for his office, and connections to unsavory elements of the Democratic Party. He concedes that Truman is a church member—in fact, Southern Baptist. "I think that in broad and general terms he intends to do right and means to make a good

179 "Vote Beer Out Nov. 6!" *Sword of the Lord*, Nov. 2, 1934, 1.

180 "Booze Government, Saloon Keeping Officers, 16 Year Old Barmaids and Drug Store Bootleggers," *Sword of the Lord*, January 11, 1935, 1.

181 John R. Rice, "Our Profane President," *Sword of the Lord*, March 11, 1949, 1.

president,” says Rice, but “the facts still remain that his moral standards are lamentably low, that he is unfitted for the high office he holds.”¹⁸²

Beginning in the mid-1940s and continuing through the mid-1950s, Rice was less focused on and adamant about politics, and wrote on politics much less often. Many of the political articles to be found in the *Sword* were actually written by or transcribed from Carl McIntire, an indication that Rice’s general political alignment was probably very similar to McIntire’s. Running McIntire’s articles allowed Rice to comment on political issues while keeping his personal focus on evangelism.

When Rice did write on politics, his tone was cool and more detached than either Norris or McIntire, echoing his handling of personal conflicts. His 1941 article, “Hitler’s American Friends,” presents examples of Rice’s thought on a range of topics. Always conciliatory, Rice is careful to concede the sincerity of those with different beliefs; on pacifism, he writes:

I want to frankly and earnestly state my profound admiration for many earnest Christian people who do not believe in war and do not feel that a Christian should fight, even in a moral cause or even in self-defense. . . . I believe that these people are wrong in their interpretation of the Bible. . . . But while I disagree with these Christian pacifists, these conscientious objectors, I do not accuse them. I love them and honor them, though I do not agree with them.¹⁸³

Rice also praises the freedom to disagree politically. “[T]hank God that America has freedom that permits groups . . . who do not fall in wholeheartedly with the New Deal administration, as long as they are loyal to American institutions and government,” he says. “I want them to have freedom and the right to express their opinions.”¹⁸⁴

182 Ibid., 4.

183 “Hitler’s American Friends,” *Sword of the Lord*, August 29, 1941, 1-2.

184 Ibid., 2.

Rice draws a line at communism, modernism, and acts he considers lawless, such as violent union actions: “What is the difference between a striker with a piece of iron pipe in his hands waylaying a workman who wants to work for regular wages . . . and a saboteur who starts fires or injures machinery to keep the same plant from making defense material to stop Hitler?”¹⁸⁵ But even on topics he feels strongly about, Rice always presents his arguments with logic and detachment, without Norris’s drama and hyperbolic language or the sometimes shrill rhetoric of McIntire.

Norris, McIntire, and Rice shared many of the same conservative political views, yet politics held very different places in the ministry of each. Norris gravitated toward politics and made political rhetoric, and sometimes action, a part of his ministry. For McIntire, politics was inseparable from religion; opposition to communism was a central theme of his writing, though he avoided personal involvement in electoral politics. Rice showed considerably less interest in politics than either Norris or McIntire. He wrote much less on politics, and when he did tended to focus on Christian duty in relation to political issues. Starting in the mid-1940s, he often relied on articles by McIntire to bring politics to the *Sword*.

In many ways, the three men’s political writings reflect the same differences as their styles of handling conflict. Norris was dramatic and personal, interested in personal involvement and the power and prestige of being politically connected. He used political fights as he did personal conflicts, to polish his image as God’s warrior against corruption and moral wrongs.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 2.

McIntire was again less personal and more concerned with the big picture of communist/modernist corruption of American freedom. He was disinterested in personal political involvement, perhaps at least partially because his rigid views prevented meaningful alliances. He most frequently made political attacks via attacks on modernist religious groups, which he viewed as allies and supporters of left-wing politics—itsself the end result of modernist thought.

Regarding politics, Rice was again the coolest and most detached of the three, arguing his positions with logic. He showed no interest in personal political involvement or power, viewing political issues through the lens of Christian duty. While his political beliefs were not greatly different from Norris and McIntire, he avoided extreme rhetoric and often conceded the sincerity and good hearts of those with whom he disagreed. Rice, the evangelist, represented a cool, conciliatory, and seldom-confrontational political voice among fundamentalists.

VII. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES

For fundamentalists in the first half of the twentieth century, the issue of separation was not only a matter of religious doctrine. Like many Christian groups, fundamentalists struggled to live their beliefs in a rapidly changing society. Evangelist Dwight L. Moody foreshadowed later fundamentalist cultural separation when he declared, “A line should be drawn between the church and the world, and every Christian should get both feet out of the world.”¹⁸⁶

As discussed previously, fundamentalist cultural separation actually began well before significant separation from mainline denominations. Marsden finds several converging influences that led to cultural separation. First, the pessimistic outlook of premillennialism fed rejection of the increasingly predominant push for social reform. Isaac M. Haldeman of First Baptist Church in New York City once described social reform as “Satan’s way of lulling the world into ignoring the immensity of the crisis [signs of the deterioration of the world at the end times]”¹⁸⁷—a common assessment among conservative Christians. Second, social reforms often smacked of socialism, or at least of a democracy that appeared to many conservatives to be a sign of weakness. And

¹⁸⁶ *Moody’s Latest Sermons* Chicago, 1900, 27-8, in George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 36.

¹⁸⁷ Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 125.

finally, science and technology, often touted as solutions to social problems, were attractive but deceptive modernist traps in the eyes of conservatives.¹⁸⁸

As modernism crept into the pulpit, says Marsden, “Modern theologians found the spirit of Christ in the culture around them . . . in every work of art, in the telegraph and telephone. . . . In contrast, Christ’s plan rejected the present world and age.” In short, the present culture and its reform was not the church’s concern.¹⁸⁹ Billy Sunday summed up the feelings of many conservatives when he charged that the liberal emphasis on social reform was “trying to make a religion of social service with Jesus Christ left out.”¹⁹⁰

The cultural upheavals that followed World War I proved a watershed for conservatives who found themselves in the minority in their denominations. As they separated and formed their own churches and networks of fellow-thinkers, Carpenter says cultural separation also accelerated in the 1930s. He outlines three conservative traits that contributed to this withdrawal from the prevailing culture. First, conservatives tended to be populists, rejecting the increasing authority of university-trained “experts.” Second, dispensationalism predicted that orthodox Christians would become “an embattled minority in the last days,” raising expectations of conflict and isolation from mainstream culture. And third, conservatives who had once been respected found that they were not taken seriously in an increasingly modern society.¹⁹¹

This was the world in which Norris, McIntire, and Rice operated early in their ministries. Fundamentalists found themselves trying to maintain the more modest

188 Ibid., 126.

189 Ibid., 127.

190 Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 31.

191 Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 35.

behavioral standards of an earlier era, rejecting movies, dancing, gambling, card games, liquor, the theater, immodest dress, and vulgar language and opposing the new freedom and independence of women and young people. Fundamentalist behavioral codes became a way of separating themselves from the world. That separation was maintained by their church and by the “Christian home,” an idealized environment offering alternative activities that separated adults and, most importantly, young people from the outside world.¹⁹² The separation was reinforced by constant rhetoric defining those who followed the behavioral code as belonging to the Lord.¹⁹³

As with politics, Norris, McIntire, and Rice’s social views were similar and very much in line with other fundamentalists. Norris was a particular enemy of the liquor business. His alcoholic father had provided a close-up example of the ill effects of drinking, and the adult Norris attacked liquor and its effects mercilessly, especially after Prohibition ended in 1933. His attacks were often as much about the corrupt politics surrounding the liquor industry as opposition to drinking, feeding his image as a fighter against the evils of modern society. “We heard it over the radio, saw it in the papers, the wet subsidized wet owned papers . . . that prohibition caused women to go to drinking. . . . Now we have the wet mayor of wet Chicago screaming frantically against the debauchery of womanhood in the saloons of Chicago, and since repeal of prohibition,” he stated in 1934.¹⁹⁴ Referring to the “whisky trust” that brought political pressure on Congress in the 1930s, Norris says that aside from liquor’s destructive effects on drinkers

192 Ibid., 61.

193 Ibid., 65.

194 ““There Is More Drinking Since Repeal,”” *Fundamentalist*, January 19, 1934, 5.

and their families, the power of its proponents was detrimental to the American political system: “If any octopus is great enough to . . . dictate the policy of Congress, then the American people are disenfranchised at one bloody bold stroke.”¹⁹⁵

Rice, too, opposed the use of liquor in the pages of the *Sword*, but with more emphasis on the social consequences.

I do not care how well trained, how much you love God, how virtuous your mind, how true is your conscience—never mind about it; you take a few drinks and that sense is gone. I do not care how well-bred, how well educated, how good your intentions are, you cannot be trusted when you drink. Nobody can be! You cannot be trusted to drive a car. You cannot be trusted with another man’s wife. You cannot be trusted to pay an honest debt. You cannot be trusted to take care of your children. And you know it!¹⁹⁶

Modern fashions and social behavior drew criticism from all three men. Norris often condemned gambling and casual betting at racetracks, while Rice attacked bobbed hair and makeup and condemned the movies as a path leading to adultery: “[S]ex is primarily what your boys and your girls see all the time at the movies! You cannot even go down the streets and see the signs without knowing that the pictures are immoral, and lewd and licentious.”¹⁹⁷ He also considered social dancing immoral and sexually stimulating. Says Rice, “[T]he modern dance is wicked. No decent girl ever feels perfectly at home in everybody’s arms. . . . But a harlot does.” He continues, “Don’t you feel there is anything wrong with having your body pawed over and having your passions aroused, and going on in such filthy, wicked sins?”¹⁹⁸

195 “A Gluttonous Whiskey Trust Worse Than Prohibition,” *Fundamentalist*, January 5, 1934, 1.

196 “The Double Curse of Booze,” *Sword of the Lord*, April 11, 1947, 3-4.

197 John R. Rice, “The Scarlet Sin and the Roads That Lead to It,” *Sword of the Lord*, March 14, 1946, 6.

198 *Ibid.*, 7.

While McIntire spent relatively little space in the *Beacon* on specific social issues, he agreed with Rice's opinion of dancing. In 1946 he ran an undated excerpt from *The Family Altar News* written by Dr. E. S. Sonners, an "eminent specialist in nervous disorders," who calls modern dancing "a reversion toward savagery. . . . [D]ancing is the most advanced and the most insidious of the maneuvers preliminary to the sex betrayal. It is nothing more than a damnable, diabolical, animal physical dissipation."¹⁹⁹ While these are not McIntire's words, he clearly agreed with the author's assessment of dancing and used his article to comment on the subject.

All three men had strong ideas about family structure and the roles of women. Women were not to preach or assume leadership roles in the church. A woman's proper place was to be her husband's helpmate, to create and maintain his home, bear and raise his children, and defer to his authority as the head of the household. In a 1943 article Norris laid a range of issues squarely at the feet of wives who, consciously or unconsciously, caused problems in their marriages by failing to properly support and defer to their husbands. One example is "a preacher's wife. A very brilliant woman, cultured and consecrated, but one of the most self-centered individuals that ever hibernated on two feet. . . . She dominated [her husband] completely. . . . [S]he used him as a foot mat."²⁰⁰ Norris lists an extensive array of imperfect wifely behaviors, including back-seat driving, hanging on the telephone, failing to keep a clean house, complaining of an illness, and not catering to her husband's taste in food, all of which he blames for unnecessary marital strife. "A sensible wife," he says, "will do everything in her power,

199 "The Modern Dance," *Christian Beacon*, October 31, 1946, 7.

200 "The Most Dangerous Thing I Ever Did—So Here Goes," *Fundamentalist*, March 5, 1943, 7.

and beyond her power, and count all joy to make everything acceptable and pleasant to her husband.”

He allows that he is presuming a woman has a good husband, which he defines as a man who works hard to provide his family a home, food, and education for his children. “All the things I have said here don’t apply to women who have sorry husbands,” he says.²⁰¹ To be fair, Norris also admonishes husbands who do not fully make their wives their life partners. He uses as an example a man who never involved his wife in decisions, even on major matters of employment and moving their household. “He had a very foolish resentment of any inquiry she made. He failed to recognize that his destiny was her destiny. . . . In truth, as the mother of his children, she had more to suffer and more involved than he did.” The man should have laid all his options before his wife, says Norris. Men, he says, often interpret the Biblical description of woman as “the weaker vessel” incorrectly: the phrase means that women are meant for different roles than men, but “it certainly does not mean that she is man’s inferior, intellectually or otherwise.”²⁰²

Rice also bases his ideal of married life on the Bible, with the man as the head of the household and the wife submissive to his authority. His rhetoric is sometimes harsh on this point. To women who resist the idea of obeying their husbands, he says, “Listen to me, Christian women! How do you expect to have the favor of God? How do you expect to get your prayers answered? . . . You say, ‘Well, I do not want to obey my husband.’ You wait until your baby is dying and you try to pray and nobody will hear

201 Ibid., 7.

202 “How To Have Unhappy Married Life,” *Fundamentalist*, April 9, 1943, 6.

you. . . . Hear me now, we had better come back to God's plan for the home. That is God's plan: wives subject to your husbands."²⁰³

Divorce was not considered an option for Christians by any of the three men. In 1949 Norris reprinted a snippet from the *Dallas Morning News* that bemoaned the ease of obtaining a "juke box" divorce in America: "The latest is a divorce by juke box; the place, Carson City, Nev. . . . After a certain time and the deposit of 200 silver dollars the lights flash, wheels spin, the contraption plays 'America' and out comes the beribboned divorce. . . . It is a disgrace to the whole country, but it is a symbol of the whole country. The infection merely crops out conveniently at Carson City."²⁰⁴

McIntire, who seldom ventured into social issues surrounding the family, clarified his position on divorce in his previously-discussed editorial reacting to an article by Henry Luce article on threats to family: "[W]e are having an appalling and disgraceful breakdown in the family and this means a breakdown in society. . . . [Divorce] is not just a contract broken, it is adultery committed."²⁰⁵

Rice made a teaser for a sermon on "Divorce, Remarriage and Adultery" the headline in the very first issue of the *Sword*, citing statistics that make his stand on the issue clear. He headlines his statistics, "Did You Know," beginning with "That the cancer of divorce is eating away the foundations of modern civilization?" and ending with "That

203 John R. Rice, "Father, Mother, Home and Heaven," *Sword of the Lord*, August 9, 1946, 5.

204 "Juke Box Divorce Comes to America," *Dallas Morning News*, n.d., in *Fundamentalist*, March 25, 1949, 3.

205 "The Family," *Christian Beacon*, April 3, 1947, 4.

in Dallas county [sic] there were twenty four hundred divorces last year, more than one half as many divorces as marriages? God have mercy on America!”²⁰⁶

On these and other social issues of the day, Norris, Rice, and McIntire consistently follow the fundamentalist line: Resistance to modern changes in society, preservation of conservative values and mores of an earlier era, and using the words of the Bible as the final authority on social issues. All called for Christians to reject the temptations of modern society.

As with politics, the differences between Norris, McIntire and Rice lie in the place they gave social and cultural issues in their ministries and in the extremity of not only their rhetoric, but their actions, which did not always match.

Norris frequently addressed social issues in the *Fundamentalist*. He gave a great deal of coverage to vice issues such as liquor and gambling and to the corrupt politics behind them. As with other areas, Norris gravitated to issues he could use to build his image as God’s warrior, and campaigning against cultural vice and corruption was a favorite way to do so.

Norris also often gave his readers guidance on Christian marriage and the proper roles of men and women, but addressed other family issues—such as the proper way to rear children and moral challenges facing young people—much less frequently. Norris ran photos of his family from time to time and spoke with pride of his sons’ accomplishments, but he never evinced a sense of a family-centered ministry; his words are aimed at adults.

206 John R. Rice, “Divorce, Remarriage and Adultery,” *Sword of the Lord*, September 21, 1934, 1.

While Norris spent time and words on social issues, he seldom addressed them with anything like the energy he devoted to attacking liberalism in the Southern Baptist Convention. For Norris, social and cultural challenges were a part of his ministry, but not central to it.

Of these three men, McIntire spent the least time on purely social issues. The social issues he discusses at all are usually in the context of his broad resistance to modernism, including cultural change, and include objections to removing prayer and Bible reading from public schools,²⁰⁷ using tax money to provide bus transportation to Catholic schoolchildren,²⁰⁸ and other politically-charged issues. Marriage and family topics appear very rarely, and McIntire's family never appears in the pages of the *Beacon*. Women are seldom mentioned at all, though McIntire made an exception in a criticism of an FCC World Day of Prayer program written by Mrs. Israel Caleb, which he felt presented unchristian ideas. McIntire objects to Caleb's "doctrinal inclusivism," "creedal corruption," "modernist infidelity," and "typical pacifist propaganda." McIntire worries about the number of "lovely Christian women" who will think the program is wonderful. "[T]he one thing which will help confuse the dear Christian ladies who love our saviour is the fact that, sandwiched between these unchristian statements and unchristian propaganda, are some of the familiar hymns. . . . A woman can look over the program and say, 'It was sound; it was marvelous; it even mentioned the blood of Christ. We sang it in the hymn.'"²⁰⁹ McIntire's tone and words are condescending, indicating a

207 "Lord's Prayer Dropped in New York Schools," *Christian Beacon*, October 17, 1946, 8.

208 Editorial, "Nullification," *Christian Beacon*, February 20, 1947, 1.

209 Carl McIntire, "Paul, Gandhi, Kagawa, Luther Used by Day of Prayer Program to Support Un-Christian Idea of Religion and Society," *Christian Beacon*, February 6, 1947, 8.

low opinion of women's intelligence and ability to distinguish false doctrine without proper male leadership. Social and cultural issues are simply not a central focus for McIntire; when he does mention them it is clear that his views of proper behavior and cultural standards are as narrowly drawn and exclusionary as his doctrine.

Rice strongly emphasized social and cultural topics. Early issues of the *Sword* resembled Norris's *Fundamentalist* in playing up vice issues. But as Rice established himself as an evangelist and developed his own ministry, he spent much more time on marriage and family topics, and especially on youth. The *Sword* was the only one of the three papers that regularly included columns and features for young people, and Rice often aimed his articles on the evils of movies, the dance, alcohol, and other cultural issues at the young.

This emphasis may again have its roots in Rice's primary interest in evangelism. While Norris and McIntire were interested in saving souls, they also had denominations to maintain and grow. The *Fundamentalist* and the *Beacon* were concerned with promoting their editors' institutions, attracting followers, and then keeping them in their respective organizations. Although Rice eventually developed a large organization, it was a network of essentially independent evangelists who cooperated on the revival circuit rather than a denominational surrogate. Rice's purpose was not to attract and hold a pool of followers loyal to him personally, but to reach out to the unsaved and teach the saved.

An important part of Rice's outreach was aimed at bringing young people to Christ and steering them away from sinful activities. Subjects such as use of makeup and nail polish for girls,²¹⁰ the morality of having to go to war,²¹¹ and the roads to the "sex

210 "Jezebel, the Painted Lady: Should Christian Women and Girls Use Lipstick, Rouge, Face Powder, and Nail Polish?" "Youth's Corner" column, *Sword of the Lord*, September 22, 1939, 2-3.

sin”²¹² instructed the young on proper Christian morals and the dangers of the changing culture.

Outreach to women was also important to Rice, and although his rhetoric on women’s roles aligned with that of Norris, McIntire, and other fundamentalists, the pages of the *Sword* also reveal an openness to women in significant roles in his organization and a frank encouragement to women in Christian service. While women are almost never mentioned in the *Beacon* and mostly appear in the roles of wives or fallen women in the *Fundamentalist*, in the *Sword* they also appear as writers and significant members of the staff.

Rice’s willingness to depend on women in significant roles appears early, with his wife Lloyds’s enrollment in classes at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in order to help him with his studies and his reliance on her to wrap up business when he left his first church. Two years after the *Sword* debuted in 1934, Rice announced with some fanfare that he had hired Mrs. Elizabeth J. Ridgway, whom he describes as a “widely known and successful Christian business woman,” as business manager for the *Sword*.²¹³ There may have been an element of one-upmanship involved in the announcement, since Rice had hired Ridgway away from the *Fundamentalist* only a few months after the acrimonious 1936 split between Rice and Norris. But regardless of the timing, the position of business manager was a significant one in Rice’s organization and included Ridgway’s own column in the *Sword* during her tenure.

211 “Should Christian Young Men Go to War?” *Sword of the Lord*, November 24, 1939, 1-3.

212 John R. Rice, “The Scarlet Sin and the Roads that Lead to It,” *Sword of the Lord*, March 15, 1946, 1, 5-8.

213 “New Business Manager of ‘The Sword of the Lord’ and Sword Book Room,” *Sword of the Lord*, May 29, 1936, 1.

Rice also stated his appreciation of other women workers. In 1935 he devoted a front-page article to three young women, Lola Mae Bradshaw, Fairy Sheppard, and Viola Walden, who handled much of Rice's office work.²¹⁴ Sheppard and Walden spent their entire lives in Rice's organization, rising to positions of some importance as his assistants and, in Walden's case, editing and contributing articles to the *Sword*.

Lloy Rice's ongoing contributions were also acknowledged: "[Mrs. Rice] has wanted to be in every revival I head and has been in most of them. She has played the piano, has done personal work, has taught the Bible to children and women, and has won hundreds of souls to Christ."²¹⁵ As his six daughters—all of whom earned degrees at Wheaton College—reached adulthood, they contributed columns, articles, and artwork to the *Sword* and assisted at revivals. Indeed, it is reasonable to speculate that Rice's wife and daughters influenced his attitude toward women significantly, his pride and confidence in their accomplishments spilling over into appreciation of other women's contributions.

Rice remained a man of his time and culture. In his article on Bradshaw, Sheppard, and Walden, he was careful to note that the women "never preach, they do not teach men nor usurp authority over men in the church."²¹⁶ But for all his sometimes-harsh rhetoric, Rice not only relied on women in important support roles, but openly acknowledged their intelligence, contributions, and skills to a much greater extent than either Norris or McIntire.

214 "Help Those Women Which Labored With Me In The Gospel," *Sword of the Lord*, July 19, 1935, 1, 4.

215 "Meet Mrs. Rice," *Sword of the Lord*, July 12, 1935, 1.

216 "Help Those Women," 1.

On social and cultural issues as on politics, Norris, McIntire and Rice are substantially agreed on the issues of the day, but the place of social issues in their ministries differs greatly. Norris emphasizes issues of vice and corruption, as always burnishing his image as God's warrior. He also addresses marriage issues and the place of women, but these issues seem to be approached more as a duty of his ministry than a strong interest. McIntire seldom writes about purely social or cultural issues except as they overlap politics and opposition to the modernist creep in church and state. Family issues and women rarely appear in his writing; they simply do not appear to be important to McIntire's thought.

Rice once again differs from both Norris and McIntire. Negotiating social and cultural change was much more central to his ministry, especially family issues and choices facing young people. Although he strove to maintain the same conservative standards as other fundamentalists and his rhetoric could be equally harsh, his consistent outreach to women and youth and the central place they occupied in his ministry moderates his rhetoric somewhat. The difference may again lie partially in his evangelistic goals, but in this case, Rice's own personality is likely a key factor. His rhetoric on women's roles in particular appears very different from his practice, in which he expresses generous praise for women and their work in Christian service. Contrasted with McIntire's apparent mistrust of women's ability to distinguish false doctrine, Rice's view of women appears much less extreme. The apparent warmth of his personality mitigates some of the harshness of his own rhetoric in practice.

Norris and McIntire once again lean more to the extremes of fundamentalist social and cultural standards than does Rice, and more closely embody the conservative feeling

that the church should not be concerned with the present culture. Social and cultural issues were far more central to Rice's ministry than to either Norris or McIntire, itself a moderating position in a movement that centered on individual regeneration, not social or cultural problems. And compared with the primarily male-oriented topics and prose of the *Fundamentalist* and the *Beacon*, Rice's *Sword* is more inclusive in its outreach and more moderate in practice if not always in its rhetoric.

VIII. CONCLUSION

John R. Rice was a highly influential fundamentalist preacher and evangelist in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. His newspaper, *The Sword of the Lord*, boasted more than 100,000 paid subscribers by the early 1950s, reaching beyond fundamentalism. Like the *Sword*, the newspapers of Rice's contemporaries, J. Frank Norris's *The Fundamentalist* and Carl McIntire's *The Christian Beacon*, were completely controlled by their editors and structurally similar. The three papers provide a revealing comparison of three major fundamentalist figures.

Early fundamentalism is often defined by the actions of its most militant and pugnacious proponents, but an examination of the writings of Norris, McIntire, and Rice show real differences on separation, handling of conflicts both with outsiders and among themselves, the role of politics in a Christian ministry, and the importance of social and cultural issues. In comparison to Norris and McIntire, Rice is consistently the least extreme and least rigid in his beliefs and attitudes.

On the issue of separation, Rice is significantly more inclusive and less combative than either Norris or McIntire, willing to maintain fellowship with fundamentalist believers within modernist-tainted denominations and refusing to label individual believers apostate because their churches might be distantly affiliated with modernists.

In handling conflicts with both outsiders and other fundamentalists, Rice avoids the violent rhetoric, no-holds-barred personal attacks, and smear tactics of Norris and McIntire, instead laying out cool, well-reasoned statements of his positions. He avoids

public arguments with his fellows when possible, working behind the scenes to resolve disagreements.

While Rice's political beliefs were similar to Norris's and McIntire's, he had no interest in personal political involvement and often approached political discussions in the context of Christian duty. For Norris, politics were a source of power; for McIntire, they were absolutely central to his antimodernist message. For Rice, politics were a peripheral issue. He avoids heated political rhetoric, concedes the sincerity and good hearts of those he disagrees with, and attempts to act as a conciliator between political enemies, a non-confrontational approach that is very different from Norris and McIntire.

Conversely, social and cultural issues were important to Rice's ministry, itself a moderate stance in a religious culture that saw individual regeneration, not social or cultural concerns, as the business of the church. His outreach to youth and warm praise of the women in his organization belie his sometimes-harsh rhetoric. Compared to the *Fundamentalist* and the *Beacon*, Rice's *Sword* was both more inclusive and more sensitive to the cultural changes of its time.

On every topic examined, Rice avoids the most extreme positions of the fundamentalist movement. He is consistently more inclusive, less aggressive, more conciliatory, less dogmatic, and less concerned with personal power and control. Within the volatile and often highly contentious fundamentalist world, John R. Rice truly provided a voice of moderation.

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