

DEATH BLOW AVERTED!

By
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In *The Berea Baptist Banner* [BBB] for September 5, 2006, p. 407-9, Elder D. P. Newell, III has an article entitled: *Death Blow to the Self-constitution Proponent's Demands*. Bro Newell refers to me and my book, *Landmarkism Under Fire (LUF)* which was published in 2005. Since *LUF* was published, I have seen two or three critical responses, including Bro Newell's. Let me say at the outset, I welcome these criticisms. The truth has nothing to fear from examination but rather rejoices in it! And with this in mind I wish to review this article.

First Bro Newell is careful to tell the readers:

I recently was reading excerpts from a book titled *Landmarkism Under Fire*. I only read part of it, as I could not stomach the whole book.

Essential Mother Daughter Authority (EMDA) brethren generally suffer from this malady, described by Bro Newell which prevented him from reading the whole book. The symptoms are a weak stomach, jumping to conclusions; a severely affected judgment; a lack of consideration of facts; dealing in generalities; a caustic spirit and jaundiced eyes which cause the patient to see everything with an EMDA tint!

The Word of God says: He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. Prov 18:13.

How can one answer what he has not read? Several other things about this article need to be mentioned. First and foremost, Bro Newell makes this charge:

The attacks on Brothers Gilpin and Cockrell were underhanded from any man. Let alone Baptists. It is shameful to twist men's words around when they are alive, but to do that to men who are gone and cannot defend themselves is irresponsible and underhanded to say the least.

I repudiate this charge! It is as false as a \$3.00 bill, and just as worthless! He admits he has not read the book but *excerpts*. He does not document a single place in *LUF* where I *twist* the words of these two men or of any others. Nor do I believe any such quote can be found therein. Almost every reference I made to these two men was documented with quotes from their own writings! I did not impute to them one single idea which they did not express in their own words! If I have twisted the words of any man or quoted him improperly, I will publicly apologize for it. Both of these brethren mentioned were good friends of mine. Both are now deceased. I differ with them on EMDA but my book is not an attack on them nor is it underhanded.

The next item is this:

The theory of self-constitution is an evolving doctrine...Those who are propagating this idea of no authority, on the other hand, are always evolving in what they believe. When the author of this book began teaching this theory it was believed by him and his friends that it was alright to have a mother church

but, it was not a necessity. As I understand them now, though, a church which has a mother is not a true church. It appears to me that they have changed.

Is it wrong to change your position if you see something in the Word of God which you did not see before? Is it wrong to embrace doctrines, such as the doctrines of grace, if you were before an Arminian? Nor is it true that we “are propagating this idea of no authority.” This shows what someone does who does not understand what he is trying to refute. This debate on church constitution is not about authority! Both sides believe in authority. EMDA advocates believe the authority comes from a mother church. We believe the authority for constitution comes directly from Christ! Bro Newell misrepresents our position and this position which I fully documented in *LUF*.

Bro Newell also objects to the term *self constitution*. I do not argue that *self constitution* is the best term for the concept intended. We might suggest as a more scriptural term *gathered together for constitution*, Cf. Mt. 16:18; II Cor 8:5; I Peter 5:13; I Cor 1:10-13; 5:4; 11:20. But let this be as it may, the term **permeates** Baptist history and I have accumulated eleven pages of references to Baptist Churches in history that used this express term in verbal form in reference to their own church constitutions and I can easily find more! [See these references under *Misnomer*]. Thus Bro Newell’s statement “The very term ‘Self-Constitution’ ought to alarm Bible believers as to its origin and danger,” indicates his ridicule of that term ought to sound the alarm! This term was not held in contempt by our Baptist forefathers. It is taboo with EMDA brethren but not with Baptists of history! Why is this? Who has changed? I submit two examples among great number available, emphasis added.

In 1712, by advice of the pastor and two deacons of Cohansey, thirty-seven persons constituted themselves into a church, under the pastorate of Nathaniel Jenkins, one of their own number. *Cathcart. Bap. Encyl*, p. 675.

In March, 1846, 21 members met and constituted themselves a Church of Christ, with Mr. Johnston as Pastor. *Yuille. Baptists of Scotland*. P. 59.

Let Bro Newell explain this enigma!

He accuses me of using *Tricks, being underhanded, attacking them, twisting men’s words, being up to his old tricks*, and here *that I believe he and other EMDA advocates are ignorant!* There are several other innuendoes in this article in reference to me and those who believe self constitution. Of course, one can only guess at what this brother is referring to as he does not give a single example. Whenever Bro Newell gives us some specifics, I will be glad to take them up. Not one time have I intentionally imputed ignorance to any one of these brethren.

Bro Newell then goes on to say:

They are claiming they get their doctrine from the Bible, but only use it when they are pinned down and have to.

First, **we do get our doctrine from the Bible** and this is what drives them to distraction!

We simply appeal to Mt 18:20; I Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20-22; II Cor 8:5 (and many other passages) for gathering together for constitution in the same way we appeal to Ephesians 1:4 for election, even though these brethren *can't see it* anymore than the Arminian can see election! As to our not using the Bible, if the brother will read *LUF* he will find there are more Scriptures used, more Scriptures explained and more exegesis of those cited than in all of the EMDA articles or books on this subject combined! [Cf. *LUF* chapters 5,12 & 14 for example]. Bro Newell should have known this and he would have known it if he had read the entire book!

Finally Bro Newell gets to the place where he intends to give a *death blow to the self-constitution proponent's [i.e., proponent's] demands*. See the title to this article, BBB. p. 407]. A death blow is a destructive or killing stroke or event. In this case, I take him to mean that his answers in this article are the full end or the consummate answer to the propositions of *LUF*. There are eleven of these in *LUF*, p. 166. We will now see if Bro Newell can take off the armor with the same airs with which he put it on.

1: *Produce a Quote From any Landmark Baptist who Taught EMDA*. [i.e., Before 1900 and this was specifically stated in *LUF*]. The anti-Landmarkers Bob Ross, Patterson, Tull, Barnes claim EMDA was the teaching of Graves, Dayton, Pendleton and other Landmarkers of that day. EMDA advocates also teach these men believed and taught it. This is false. Neither group has ever given any proof for this claim. But we have given many express statements from most of these men where they state self constitution specifically! Bro Newell also believes EMDA is a Landmark Baptist doctrine. Does he give any proof for his contention? No! Here is his response:

Jesus Christ is the greatest of all landmarkers...

Of course Jesus Christ is a Landmark Baptist when that term is correctly defined! I readily agree. But what Bro Newell was supposed to do was give a quote where any old Landmarker taught EMDA. Did he give the quote? No, he did not. He quoted Mt 28:18-20. He quoted Mt. 16:19. But neither of these passages say one thing about EMDA! But the more amazing thing is that Bro Newell rejected the Lord's express statement that saints in gospel order (not "anyone anywhere," as Bro Newell falsely suggests we believe [BBB. p. 407, col. 3]) could constitute themselves into a church, Mt. 18:20! The great Witness does not give any statement of EMDA but He does in this passage give an explicit statement of self constitution! This text is the exact answer I asked for—but it is on the opposite side of the issue to EMDA! Bro Newell's attempt to answer this proposition boomeranged. What he thought to prove failed miserably. What he opposed was firmly established by the only witness he called! The Lord Himself spoke for self constitution! Bro Newell's paucity on this proposition is evidence that he, like the magicians of Egypt, could not bring forth! Ex. 8:18-19. In Bro Newell's *death blow* he missed the intended target of self constitution and struck EMDA with a direct hit!

2. Produce a Baptist Covenant which teaches EMDA.

Again Bro Newell, because he can find no help, abuses the plaintiff! He says:

This is a foolish demand. The fact that one church is the offspring is a given. I told you before the author of the book will stoop to any means to twist and wrangle the truth and he will use any tactic.

The reason for this proposition is because a covenant is the essence of constitution and without a covenant there can be no church. Mt 18:20. **For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.** In accordance with this text, we have examples of covenants which expressly teach self constitution. For example we have this covenant which Dewesse says was *probably* written by J.R. Graves:

Thanking God for the light we have received, for the revelation of Jesus which we now enjoy; and hoping that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned our sins; and having been baptized on a profession of our faith in Christ Jesus into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; we do, this day, before God and the world, with deep joy and great solemnity, enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ. [Dewesse. *Baptist Church Covenants*, p. 170].

Graves here teaches churches are formed by covenanting together. Again:

What is the ecclesiastical meaning of the word [covenant] as used by Baptists?

It means that agreement between saved individuals by which they associate themselves into a local church, setting forth their mutual engagements as members of one body. It is usually appended to their Articles of Faith because a common belief is a necessary condition of fellowship and co-operation. [B.H. Carroll. *Christ and His Church*, p. 245].

Baptists, Carroll, says "associate themselves into a local church". This is the same thing as "constituted themselves!"

Now why was it *underhanded* of me to ask for a covenant which expresses EMDA? Only one thing made it such. The fact the assailant could not find the material needed. It was an easy thing to sidestep the intended blow!

3. Produce a Baptist Confession which teaches EMDA.

Bro Newell says:

I want to interject here, that again the author is up to his old tricks. Most, I suppose, adopt confessions of faith of which most are the same. I believe if churches would, in their own words, discuss the church they no doubt would plainly spell out the link-chain succession of the Lord's churches.

The surprising thing here is that what the Brother calls foolish and ridicules under #2 he now admits that if churches produced their own confessions they would spell out EMDA! That is exactly what was done by churches in covenants. Most of them wrote out their own covenants in our early history. And I emphasized this very fact in *LUF!* Of course, the brother is to be excused because he got sick and could not finish the book.

But as to the Confessions, I was referring to the standard confessions, such as the Confessions of 1644, 1688 and the New Hampshire, not those composed by

individual churches in recent times as Bro Newell seemed to think. Now these old confessions express self constitution and the quotes were given in *LUF*, but alas, we must repeat, because the Brother could not read all!

The Baptist Confession of 1644

It is believed that among the authors of this “the noblest of all Baptist confessions” were Spilsbury, William Kiffin and Samuel Richardson.

Chapter XXXIII.

That Christ hath here on earth a spiritual kingdom, which is the Church, which he hath purchased and redeemed to himself, as a peculiar inheritance: which Church, as it is visible to us, is a company of visible Saints, called & separated from the world, by the word and Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel, being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement, in the practical enjoyment of the Ordinances, commanded by Christ their head and King.¹

They go on to say in Chapter XXXVI :

“That being thus joined, every Church has power given them from Christ for their better well being...”²

This means the authority for constitution is given **directly from Christ** and that it does not come from another church, mother church, father church, sister church, grandmother church or any other church relative but from Christ Himself! [*LUF*. P. 97].

The London Confession is even more express saying the power and authority is vested in Christ Himself and that the Lord gives this power to a church when they covenant together. That they reject EMDA is made doubly clear by their appeal to Mt. 18:20 and the phrase “...and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement,” which is self constitution stately so! [Cf. *LUF*. p. 101-3].

Bro Newell claims I am up to *old tricks*. Yet, I doubt he wrote Bro Cockrell and complained when he quoted from twelve confessions in *Scriptural Church Organization* [pp 26-29]. Why this difference? The reader will understand right well! But Bro Newell himself turns to trickery quoting from the Salem Baptist Association of Tennessee:

“Resolved, That the churches be advised to receive none but those who have been baptized on a profession of faith in Christ, by a legal administrator; and that we esteem legal only such as act under the authority of the regular Baptist Church, as organized after the model of the gospel.”

Now listen to the gloss Bro Newell puts on this associational rule:

They believe in a model set forth in the Word.

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This brother is actually trying to read EMDA into this account by the Salem Association of Middle Tennessee! What was the model? How does Bro Newell know what they meant by these words? He assumes! How can one take such words as these and turn them into the law of EMDA without proof?

3. Produce a Baptist Manual which teaches EMDA.

Here Bro Newell got his numbers mixed up. He used Roman numerals and this should have been IV. This mistake he followed throughout and though he had eleven in the end he only did so by omitting number 9. [p.408, col. 2, par. 1].

Bro Newell again dares to throw a punch but actually misses entirely and throws himself so far off balance he is never able to recover himself! He says:

The Manual for Baptist is the Word of God. When you begin to take the word of men over the Word of God you have begun a journey that leads you farther and farther from the Truth....

The Bible is the Baptist manual but, sadly, men like this author will avoid it and look to men and their books to satisfy their need to find someone or anyone who will agree, or appear to agree with them.

I also notice that he did not, so far as I know, censor Bro Cockrell for quoting from the manuals of Hiscox, Pendleton and others. Was Bro Cockrell taking the word of men over the Word of God? Why not? What the difference? How easy to evade a shadow boxer!

Remember # 4 only asked for a Baptist manual which taught EMDA before 1900! Why did he not give us a few examples? Why not just one? Why jump to Acts 11 which says nothing about a manual? What a feint!

5. Produce any Baptist History which specifies EMDA. Bro Newell in this section of his article violates what he lays down in the preceding part. He said:

Again, all proof for EMDA is found in the Bible and it is not necessary to run to the publications of men to prove Bible doctrine. I am only doing so, in this article, that you may see that the Bible and even Baptist History deliver a death blow to self-constitution. I will show that the Bible and historical actions of Baptists prove that from Jerusalem unto now: it has been the practice of Landmark Baptists to organize churches by the authority of a mother church.

As it is not necessary to run to the publications of men to prove Bible doctrine, then why does he do it? He claims he is only doing so *that you may see that the Bible and even Baptist history delivers a death blow to self constitution*. He implies that we run to men to prove our doctrine if we quote history—but then he does he does the very same thing! He is permitted to do this but we are forbidden to do it! He can do it and he is not appealing to men. He can do it and he is not putting the word of men above the Bible. But if I do the same thing then I appeal to men and put them above the Bible! Incidentally, I have never in my life referred to any author to establish my doctrine. I appeal to the Bible and the Bible alone for my doctrine. When I refer to an author I only do so to show that what I believe is in line with what others believed on the subject! Is this wrong?

He is trying to say we have no biblical proof but only the proof of history for self constitution. It is quite evident Bro Newell feels the toe mashing effect of the many Scriptures given in *LUF!* It is also evident that he was blown away with the mass of quotes from Baptist history proving self constitution was the Baptist standard of days gone by! Consequently, he hopes to gain some relief by appealing to history! How neat! Does he accomplish his goal? Does he deliver a death blow to self constitution? Let us see.

Bro Newell quotes from Grimes' *History of Middle Tennessee*. I have read every word of this book and some portions of it more than once. I bought my copy from the author's son. Bro Grime does use some terms which sound a little like EMDA. [pp. 1; 356; and some other such terms in a few other places]. He also often refers to *arms*, *colonies*, *mothers* and the like. These and some other terms in the book have led Bro Newell to believe Grime was teaching EMDA. Bro Newell quotes Grime:

Concerning Dixon's Creek Baptist Church in Smith Co. TN notice, "The history of this old mother church comes to us with peculiar interest...This church, at first, was composed of emigrant Baptists from the older states. She, however, was the foster child of El Bethel Church...in 1798 these emigrant Baptists, longing for the house of the Lord, and there being no church within reach, and having no minister among them, banded together into what they were pleased to call a 'district church'. ... They met at private residences for worship, sometimes at Captain Grant Allen's...This continued until the summer of 1799 when they began to lament their situation. (I believe The Holy Spirit showed them their error of self constitution) After consultation, they agreed to make their situation known to the nearest Baptist Church. On inquiry it was found that the nearest Baptist church was located on Station Camp Creek, Sumner County, Tennessee, twenty-five miles distant. This church was known as El Bethel. They appointed a committee to visit said church. And in conference they appointed a committee to visit this neighborhood and constitute these brethren into an arm of said church. In compliance with this agreement, they met at Captain Grant Allen's and received the letters which these brethren had brought from the old states. They worshipped as an arm of said church till March 8, 1800, when they were constituted into an independent church..." Hist. Mid. TN Baptists. pp. 354-5.

Bro Newell thinks this is a reconstitution and a reconstitution because they were first self constituted! He is bold enough to say "the Holy spirit showed them their error of self constitution." But Baptist churches did sometimes reconstitute and did so without repudiating their first constitution as did the Welsh Tract church in 1727 [Cf. Willaim Carey's Church and the Hill Cliffe Church for examples]. Did this mean these churches were not churches before? Did they rebaptize their members? Welsh Tract certainly did not. Grime here mentions *arm* and *constitution*. But we do not have any such thing as EMDA. Of course churches were often formed in this manner. Some members being set off as an arm and when they were ready they were constituted into a church. But this is not the same thing as EMDA. And for proof, I need only mention that the Associations in this part of the country often appointed two or more ministers to constitute a church. For example: Sycamore Fork Church.

This church is situated on the line between DeKalb and Cannon Counties, five miles south of Liberty on the waters of Clear Fork Creek. This church was constituted of members belonging to Salem and Prosperity churches. The church was gathered through the ministry of Elder Henry Bass. A council was first called to consider the question August 30, 1871, and a day set and helps invited to constitute them into a church. This church was constituted September 14, 1871, by a Presbytery consisting of Elders A.J. McNabb, J.W. Hunt, Henry Bass and James Barrett. They adopted the New Hampshire Confession of Faith.

We note this group called a council to consider if they were ready to constitute. These members were not all members of one church as EMDA demands but from two churches, Salem and Prosperity. When the day set arrived, it was not authority from a mother church which came but *helps* and *helps* is not *authority*, and this is emphasized because they were *invited!* You do not *invite* a mother church to an EMDA organization! Since when do you *invite* a mother to the birth of her child!

Another example from Grime is:

Wharton Springs. This church is situated in DeKalb County, Tennessee, three miles south of the town of Smithville. A number of Baptists had moved into this community from different sections of the country, some from the churches of Salem Association, and others from the churches of Union Association. Being deprived of the privileges of God's house, they agreed to band themselves together for this purpose. This church was constituted July 6, 1889, by Elders William Simpson, R.E. Smith, Edwin Kelly and J.D. Howell. This church was constituted in the private dwelling house of E.B. Allen, with twelve members. [Grime. History. P. 66].

There are these unmistakable words—"They agreed to band themselves together". This is the same thing as "self constitution" which so infuriates EMDA advocates. Where did they get this idea?

In the tumultuous times of the split between the Missionaries and the Hardshells another account is recorded by Grime: I quote:

In conformity with a memorial from a minority of the members of Salt Lick Church [the majority had gone with the Hardshells. The memorial was sent to the Salem Association—JCS] Resolved, That a presbytery to consist of Elders John Wiseman, William C. Bransford, William Flowers, and Jonathan Wiseman, meet at the X Roads, on Defeated Creek, on Friday before the fifth Lord's day (inst., October, 1837). In order to constitute said brethren, and as many others as may wish to join them, into a church and report to next Association. This marks the origin of Defeated Creek Church, which is now one of our very best churches. [Grime. Hist. p. 18. Cf. also p. 322 where Grime indicates this reconstitution was really a continuation of the original constitution--JC].

Now here is a case where the Salem Association appointed men and authorized them to constitute a group into a church! Where did this Association get this authority? Does this sound like EMDA ? Perhaps it is Associational EMDA!

Another:

Snow's Hill. This church is situated on the Lebanon and Sparta pike, some five miles west of the town of Smithville, DeKalb County, Tenn.This church was constituted March 27, 1897, by Elders J.H. Davis, A.J. Waller and D.C. Taylor, with thirteen members. These constituent members came from different churches, mostly from Indian Creek and Dry Creek. Grime. P.66

This will not fit EMDA parameters. Why not? Because EMDA requires all the members for a constitution to be members of the Mother church. How many mothers can you have? But here we have members from "different churches." So what sounds like EMDA is not EMDA. No church can extend its authority beyond its own members. J.R.

Graves put it like this:

We learn that all our church rights, privileges, and franchises are limited to the particular church of which we are members, as those of a citizen are limited to the State of which he is a citizen. Nor can one church constitutionally extend her franchises or privileges to persons without and beyond her jurisdiction, any more than one State can extend her franchises to citizens of other States.” – [Graves, *Intercommunion*, p. 161].

But this is not all. J.H. Grime lived from 1851-1941. He was active in Middle Tennessee which is the same area in which J.R. Graves labored. Grime mentions Graves several times and heard him preach for three hours in the Enon Association in 1882, Grime. p. 314. Graves specifically taught self constitution:

Each particular Church is independent of every other body, civil or ecclesiastical, and receiving its authority directly from Christ, it is accountable to him alone. J.R. Graves. *Great Carrollton Debate*, p. 995-6. *Cf. The Great Iron Wheel*, p. 552.

This is no vague reference, which might mean a dozen different things but here Graves explicitly states **a church receives its authority directly from Christ in constitution!** I cannot believe Grime was on a different page than Graves. Bro Newell has taken a few phrases from Grime which seemed to have the sound of EMDA but not the sense of it. Bro Newell has given a mere pat instead of a death blow!

Again the brother says:

This will suffice in answering this proposition and I will let this be a death blow to Proposition viii which as for history showing a church being reorganized for lack of authority from a mother church.

The reason I gave this proposition # 8 in *LUF* is that Bro Cockrell said:

I do not deny there have been liberal elements of Baptist who may have practiced otherwise. [SCO. P. 89].

Bro Cockrell here meant by *liberal elements*, churches without EMDA. Now if this was true, then there must have been many cases where such churches attempted to unite with the various associations. (Bro Newell admits this above when he says Dixon’s Creek Church was originally self constituted). Of course if they were, and the association held to EMDA, then that body would have required the church formed without EMDA to be reconstituted with EMDA. I don’t believe this ever happened and I do not believe Bro Newell’s efforts on this score are anything more than a feint!

Brother Newell then takes up propositions #6 and # 7. Or it would be better said that he did not dare to take them up as they were too hot for him to handle! The reason I gave these propositions is simple. If EMDA was essential in their estimation, then the associations would have insisted on this doctrine. This they never did. These propositions are:

6. Produce any Baptist Association which included EMDA as a requirement for membership.

7. Produce the record of any Baptist Association which refused to admit a church because it was not formed via EMDA.

Here is Bro Newell's reply:

As to the matter of link-chain succession being a requirement for membership in any association I give the following excerpts from the Wiseman Baptist Association of Macon County TN 1891.

Article XI. New churches may be admitted into the association, who shall petition by letter, and delegate, or delegates and on examination, if found orthodox and orderly, may be received

Article XII. The Association may exclude from their union any church or churches that are heterodox in principles, or disorderly in practice. (*History of Middle Tennessee Baptists*, pg. 306).

Bro Newell then implants words of wile into these articles:

Now, I realize that they did not say mother or daughter but, you can very well believe that it was a requirement; seeing that all of these old TN Baptists practice church authority. Again the, the author is straining at gnats when he avoids practice and tries to discredit churches by twisting their words, adding, and subtracting from them.

Again I must insist Bro Newell and EMDA advocates generally make such assumptions. Note he recognizes these articles do not contain his doctrine! "Now, I realize they did not say mother or daughter but, you can very well believe it was a requirement"! Is this not twisting words? Is this not trickery? Has he not added to these two articles because they do not say what he wants them to say? It is easy to see who swallows the camel but chokes on the gnat! [Mt. 23:24. p. 409, col. 2, par.1].

The next proposition is # 10. Produce a reasonable explanation of why so many Baptist leaders explicitly stated the authority for church constitution came directly from Christ according to Mt 18:20.

Bro Newell attempts to reply:

I did not know there were so many who would think that Matthew 18:20 had one thing to do with starting a church.

If Bro Newell had read *LUF* in its entirety, he would never have written this! But let us see. We have already referred to the Confessions of 1644 and 1688. These men who drew up these documents represented quite a number of Baptists and they used Mt 18:20 in reference to church constitution! But I append a few more:

Now I wish Elder Ditzler to know that there is a world-wide difference between originating an organization different from anything that can be found in the Bible, different from anything the world had ever before seen or heard of, and calling it a Church, and organizing a Christian Church. **It is true that two or three baptized individuals can organize a Church, provided they adopt the apostolic model of government, and covenant to be governed by the sole authority of Jesus Christ.**" — [Graves, *Great Carrollton Debate*, p. 975, emphasis mine—JC].

Was Graves a Baptist? Again:

Wherever there are **three or more baptized members of a regular Baptist church or churches**

covenanted together to hold and teach, and are governed by the New Testament,' etc., '**there is a church of Christ**, even though there was not a presbytery of ministers in a thousand miles of them to organize them into a church. There is not the slightest need of a council of presbyters to organize a Baptist church.– [Jarrel, *Baptist Church Perpetuity*, p. 1, quoting J.R. Graves. My emphasis].

Was Jarrell a Baptist? Graves goes on to say:

Each particular Church is independent of every other body, civil or ecclesiastical, and **receiving its authority directly from Christ**, it is accountable to him alone." [Graves in the *Great Carrollton Debate*, p. 995. My emphasis].

Where does a church get authority? **Directly from Christ!** Graves repudiates the EMDA cliché:

Pendleton and Clark say this:

In my name: united in and acknowledging my authority and worshipping as a church, or members of a church. *In the midst:* sanctioning their gathering, directing their consultations, answering their prayers, and blessing them. Ch. 18:20." [Com. By Clark, Pendleton, Mt. 18:20].

Were Pendleton and Clarke Baptists?

In this next quote Dayton does not actually quote Mt 18:20 but it is clear that he is referring to this passage.

He invested every member with the right to execute his laws, but only when assembled with the brethren. As many as could conveniently unite came voluntarily together and by mutual consent were constituted an 'ekklesia,' or official assembly, of Christ. It was subject to *his* laws: it **acted by his authority: it used his name** to give a sanction to its acts; and as he had *authorized* it, and conferred on it all its authority, so he promised to be in its midst by his Spirit, and to ratify in heaven what it did upon earth." — [Dayton, *Theo. Earnest*, II, p. 115-6, emphasis mine– JC].

You will note here that this Old Landmarker thought baptized believers could constitute a church and they did so **not** by getting "mother church" authority but by getting the authority of Christ according to Mt 18:20 directly.

Again he says:

"But now, as the King has gone to Heaven, whom has He left to attend to the business of the kingdom in His absence?He provided for all this before He went, **by directing as many of the citizens of the kingdom as could conveniently meet together, to assemble and organize themselves into a 'church,'** which should in its corporate capacity attend to all these matters." — [Dayton, *Alien Baptism*. 1858, p. 167, emphasis mine – JC].

Was Dayton a Baptist?

In 1795 the Philadelphia Association asked Samuel Jones to prepare a Treatise of Church Discipline for their churches. Jones prepared this Treatise and it was revised by a committee formed of one from each church and approved and printed in 1805. You can be certain this was what these churches believed and practiced.

Concerning the constitution of a church Jones says:

“5. A number of believers are united together into a particular church, by an act of mutual confederation. ‘Gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.’ 2 Cor. 8:5.”

“6. Whether the requisite number should be twelve or thirteen, because our blessed Lord and his disciples, at the first celebration of the Lord’s supper, made that number, or whether three will be sufficient, because of the promise in Matt. xviii. 20. may be doubtful: but there ought to be so many, as to answer the end of that holy institution.” –[Samuel Jones, Quoted in *Polity* by Dever, p. 141].

Was Samuel Jones a Baptist? What about the churches and pastors of Philadelphia Association?

In a church manual entitled *The Glory of A True Church*, Keach wrote in 1697:

What tends to the Glory and Beauty of a true Gospel Church.

IX. In their having the divine Presence with them: Or when the Glory of God fills his Temple.” [Refs given are]— Ex. 20:24; Mt. 18:20. – [Benj. Keach, *Glory of A True Church*, Quoted in *Polity*, edited by Mark Dever, p. 85].

Was Keach a Baptist?

Well, it is not too hard to see Bro Newell’s admitted ignorance (“lacking knowledge or comprehension of the thing specified”) prevents him from writing knowledgeably on this subject. Baptists, lots of them, believed Mt 18:20 referred to church constitution as the above quotes prove. Ignorance is one thing but it is an entirely different thing if one is ignorant when the information which would give him light is available but he refuses to use that source! This is the case with Bro Newell. His stomach would not let him pass from ignorance to knowledge! *LUF* contains many quotes from Baptists on Mt 18:20. Just a cursory reading would have enlightened him [This text is referenced numerous times in *LUF*, too many pages to list here.]. When anyone refuses to become informed then he is *willingly ignorant*, [2 Pe 3:5].

Bro Newell made no attempt to answer proposition number 9, although he did mention it [p. 408, col. 1, par. 1] in passing. It says: “Produce a ‘thus saith the Lord’ for EMDA.” There is no question but that this is a chasm EMDA advocates cannot cross! Bro Cockrell admitted this in *SCO*, p. 50. Bro Newell admits as much in that he did not give any answer to this proposition but merely bypassed it! But we have boldly given Mt 18:20 and other texts which establish *gathering together for constitution or self constitution*. We have a plethora of quotes from history where Baptist churches used this exact term for their constitutions. We have quoted the old Landmarkers expressly stating constitution is directly from Christ. Why do these brethren prefer to remain ignorant on this subject? What more could be said?

There are some other things in this article that are of less weight than these light ones here treated which I could easily answer but will not do so at this time for the lack of space.

Bro Newell’s *death blow* is just a swoosh of air—*hot air*! Consequently the eleven propositions of *LUF* still stand as a Gibraltar of the doctrine—**Christ directly constitutes His churches!**