



Here & Now

Vol. 7

An update for Florida Baptist Historical Society Board of Directors and Friends

No. 7

September, 2015



FLORIDA BAPTIST
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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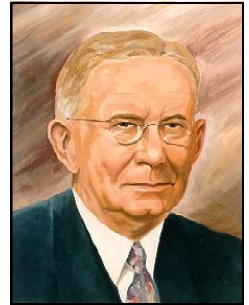
Dear Board Members and Friends of the Florida Baptist Historical Society,

Southern Baptists have never been able to do what they wanted to do. However they have been able to do what they could.

That philosophy of faith, cooperation, and hard work produced a program in 1933 called "The Hundred Thousand Club." This fund raising effort was the after shock of the 75 Million Campaign.

That particular effort was kicked off with a committee of 29, who set up a five year program, 1919-1924, to raise 75 million dollars. This giving provided increased support for convention causes. This campaign actually set a new pattern for Southern Baptist cooperation.

Lee Rutland Scarbrough (1870-1945) a graduate of Baylor and Yale, was chosen to head up the campaign. Scarbrough was a pastor, evangelist, administrator and denominational leader. He served as president of Southwestern Seminary from 1915-1942.



Lee Rutland
Scarbrough

The 75 Million Campaign had eight financial goals. Foreign missions, 20 million; Christian education, 20 million; home missions, 12 million; state missions, 11 million; ministerial relief, 5 million; orphanages, 4.7 million; hospitals, 2.125 million; National Memorial Baptist Church, Washington D.C., \$175,000.

The 75 Million Campaign collected 58 million dollars in cash but unforeseen financial downturns left the plan in crisis. Various entities were depending upon the 75 million dollars and the 17 million dollar shortfall left great debt in its wake.

That is when the Hundred Thousand Club was formed. It was a plan used by Southern Baptists in the years 1933-1943, to pay the debts of their institutions and mission organizations. By 1927, SBC causes had accumulated a debt of \$6,500,000.00. Something needed to be done to honor the name of Christ and protect convention causes and reputation.

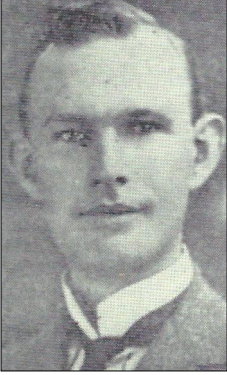
In 1933, Frank Tripp (1894-1975), pastor of FBC, St. Joseph, Missouri, was elected as general leader of the Hundred Thousand Club. It was Tripp who made the basic proposals and the club was simply "one person, paying one dollar, per month" until the debt was paid. The club plan was for Tripp to be the general director and then each state, association and church would elect a local leader. Meanwhile the entities would be working on debt retirement in their own way. After three years Tripp declined to serve and James Edgar Dillard (1879-1953), pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Birmingham, took up the role of director of promotion.

Dillard proposed the slogan "Debt Free in '43—Count on Me." The slogan and the cause caught fire. By the end of 1943 all convention agencies and institutions were out of debt with \$38,846.49 balance in the debt paying fund.

Florida did its share. George Hyman, pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Miami, became the Florida leader. Before going to Miami Hyman was pastor for six years of the Bayshore Baptist Church in Tampa, and previous pastor at Sanford, Marianna and Apalachicola.

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George Hyman

Hyman was a go-getter. When he became head of the Florida effort he stated that "It is my ambition to have Florida the first state to reach the quota of five percent of its membership enrolled in the club and I confidently believe this will be the case." (*FBW*, January 11, 1934, p. 16). By the time Hyman made this pledge, Temple Baptist Church in Miami already had more members in the Hundred Thousand Club than any other church in the state.

The January 10, 1935, *Florida Baptist Witness* issue was given nearly entirely to the SBC debts and the Hundred Thousand Club. Editor Edward D. Solomon stated there were six reasons we needed to retire our SBC debts. Solomon noted, they are our debts, we are able to pay, we must save our honor, we must save our work, we need to pay the debt to save the interest (it was \$300,000.00 a year) and by paying the debts we will encourage our missions and education leaders.

Florida gave \$38,972.38 through the Hundred Thousand Club from 1933-1943. The Florida goal was 5,000 members (1935 FBC annual, p. 9) and well known leaders Henry A. Parker, James A. Sawyer, Albert Carnett, T. V. McGaul and J. R. White were some of the associational leaders for fund raising effort.

Frank Tripp came to Florida in January, 1934, to promote the Hundred Thousand Club. Tripp made some keen observations when he said, "Baptists must pay their debts; Baptists can pay their debts, Baptists will pay their debts, Baptists are paying their debts." (*FBW*, January 11, 1934, p. 11).

Florida Baptists helped lead the way. I sense we are doing that still.



Edward D. Solomon

Honoring those who honor Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry M. Windsor".

Jerry M. Windsor
Secretary-Treasurer
Matthew 6:33
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