

News Flash – New Fellowship to Form

***By the Always-Right Reverend Doctor Isaiah J Trin - PhuD, ThuD, DuD
(Doc Trin, for short)***

After much debate with myself, I have decided that we need a new non-organization of independent Baptists. It seems that most independent Baptists, while claiming to be independent, really have no desire to be independent. They have, therefore, formed many organizations to help realize and achieve their dreams of non-organizational heaven on earth, known as having your name and eating it, too.

We have the WBF, ABA, ABC, SBC, GARB, BBFI, SBF, NIBF, PTA, NBA, and most recently (as far as I know), the GIBF. There are probably others, of which I am not now able to speak, even if I should want to do so. By the time I finish writing this, there will be three more. We also have mission organizations, family advocacy organizations, political organizations, and book distribution organizations that claim to serve independent Baptist churches (mostly by asking for their money), while maintaining separation from them so as not to be watched too closely. These too, for the most part, have names that are scrunched into letters. All of these, while meeting the strict criteria of maintaining an acronym that no-one outside the organization will recognize or be able to pronounce, have nevertheless failed to a great extent in providing a suitable moniker that can be used in scrabble.

Consequently, it is my privilege to announce the formation of the non-organization that will be the final word among independent, no-nonsense, pre, post, or ah – millennial, closed-minded, unaffiliated Baptists who want to get together and remain separate. The name is something that can be pronounced, so there will be no misunderstanding about where to send your money, or who is most important. I take great pleasure in inviting all unaffiliated Baptists to affiliate with my (ehh, umm, OUR) new and all-inclusive fellowship, the

***INTERGALACTIC FELLOWSHIP OF INDEPENDENT BAPTISTS
(IFIB)***

I see no need to fool around with national, international, or global restrictions, or dilly-dally with unimportant geographical connotations.

We'll just go for it all!! Our reach and our influence shall know no bounds (and we know no-no's). And, besides, the name has a nice ring to it. The name also is very practical and will appeal to those who do not like change (i.e., Baptists). Should we eventually find intelligent life on other planets (or even here on earth), we will not have to change our name to include them in the organization. A simple "Join Invitation Galactica" (jig) will be sufficient to add the space people to our organization.

In order to make this non-organized fellowship the very best and most important for now, a few things are needed, as follows:

1. A president – All non-organizations need a sharp-minded, clever visionary to guide the ship in whatever circumstance she should find herself, whether fair weather or foul, lean times or fat (without getting personal), and in calm or raging seas. Since I personally know of no one who is more uniquely qualified, I hereby nominate, appoint, and elect (without being fore-ordained) myself to that office. It saves a lot of trouble and bickering about who should have the office and, after all, it was my idea. We can eventually talk about replacing me when I get tired of it and want to do something else, or should I be forced to start another organization when this one becomes too liberal. At that juncture, perhaps a nice title like "Supreme Guide Emeritus" can be given, and I can disappear into obscurity with a suitable pension and more letters after my name. We do not hold that the president is infallible, except when he invokes the *ex-cathedra* privilege to which his office is entitled. Even then, he can only lay aside one scriptural principle at a time, and only if he cites a scriptural reason for doing so.
2. A paper – All non-organizations worth their literary salt must have a suitable outlet for expressing the views of the president, and perhaps those of a few other notables within the non-establishment. We shall publish a quarterly paper that will keep our unaffiliated member churches aware of what's going on in the non-organization. This paper needs a good name, and we have decided to title it ***The Sword and the Towel***. Please do not think this a misprint. We understand that C.H. Spurgeon published a periodical known as ***The Sword and the Trowel***, but we feel pretty certain that Mr. Spurgeon would not want us usurping his name for our publication, and the name we have chosen serves our interests in much finer fashion, since we have already thrown it in (the towel, that is). This gem of literary merit will

serve to enlighten our members about the things we already have in common, and with which we all agree. It will also point out the faults of those with whom we disagree, such as those who call their non-organizations conventions instead of fellowships. If you can't keep your good name, what can you keep? Should we fail to garner enough material for any particular issue of *The Towel*, we will publish messages from other good sources, and edit them to give the appearance that the author (who is probably now dead and can't defend himself) agrees with all of our doctrinal positions. These messages will then be posted to our web site for use by those who would like to preach a good message, but can't find one.

3. An Executive Director – this position is necessary to lend credibility to any non-organization, and to take the blame for anything that goes wrong, thereby absolving the president of any liability for his actions. That's really all it's for – really.
4. A School – The non-organization needs a cathedral of higher learning to be the focal point for the preparation of those who will be in positions of primary leadership within the churches who support the non-organization (and the school). Churches who are affiliated with the non-organization will be expected to send their best, most energetic, on-fire, talented people away from their home church to the school to properly ascertain such things as the correct pronunciation of theological terms not occurring in scripture, such as “supralapsarianism,” and “theophany.” This may weaken many churches but, so what? It strengthens mine. They can also learn things about music, dress codes, and mannerisms not specifically addressed in the bible, but firmly believed by the administration because they are “proper.” And there will be no beards, such as Aaron, David, Solomon, the priests, and Jesus wore, and no locusts, wild honey, or clothes made from camel's hair allowed in the dormitories. And no bagpipes under any circumstances. You can't find those things in the bible anywhere. Attendance at this institution will provide students with avenues for discovering how to break the rules without getting caught, and thereby prepare them for life. They can be overseen by people who don't know them, so if they should be reported as a scoundrel by said people to those who do know them, such report will promptly be labeled as libelous (or slanderous, if in verbal form). These students can, upon graduation, go out and fill the

pastorates of any churches needing same, thereby ensuring the future stability of the non-organization and the school. Should any church decide that it is the local church that was given the charge to train leadership, so that she might keep the strength she has been given, we will not be disagreeable, but shall refer to the little school as “Podunk,” and will not recognize her graduates as being “real preachers.” And we will most certainly not allow them to be referred to by the scriptural title of Doctor, nor to put multiple letters after their names as if it actually meant something – unless, of course, their last name happens to be “Doctor.”

The first required course of the school will be *The Art of Argument*, which will teach the all-important difference between defending something we are doing that is **not in** scripture (i.e., “Well, the Bible doesn’t say we *can*’t do it that way) and defending something that we are not doing that **is in** scripture (i.e., “Well, the Bible doesn’t say we *have* to do it that way”). As we all know, all other positions for a successful non-organization are built upon this foundation – and the knowledge that a house divided against itself can always re-divide.

5. An annual meeting – In order to keep order in the non-organizational order, we will convene at least one annual meeting – per year. We will discuss those things that need to be discussed, such as what kind of food we will have at the next annual meeting, and why we tabled all the controversial things from the last annual meeting (that would be mostly because we hoped that the same trouble-makers who showed up last time don’t show up this time). The meeting should be held at the school, of course, so the member churches can avail themselves of this opportunity to say “ooh” and “ahh” when they observe all the things that have been constructed at the school. We will pass resolutions, such as those requiring us to abstain from bible translations we are not now using, and to declare that non-affiliated members who don’t pay their dues are no longer members of the non-organization. We may have a time for the students to demonstrate what they have learned at the school by allowing them to sing for us (all songs must be approved by the song approval committee), or perhaps holding preaching contests and judging how well they can flail their arms in the pulpit and say “See?” Perhaps we will have a “speech contemptible” award for the best preacher, engraved with the words of Second Corinthians 10:10. We can close the annual meeting

by having one of the more influential among us bring us a stirring message on the church, reminding us that we are all independent and autonomous, and that's why we're all here keeping the organization together at any cost. After that, we will all write checks to the missions clearing-house of the non-organization. Givers of large donations will be recognized by bestowing upon them the "gift of the pointy hat."

There may, or may not, be other things that are necessary for the non-organization. Those things can be determined by the committee on necessities, or by the President, as he sees fit. As of now, I am the only member of the non-organization, which makes the organization extremely efficient. Should you desire to be a part of IFIB (pronounced IFIB), you may contact me for an application and further information. Thank you so much. But act soon. I expect the response to be overwhelming, given man's inclination to build things in honor of himself. If you don't like the idea of my organization, you may start your own organization. Who knows? – maybe I will join it.

Doc Trin