



# **The Betrayal: The hostile takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention and a Missionary's Fight for Freedom in Christ**

*John W. Merritt*

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The destruction of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) as a cooperative and united fellowship of more than 16 million Baptists over more than 25 years by the actions and spirit of fundamentalist leaders can be compared to the 9/11 destruction delivered in one morning to the World Trade Center towers. The grave difference is that the 9/11 masterminds were sworn enemies of the United States. Their intention was to cause as much death and destruction as possible. The masterminds of the destruction of the unity and fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention were Paige Patterson and Paul Pressler, a theologian and a judge, two Southern Baptist insiders who betrayed the SBC and all it has stood for for more than 150 years. Further, the destruction of the unity and fellowship of Southern Baptists is worse than the Enron and WorldCom scandals because it was led by deceitful Baptist leaders who conducted their crusade under the themes of "believe the Bible" and "a high view of Scripture." In reality it was, and still is, perhaps the biggest hoax ever attempted by some Baptists against other Baptists. Author John W. Merritt served as a Southern Baptist missionary in Europe for 34 years. He was in "the eye of the storm" when the aggression of fundamentalist Southern Baptist trustees took their movement to Europe. In his book, and in his talks, Merritt documents their deceit. In this important, historic and difficult book, Merritt clarifies who calls and sends missionaries and under whose authority they live and work. He presents 10 arguments that the SBC fundamentalist movement is "another gospel" and offers five proposals to churches to help them regain their autonomy under the authority of Christ. He also offers a new vision for a new future for Southern Baptists. Merritt writes that church communities must participate in fair, free and open forums of discussion on the Bible to overcome the divisions and bring unity to the Baptist churches, associations and Convention. The Betrayal makes a compelling case, using clear, strong, and timely examples, that the Southern Baptist Convention is in desperate need of new leadership, including new trustees, new heads of boards, seminaries and agencies. All of these should know the difference between good and evil and courageously practice the good.

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