

Old Landmarkism – What is it?

Chapter 1 – 30 Minutes

A. Facts Taken For Granted

1st Fact: Christ set up a kingdom and built a Church while here on earth unlike any institution that had ever been seen up to that time.

2nd Fact: Christ set up only one kingdom and built only one Church, which He designed to be called “the house of God”, “the Church of the living God”.

3rd Fact: Christ did Not found His kingdom with parts in antagonism to each other and in open rebellion to His own authority, laws and government with No ability to be “fitly framed together” but “a house divided against itself”.

4th Fact: There are at least 50 distinct religious societies in US, each asserting they are scriptural. Impossible. As only one can be scriptural, all else cannot.

Direct Inferences Admitted from these Facts:

First: The “church-branch theory” is an absurdity. Teaches all the different sects of Christians, holding different teachings and practices, make up the Church.

Second: The “church-army theory” must be false. Teaches each sect, flying its own banner, makes up the regiments, brigades, and divisions of the army.

Third: The “universal church theory” is wrong. Teaches the various sects make up visible kingdom of Christ but all born again make up invisible Church.

B. Axioms

What is an Axiom? Defined: A self evident truth; a proposition whose truth is so evident, that no process of reasoning or demonstration can make it plainer.

Axiom 1 – Things equal to or like the same thing are equal to or like each other.

- Those who assert churches are the same who believe and/or practice different things involves themselves in the absurdity of asserting that things unlike and unequal to each other are like the same thing.

- Baptists believing/practicing the Historic Faith of Jesus Christ stand apart.

Axiom 2 – Two truths or a thousand can no more antagonize, than two or a thousand parallel lines can cross each other.

- Churches who have received the one Lord, one faith, one baptism are essentially the same in belief and practice. Others are societies; Non-churches

Axiom 3 – Baptists are fundamentally, vitally different in doctrine, character, and principles. If Baptist Churches are scriptural, then others are not; vice versa.

- Reason is violated when admitting opposites and contradictions

Axiom 4 – Contradictory systems or theories, no more than antagonizing elements in nature, (like light and darkness) can exist in the same time or place without antagonism. Harmony or quiescence is impossible.

- There can be no union of effort between a system of religion founded in truth and systems of religion founded in error; sham unions are hypocritical/sinful.

- Principles, moral convictions, and the revealed truth of God cannot be denied, yielded, modified to have compromise. Opinions, feelings, self-interests can.
- When the truth in belief and/or practice is modified to have compromise with those who do Not hold it, is to commit treason against the Head of the Church.
- Those who work in union with such will be unable to say in eternity, “We have Not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.”

Axiom 5 – Compromise, being based upon mutual concessions, when effected between truth and error, truth must always suffer.

Axiom 6 - “The accessory before or after the fact is equally guilty with the principal.” - Common Law.

- If we receive or pass, or encourage others to receive or pass, counterfeit money, we make ourselves equally guilty with those who counterfeit it.
- Unscriptural systems of religion/churches are counterfeits.
- To interact with them and their teachers as to impress others who witness our acts that we recognize them as accredited representatives of the truth; we encourage their work and thus “bid them God-speed,” 2nd Jn 10-11 making ourselves partakers of their sins.

The Work or Objectives of Old Landmarkism, What Is It?

1. To establish the fact that Baptist Churches are the Churches of Christ (in belief and practice) and they alone have ever held and preserved the doctrine of the gospel in all ages since the ascension of Christ.
2. To clearly establish the “Old Landmarks” of true Baptists in all ages.
3. To demonstrate that treating ministers in error and receiving their acts as scriptural proclaims louder than words that we hold them as scriptural.

Questions

1. Describe the “Church-Branch” theory. How does it contradict the scriptures?
2. Which axiom is violated when people teach two churches practicing different ordinances are the same?
3. If Baptists are scriptural, where does that leave every other Church?
4. Why can there be no agreement or union of effort between churches practicing ordinances differently than true Baptists?
5. What happens when we modify true belief and practice to have compromise?
6. What occurs when concessions are made between truth and error?
7. What are unscriptural systems of religion/churches?

Optional Writing Assignment

In three pages or less, explain the three objectives of Old Landmarkism, What Is It?