

Herman B. Pender, 1927-1929

Dr. C. N. Glover wrote over his picture, "Dr. Pender was a prince among men. A southern gentleman and unexcelled as a presiding moderator. He inspired men."

Dr. A. T. Powers commented:

He was a prince among the men whose name will be called on this list. He was a great believer in the sovereignty of the church. Sam C. West, who had been a friend of mine from boyhood, was pastoring four churches, but belonged to none of them. However, all of them had elected him as a messenger to the American Baptist Association.

Some brother raised the question and said, "One man cannot represent four churches," and wanted to challenge his vote. Dr. Pender--I never shall forget his speech--said, "My brother, my brethren, listen to me, never as long as I am Moderator of this group will I sit by and see the sovereignty and freedom of a church challenged. These four churches have a perfect right to name their pastor, if they wanted him as a messenger. He has one vote. Each church has one-fourth of a vote. They might have had three votes, but they did not elect to do it that way. They elected to send their pastor, and so far as the moderator is concerned--and I challenge you to challenge it, if you do not believe it--they have a perfect right to do so."

"I did not know much about the sovereignty of a church and who was qualified to be a messenger, but I proudly came to represent my church, and I never shall forget Dr. Pender's statement because it agreed with what my church had practiced when it sent me."

Dr. C. N. Glover wrote: "I remember Dr. Pender. I believe he was about eighty years old when he was Moderator or President of the American Baptist Association.

"At the time of his death Brother Pender was a member of our Missionary Committee and had been for several years (1927-1929) President of the American Baptist Association. He was a safe counselor, a wise but humble leader and could always be depended upon to stand for the right. His work on earth is done, but his work and his influence for good will continue to live and bless the world." i[i]

According to two sisters, ages 101 and 103, who were baptized by Dr. Pender, they remembered Dr. Ben M. Bogard holding revivals in their home church, pastored by Dr. Pender.ii[ii]

The principle enunciated by Dr. Pender continues to be practiced in the ABA even today. However, the unsuccessful challenge of this principle eventually led to approximately 450 churches

withdrawing from the ABA in 1950 to form what is now known as the BMA of America.

In the history of the BMA of America, the author, John W. Duggar referred to Dr. Pender's statement: "Dr. Pender was a great man of God. But to some his way of settling the question in defense of church sovereignty was strange indeed. One might wonder, if a local church was absolutely sovereign enough according to some to elect anyone to serve as her messenger, why would it not be proper for one church to designate another church's messenger as hers, and to vote for her, too?"iii[iii]

An entire page of Dr. Duggar's history was devoted to the discussion of the incident cited by Powers and Glover.

According to Wm. H. Parks' **History of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas**, Eld. Pender was elected as Temporary Chairman at a preliminary meeting at Troupe, Texas on July 6, 1900, leading to the organization of the BMA. Pender was mentioned several times, before being elected as a Vice-President at Jacksonville in 1902.

He preached the Introductory Sermon for the 1904 meeting at Dallas, and was again elected as a Vice-President. He was re-elected in 1905, then was elected as President at the Dallas meeting in 1906. He was re-elected at Jacksonville in 1907, Dallas in 1908, Oak Cliff in 1909, Jacksonville in 1910, Mineral Wells in 1911, and Dallas in 1912.

Dr. Pender was Assistant Moderator of the General Association in 1915. He was elected and preached from Psalm 11:3. He was also on the Committee on Order of Business with Ben M. Bogard and J. W. Brewer, and on the Education Committee. He was a messenger from Campbell Church, Campbell, Texas.

Dr. Pender was again present in 1917. At this meeting he served as chairman of the Nominating Committee, and preached.

Dr. Pender was elected as Assistant Moderator in 1919.

At the 1923 meeting he was listed as a visitor, with a message from the B. M. A. of Texas. Bro. Pender was listed with other brethren "Making talks on the need of Unification of all true Baptists.

The minute also recorded, "Upon motion, brethren J. M. Newburn and H. B. Pender were asked to meet in a fraternal and advisory way with our committee on Unification." Later he served on the Unification Committee, of which Dr. C. C. Winters was chairman.

After the ABA was officially organized, he and C. C. Winters were nominated as the first President. Dr. Winters was declared elected, and Dr. Pender was declared as the First Vice-President. He was also elected to the Literature Committee in 1924.

He was mentioned quite frequently in the negotiations between the BMA of Texas and the

ABA in allowing the ABA to assume the mission programs supported by the BMA of Texas.

Dr. Pender preached the annual sermon in 1927 at Hot Springs from Eph. 6:6-14, "Those Things for Which the Church must Stand."

The Memorial Committee reported that Dr. Pender was in bed sick during the March, 1930 meeting, and soon thereafter passed to the eternal realm to be with His Lord.

The report stated, "...the cause lost one of the best men and most loyal friends we had. He was a powerful preacher and a fearless exponent of the truth. He was active in the ministry for more than sixty years."

Dr. Pender was the second President, following C. C. Winters. He died May 4, 1930 in Dallas, Texas, and was buried at Greenville, Texas.