

Biographical Sketch of Daniel Marshall

Tom J. Nettles

Baptist beginnings in America were virtually all church planting experiences.

- Roger Williams – eventually after three months was convinced by Seekers – writings on toleration described as “pernicious, God-provoking, Truth defacing g, church ruining, [and] State-shaking; banished from Massachusetts in 1636 and spent fourteen weeks in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean.”
- John Clarke at Newport – established a Baptist church around 1644; Clarke imprisoned but offered to debate the theological issues;
 - Whereas, It pleased this honoured Court, yesterday, to condemn the faith and order which I hold and practice; and, after you had passed your sentence upon me for it, were pleased to express I could not maintain the same against your ministers, and thereupon publicly proffered me a dispute with them: Be pleased, by these few lines, to understand I readily accept it, and therefore, desire you to appoint the time when, and the person with whom, in that public place where I was condemned, I might, with freedom, and without molestation of the evil power, dispute that point publicly, where I doubt not, by the strength of Christ, to make it good, out of his last will and testament, unto which nothing is to be added, nor from which nothing is to be diminished. Thus desiring the Father of Lights to shine forth, and by his power to expel the darkness, I remain your well wisher, John Clarke.
- Obadiah Holmes whipped thirty lashes with a three corded whip; Clarke wrote *Ill Newes from New England* during his stay in England in 1652
- Thomas Gould – harassed by the church from 1655-1665 to have his child baptized. He resisted seeing no reason for such baptism in the word of God. Began the FBC of Boston in 1665.
- Elias Keach – Through a ruse established the Pennepak Baptist church, the first in the Philadelphia Association. Keach’s evangelistic labors, along with those of Thomas Killingsworth, led to the founding of several other churches before he went back to England. This led in 1707 to the establishment of the Philadelphia Association; The sent out preachers to plant churches, they received new and struggling works into their fellowship, they kept a close watch on the faith and order of their member churches, and they dismissed churches to found new associations
- Valentine Wightman - The grandson of Edward Wightman who was burnt for heresy in Litchfield England in 1612. The Son of one of Edward Wightman’s five Baptist sons that came to America. He was born in Rhode Island in 1681 and in 1705 moved to Groton Connecticut where he began to preach and established the first Baptist church in Connecticut, which became the mother of many other Baptist churches, largely through his labors in going to other towns around Groton and gathering together interested persons for preaching. In spite of

opposition from the established church he founded congregations in Waterford , Lyme, Stonington and other places.

Daniel Marshall

- 1706, born of respectable and Pious parents in Windsor Connecticut to Thomas and Mary Marshall, the ninth of eleven children.
- Converted at age 20 and joined the Congregational church, and soon became a deacon. His son described him as “naturally of an ardent temper” and therefore exhibiting zeal in his calling as a Christian. He carried out his duties as deacon serious concern to please Christ.
- For twenty years he was in prosperous circumstances; he married Hanna Drake in 1742; She gave birth to a male child in 1744 and died soon after that. Marshall already had begun to speak publicly about the necessity of the new birth and seems to have been arguing for a regenerate church membership. According to Henry Stiles, who wrote *The History and Genealogy of Ancient Windsor,*” the pastor of the local congregation, having developed an animosity toward Marshall, left Marshall at the graveside and made a public statement about his refusal to perform the service; The people dispersed leaving Marshall alone to bury his deceased wife;
- Around age 38, in 1744, he heard Whitefield preach, saw many conversions and came to believe that the time of the millennial glory was near. He began to burn with a desire to see the divine glory displayed in the large numbers of conversions that would constitute the “glory” of the Latter day glory. The confessional stance of his church, the evangelistic tradition that inspired his zeal, and his expectant hopes for success all were framed within the tradition of historical Calvinism.
- On June 13, 1747, Marshall married again. The new bride was the younger sister of Shubal Stearns, Martha. She would be a zealous participant in the sufferings and zealous efforts that soon would come to characterize their lives until Marshall’s death in 1784. The ease with which he moved from one place to another and the time he was able to give to his itinerancy is due in large part to the zeal that Martha had for the progress of the gospel, or as one writer said, “Mrs. Marshall’s unwearied and zealous co-operation.” [Sprague, 61]
- Along with many others Marshall reached a conviction that he should dispose of all his earthly goods and engage in the attempt to convert the heathen, the nearest manifestation of which was a large concentration of native Americans, the Mohawks. At a place called Onnaquaggy at the head of the Susquehanna river.
- This was not the result of overwrought emotion or an indiscreet reaction to the preaching of Whitefield, but came after some years of study, prayer, and consideration. He and his wife, Martha, and their three children made this move about 1751.
- His Son, the famous Abraham Marshall, described it this way: “Firmly believing in the near approach of the latter-day glory, when the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles, shall hail their Redeemer, and bow to his gentle scepter, a number of worthy characters ran to and fro through the eastern States, warmly exhorting to the prompt adoption of every measure tending to hasten that blissful period. Others sold, gave away, or left their possessions, as the powerful impulse of the

moment determined, and without scrip or purse, rushed up to the head in a town called Onnaquaggy, among the Mohawk Indians. One, and not the least sanguine of these pious missionaries, was my venerable father. Great must have been his faith, great his zeal, when without the least prospect of a temporal reward, with a much loved wife, and three children, he exchanged his commodious buildings, for a miserable hut; his fruitful fields and loaded orchards, for barren deserts; the luxuries of a well-furnished table, for rude savages! He had the happiness, however, to teach and exhort, for eighteen months, in this place, with considerable success. A number of the Indians were, in some degree, impressed with eternal concerns, and several became cordially obedient to the gospel. But just as the seeds of heavenly truth, sown with tears in this unpromising soil, began to appear in their first fruits, the breaking out of war among the savage tribes occasioned his reluctant removal to Conegocheague, in Pennsylvania. After a short residence in this settlement, he removed to a place near Winchester, in Virginia.”

- Here in Winchester he attended a church connected with the Philadelphia Association. Examining their doctrine, he came to the conclusion that they were biblically sound, and he and his wife asked for baptism by immersion. Marshall was forty-eight years old. Here Marshall, who had labored as an exhorter till this time, was licensed to preach the gospel and the “unrestrained exercise of his gifts.” [Benedict 2:352] Daniel remarks that his gifts “were by no means above mediocrity,” but that he was, nevertheless, “instrumental in awakening attention, in many of his hearers, to the interest of their souls.”¹

Some of the members of the church, however, were not awakened to the interest of their souls but to their dislike of Marshall’s earnest and probing way of enforcing the gospel claims on his hearers. They appealed to the Philadelphia Association to come and examine this preacher with such unusual fervor. They sent Benjamin Miller to conduct the examination. This visit provides a clear test of the doctrinal content of the preaching of Daniel Marshall as well as his brother-in-law, Shubal Stearns. As mentioned above, members had complained to the Philadelphia Association about supposed irregularities in the church, particularly under the influence of Daniel Marshall. Because he had been instrumental in the reformation of this church just years earlier, Miller had vested interests in giving a thorough examination to the complaints lodged against Marshall. He would be particularly concerned to know if they had any substance.

Miller had served faithfully as a pastor, an active member of the Philadelphia Association, and as an itinerant preacher. His name first appears in the Association minutes in 1747, a year in which the messengers gave a spirited defense of the church's duty to "call and prove their candidates for ministry" and the correlative duty of such candidates to wait with "self denying meekness, humbleness, and lowliness of mind to a further approbation from the churches."ⁱⁱ They zealously sought to exclude those who had an indication of "a heavy, self-willed, obstinate, and ungovernable temper" and assure that the churches sufficiently tested for "the steady, sound, and orthodox principles and regular behaviour" of those they would ordain to office.ⁱⁱⁱ They had affirmed, using the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch as an example, that persons not ordained might still function as teachers if so gifted. "What reason can be given why there may not be in churches men of useful gifts, and profitable to teach all the days of their life without ordination?"^{iv} Daniel Marshall would have been viewed in such a light at the time of Miller's visit in 1754 for, though not ordained, he had been licensed to preach by the church.

In 1752 the Philadelphia Association considered a query "Whether a person denying unconditional election, the doctrine of original sin, and the final perseverance of the saints, and striving to affect as many as he can, may have full communion with the church?" The answer returned to and approved by the assembly stated that such a notion "opposeth the absolute sovereignty of God over his creatures contrary to express scriptures." They went on to affirm the three parts of the query by asserting and arguing from Scripture that "personal election is the truth of God,...That we are originally sinful or partakers of the first sin of human nature [and]...are justly shut out of our native

happiness...unless our title be restored by the second Adam...by being effectually called in time." The word to the churches that followed this underscored in red the seriousness of their commitment to these principles.

Upon which fundamental doctrines of Christianity, next to the belief of an eternal God, our faith must rest; and we adopt, and would that all the churches belonging to the Baptist Association, be well grounded in accordance to our Confession of faith and catechism, and cannot allow that any are true members of our churches who deny the said principles, be their conversation outward what it will.^v

Two years later, 1754, the Opekon and Kettocton churches in Virginia were received into the Philadelphia Association. Benjamin Miller, in attendance when both statements mentioned above were approved, made his investigative trip to Virginia apparently during the few months that Marshall, and then Stearns, was with them. Robert B. Semple described the event charmingly.

They were very zealous, had much preaching, and were remarkable warm in their religious exercises, and more particularly so after Mr. Daniel Marshall came among them. They went to such lengths that some of the more cold-hearted lodged a complaint in the Philadelphia Association. Mr. Miller was sent to see what was the matter. When he came he was highly delighted with the exercises, joined them cordially, and said if he had such warm-hearted Christians in his church he would not take gold for them. He charged those who had complained rather to nourish than complain of such gifts.^{vi}

What can we conclude from these events and the very positive judgment rendered by Miller? Would Miller give such cordial approval to “exercises” or teaching inconsistent with the clear judgments recently rendered by the Association in which he was an active participant and whose integrity he was determined to uphold? Should we conclude that he cared little about the doctrinal and experiential orthodoxy of a church that he so recently had labored in to set right in these matters? When the church was “new-modeled...upon the Calvinistic plan,”^{vii} a couple of years earlier, more was at stake

than the simple imposition of a new confessional form on the church. John Gano recalled that only three of the original church could “give an account of experiencing a work of Grace.” Six others who visited with them professed faith in Christ and so were baptized. A number of the old members expressed to John Gano “their deplorable state” said that they had been misled and hoped that the ministers, including Miller, would not blame them. Gano comforted them and spoke to them from the words, “They being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Several of those were converted and became zealous members of the church.^{viii}

Unless Miller was completely without discernment (very unlikely, as he was appointed to tasks that required careful and compassionate discernment) or had shaken off the former convictions of his soul concerning the truth and the character of gospel ministry (also highly unlikely in light of his continued work and responsible leadership in the Philadelphia Association), we may be justified in concluding several things concerning the Stearns/Marshall tandem.

First, their giftedness in proclamation and teaching appeared adequate in content and edifying in effect. Whether Miller heard Marshall or Stearns is not clear. The “impartial examination” of Marshall’s faith and his exercising his gifts among them as a licensed preacher, however, would certainly be consistent with what Miller observed. In the history of the Kettocton Association, William Fristoe reported the detailed examination to which possible candidates for the ministry were subjected. These candidates must understand the Scriptures, be “sound in faith,” and show “a knowledge of the connection of the various doctrines contained therein.” Though his ordination to

ministry as a pastor did not come at this time, he would hardly have been called “as a licensed preacher, to the unrestrained exercise of his gifts” had he disagreed with the doctrinal points upon which ordination examinations proceeded as summarized by Fristoe:

Such as the being of the one living and true God—of his existence and perfections—of the Holy Trinity—of the incarnation of God’s dear Son, and the great work of salvation accomplished by his mediation—of particular election and particular redemption—of the fallen & degenerate state of Adam’s progeny—of effectual calling by unfrustrable grace—justification by imputed righteousness—protection of the saints and their certain perseverance in grace, their everlasting rest in ultimate glory, and the entire ruin of the wicked in everlasting destruction.^{ix}

Second, their spirit, though exuberant, did not come under censure as arrogant, prideful, or improperly enthusiastic but as warmly spiritual. The Regular Baptists of the Philadelphia Association had experienced their share of overwhelming conviction and knew that both despair and joy can periodically overwhelm and alter physical strength. The warmth of the exercises was a delight, not an offense.

Third, their theology supported the strength of the exercises. Miller fully embraced the judgment of the Philadelphia Association that it “cannot allow that any are true members of our churches who deny the said principles” of total depravity, unconditional election, effectual calling, and the certain perseverance of God’s elect. Had the theology been error cloaked in zeal, he would never have admonished the petitioners to nourish rather than complain of such gifts. Morgan Edwards confirmed this judgment in his chronicle of the Separate Baptists in Virginia. “These are called Separates,” he wrote, “not because they withdrew from the Regular-Baptists but because they have hitherto declined any union with them.” He then made this doctrinal observation: “The faith and order of both are the same, except some trivial matters not

sufficient to support a distinction, but less a disunion; for both avow the *Century-Confession* and the annexed discipline.”^x

Principles of Faith adopted by the Sandy Creek Association in 1816, coincide with the doctrinal statements of the Philadelphia Association and express the doctrinal position of the church at its founding and that held by Marshall at this time of fraternal investigation. Articles III and IV read:

- III. That Adam fell from his original state of purity, and that his sin is imputed to his posterity; that human nature is corrupt, and that man, of his own free will and ability, is impotent to regain the state in which he was primarily placed.
- IV. We believe in election from eternity, effectual calling by the Holy Spirit of God, and justification in his sight only by the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. And we believe that they who are thus elected, effectually called, and justified, will persevere through grace to the end, that none of them be lost.^{xi}

Given this powerful combination of reformed orthodox theology, genuine experience, and fervent zeal, plus the dissatisfaction of some the church members in Winchester, they sought to do a work about thirty miles from Winchester. Slow response prompted them to consider another move. They had heard of the massive spiritual destitution of an area in North Carolina, but had also learned by letters from former acquaintances that many were hungry for gospel preaching and would ride for forty miles to hear a gospel sermon. Consequently they moved about two hundred miles to Sandy Creek, North Carolina, at that time in Orange County. In 1755 they constituted themselves into a church with sixteen adult members and laid plans for evangelizing the area. Abraham Marshall summarizes the event in writing: “Under the influence of an anxious desire to be extensively useful, he proceeded from Virginia to Hugh-warry,

North Carolina, where his faithful and incessant labors proved the happy means of arousing and converting numbers.” [Benedict 2: 352]

The Separate Baptists that settled at Sandy Creek lived in the spirit of the First Great Awakening and often conducted themselves as those in reaction against the severe criticisms of many who opposed the revival. J. M Cramp has set these practices in context.

They were not all suitably qualified for the work, as we should now judge; mistakes were committed and measures of doubtful propriety adopted, in some places; but such things might be expected in times of great spiritual excitement. It cannot be denied that the laborers were generally men of God, “full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” They had deep convictions of the evil of sin and the peril of a rebellious state. The love of God in Christ overpowered their souls. Their views of the solemn realities of another world were vivid and heart-affecting....Their earnest appeals made the stout-hearted tremble, awed many a reprobate into silence, and wrung tears from daring and hardened offenders. Tens of thousand bowed before the majesty of truth....We need not be surprised at some oddities....If the churches composing the Sandy Creek Association in North Carolina were tenacious of the kiss of charity, the laying on of hands upon members, the appointment of elderesses, and such things;...and if, in some respects, the fervency of New Light feelings got the better of discretion and decorum, we must bear in mind the peculiarities of the times. After a long season of cold and drought, the Lord “poured water upon him that was thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;” the spiritual vegetation sprang up thick and strong, requiring skillful cultivators; and some detriment was experienced for want of care in pruning and training. In the course of a few years these wants were supplied, and suitable arrangement constituted. Surely we ought to prefer a revival of religion, though dished with some irregularities, to the death-like coldness of mere orthodoxy and form.^{xii}

Morgan Edwards made the famous observation about the influence of the Sandy Creek Association by 1772 when its division into three association was culminated. It had become the mother and grandmother of forty two fully constituted churches with numerous other branches and preaching points and 125 gospel ministers had come from her influence.

As one of the more zealous members of the team of exhorters sent out by the Sandy Creek church, Daniel Marshall began preaching in Grassy Creek. Abraham Marshall wrote of his father's "faithful and incessant labors" that became the "happy means of arousing and converting numbers." A small General Baptist congregation formerly had functioned there, but under the powerful impact of this new wave of evangelism, it became an arm of the Sandy Creek congregation. An abundant harvest of new converts included James Read, an illiterate man who then learned to read so that he could study the Bible and preach. Read eventually became the pastor at Grassy Creek and had extensive success as an itinerant evangelist in Virginia. Under Marshall's guidance the congregation adopted, apparently, the covenant that was held by the Sandy Creek church. Robert Devin includes the covenant of the Sandy Creek church in his history of the Grassy Creek church, founded under the influence of Daniel Marshall, indicating that the covenantal position held true for the beginning of the Grassy Creek church. The preamble establishes doctrinal parameters for their union.

Holding believers baptism; the laying on of hands; *particular election of grace by the predestination of God in Christ; effectual calling by the Holy Ghost*; free justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ; progressive sanctification through God's grace and truth; the final perseverance of the saints in grace; the resurrection of these bodies after death, at that day which God has appointed to judge the quick and the dead by Jesus Christ, by the power of God, and by the resurrection of Christ; and life everlasting. Amen.^{xiii}

- After the success at Grassy Creek, Marshall, again described in the words of his son as "eminently useful as an itinerant preacher," [Benedict 2:352] went to Abbott's Creek at the request of a former member of the Welsh Neck Church from the Charleston Association, James Younger. Marshall's preaching again

became the occasion for the conversion of many. This group of gathered converts wanted Marshall to remain as pastor. He accepted their request, went to live among them, and, sought ordination. Shubal Stearns, according to the practice of the Baptist, sought the aid of another elder for the ordination. The first that he contacted refused to participate because he “believed them to be a disorderly set [sect], suffering women to pray in public and permitting every ignorant man to preach that chose; that they encouraged noise and confusion in their meetings.” One can only imagine the jolt that this refusal might have been to Marshall, but he and Stearns had been criticized similarly before and would not allow this rebuff to be the final word. Stearns sought help from another regular Baptist, Henry Ledbetter, a pastor in South Carolina, who consented. Paschall noted that the Abbott’s Creek church was established in 1756 with Daniel Marshall as pastor. At age fifty, Daniel Marshall assumed his first pastorate.

From his position as pastor at Abbott’s Creek, he peregrinated into Virginia frequently. On at least one occasion, he went at the invitation of Dutton Lane, another Sandy Creek evangelist, and preached with a bountiful harvest, baptizing 42 persons. In August 1760, Marshall constituted the first Separate Baptist church in Virginia, the Dan River Church. From this founding, the Separate Baptist movement spread rapidly in Virginia so that by 1790 the number had increased to 210. Waldo P. Harris in *Georgia’s First Continuing Baptist Church* made the judgment, “The success of the whole work in Virginia is directly traceable to the spirit and energy of Daniel Marshall, who traveled far and wide wherever there was an opportunity to preach, baptizing hundreds of converts.” Colonel Samuel Harris was converted under his ministry and accompanied Marshall on his preaching tours. Eventually Harris became an effective evangelist that trained others in the art of itinerant evangelism. Another conflict with a regular Baptist occurred in Harris’s ministry. Some of his young evangelists invited David Thomas, a zealous, intelligent, and effective church planter and pastor among the Regular Baptists to preach for them and “teach them the ways of God more perfectly.” They regularly preached for one another seeking to improve their gifts. Thomas rather than providing encouragement

and helpful instruction discouraged them and reprimanded the group for allowing the preaching of “such weak and illiterate persons.”^{xiv} Perhaps such candor is necessary at times, but history proved Thomas’s judgment wrong, as these men became the force for the expansion of Baptist churches throughout Virginia.

The massive pre-Revolutionary growth of the Separates in Virginia came in spite of such doubts, gross misrepresentation, ridicule and harassment, and persecution both popular and legal.

Having labored in North Carolina and Virginia, Marshall, in 1760 looked south to South Carolina. His labors there resulted in a church established at Beaver Creek. From Beaver Creek, as he gathered other gifted men around him he evangelized the surrounding area, again in the face of significant opposition. The Lieutenant Governor referred to Marshall and his men as “Baptist vagrants, who continually endeavor to subvert all order, and make the minds of the people giddy, with that which neither they nor their teachers understand.” [Ray, 15, quoting Leah Townsend] Abraham Marshall, reported, “In this place, likewise, a large church was raised under his ministry, and, till brought to a good degree of maturity in divine things, was an object of his tender and unremitted care and solicitude.

At the direction of Divine Providence, as he conceived, and as subsequent events proved, his next move was to Horse Creek, about fifteen miles north of Augusta.” [Benedict 2:352] By 1762, Marshall had established his evangelistic outpost at Horse Creek, also known as Stephen’s Creek, ten miles from Augusta on the South Carolina side. By 1766 a church was established there with Marshall as pastor, “some of whose sons, raised up under his care, have successfully diffused the light of divine truth through

various benighted regions.” [A. Marshall in Benedict 2:353] It was in this place that his son Abraham, first son by Martha, was converted. Through his labors eight churches were established in South Carolina and the foundations for others were laid.

Also from Stephen’s Creek, Marshall began his sojourns into Georgia. Outposts for ministry were established at Quaker Settlement and on the Kioka. On Marshall’s third visit into Georgia, he was apprehended at a gathering for preaching when the local constable, Samuel Cartledge, arrested him during prayer. Hugh Middleton gave security for Marshall to appear the next Monday at court. Marshall continued his preaching, ignoring the threats of the constable and baptized two of Middleton’s relatives at this meeting. He probably was enabled to continue his preaching and ministry even in the face of his arrest because of the indignant reaction of the gathering at such an irreverent intrusion into divine proceedings. Not the least indignant was Martha Stearns Marshall, already well-known and revered for her passionate exhortations. Catherine Brekus surmised that she had begun these times of exhorting in New England^{xv} Robert Semple noted that she was “a lady of good sense, singular piety, and surprising elocution” who on occasion “melted a whole concourse into tears by her prayers and exhortations.” Semple quickly added that in her exhorting, Martha Marshall never “usurped authority over the other sex.”^{xvi} On this occasion, however, delicacy of proper roles was laid aside and she made a “solemn denunciation of the law, quoting with fluency passage after passage of Scripture.” [Riley, *History of the Baptists in the Southern States East of the Mississippi* , 31; Ray 18]

The next Monday in appearing before the judge, a local minister harassed Marshall with questions and tests of his intelligence and literacy. He was ordered never to

enter Georgia again as a preacher. Marshall replied, “Whether it be right to judge God or man, Judge ye.” Accordingly, in 1771, he moved his family across the Savannah River into Georgia and settled in Kiokee, his final earthly residence. The following spring, the church there was formed and, according to Marshall’s practice adopted a statement of faith included in a covenant. It reveals something of the increasing comprehensiveness of Marshall’s awareness of the doctrinal errors confronted on the American frontier. In the “Abstract of the Articles of Faith and Practice of the Kiokee Church of the Baptist Denomination.” One finds the following declaration:

According to God’s appointment in his word, we do hereby in his name and strength covenant and promise to keep up and defend all the articles of Faith, according to God’s word, such as the great doctrine of Election, effectual calling, particular redemption, Justification by the Imputed righteousness of Christ alone, sanctification by the spirit of God, Believers Baptism by immersion, the saints absolute final perseverance in Grace, the resurrection of the dead, future rewards and punishments...denying the Arian, Socinian, & Arminian errors, & every other principle contrary to the word of God.^{xvii}

Early in his ministry at Kiokee, Marshall saw his arresting officer, the constable Samuel Cartledge converted and baptized. Cartledge became an effective preacher of the gospel for fifty years. Kiokee became the home base for another extensive itinerant ministry for the aging soldier of the cross. Before the Revolutionary broke out, Marshall saw several other churches established. Abraham recalled, “For this purpose many common members have been dismissed, and several ministers have been ordained.

Among these are the Rev. Messrs. Sanders Walker, Samuel Newton, Loveless Savage, Alexander Scott, and the writer of this article.” [Abraham Marshall in Benedict 2:353]

While many ministers fled for safety during the War, Marshall decided that he would not move, but would continue to minister and stand his ground. On one occasion he was arrested and imprisoned. Marshall received permission to preach to the prisoners and pray with them. The meetings became so exuberant that the guards sought and executed an early dismissal for Marshall from prison.

Within a few months of his death, Marshall recognized that he was unable to carry on pulpit labors any longer. Abraham recalled, “Rising in his pulpit, which he had frequently besprinkled with his tears, and from which he had often descended to weep over a careless auditory, he said, ‘I address you, my dear hearers, with a diffidence which arises from a failure of memory, and a general weakness of body and mind, common to my years; but I recollect, he that holds out to the end shall be saved, and am resolved to finish my course in the cause of God.’” Several months later, as he lay dying he spoke to a small group around him. “Dear brothers and sisters, I am just gone. This night I shall probably expire; but I have nothing to fear. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. God has shewn me that he is my God, that I am his son, and that an eternal weight of glory is mine.” [Benedict 2:354]

Are there messages that can be gleaned from this quick overview of the life and ministry of Daniel Marshall? It seems that several biblical principles emerge as we consider the success that God granted this humble and faithful servant in his gospel ministry.

The evaluation of Marshall's pulpit abilities by his son "as by no means above mediocrity" reminds us that that true success in preaching comes not by might nor by power but by the blessings of the divine Spirit. Paul, obviously a man that had a way with words, a man highly trained in styles of logical argument and the classical use of rhetoric, nevertheless placed no confidence in such things as immediate means of spiritual power. His own testimony is that he did not use excellency of speech or of wisdom, not the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. [1 Corinthians 2:2, 4]. J. P. Boyce warned the graduating class of 1879 at Southern Seminary of the dangerous gift of eloquence.

In wishing you success in your future work as pastors, ours is not necessarily a desire that you may be popular pulpit orators. The idea that makes the oratory of the pulpit the test of ministerial efficiency is one of the popular fallacies of the day. Rightly used, as it is indeed by many, the gift of persuasive eloquence is greatly to be desired. It has its place among the most effective means conferred by God upon the preachers of his Word. But in most cases, those who have carefully studied its effects have found that its tendencies are really destructive rather than edifying, leading to sinful admiration of and attachment to the person of the preacher instead of to his Master, and an exaltation of his opinions about those of the Word of God. If, therefore, any of you shall find yourselves possessed of this desirable yet dangerous gift, we beseech you to see to it that it is used in strict subordination to the great objects of your ministry, and that you carefully guard yourselves and your people against the many evils which have sometimes accompanied it.

Second, we are reminded that God gives the increase. Like Paul in Corinth, Marshall could expect little sympathy from the culture and had overwhelming evidence of the absolute ineptness of the natural man to evaluate properly the things of the Spirit. "Neither he who plants nor he who waters are anything are anything," Paul said, "But God who gives the increase." Marshall give flesh to the reality that God does not delight in the "legs of a man," he is not dependent on human talent or ingenuity but on his own determination to build his church and to use whatever instruments he desires. Marshall

demonstrated no confidence in himself, and well knew himself to be only a divinely chosen instrument for the spread of divine truth into a hostile environment. God would accomplish his purpose and the steward must be accountable only for faithfulness in sowing and planting

Third, we learn the great value of personal courage bolstered by the confidence that God will own his cause. Marshall endured great persecution and ridicule under the conviction that neither his life nor the cause were his own—they were God's. He could say with Paul, "Many of the brethren in the Lord, becoming courageous by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." But he could also say, in contemplating how a venture might turn out, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." His co-laborers, learned not only the art of impromptu outdoor preaching, but they learned the glory of suffering for the cause of Christ.

In light of that we see, fourth, that Marshall served as a great encourager of younger ministers. Wherever God raised up a church under his preaching, his example of zeal always led to others sensing the goodness and urgency of gospel ministry. These men accompanied him, and sometimes failed miserably in their attempts at preaching. Marshall knew the emptiness of public failure and drew these men alongside until they found their preaching feet planted firmly and they, in turn, could teach others also. He knew how to encourage one to stir up the gift of God that was in them, and that God did not give the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. He could give the personal nudge needed for a young laborer not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of the suffering that its servants might endure, but to join with him in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.

Fifth, we learn from Marshall the irreplaceable value of zeal. He could say with Elijah, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts.” J. B. Taylor’s article about Marshall said, “Mr. Marshall’s zeal in his Master’s cause kept him laboring after he was bowed by the infirmities of age, and almost up to the very day of his death.” Later he remarked, “The prominent feature of Mr. Marshall’s character, as developed in the history of his life, seems to have been a burning zeal for the salvation of his fellow-men. Without any extraordinary talents, or much intellectual culture, he made himself felt as an element of life and power in every community in which he mingled.” It was manifest to all that love to Christ, and love to the souls of men, constituted his ruling passion.” As his son Abraham remarked about the work at Kiokee, so it could be said about his work at every church, “Through God’s blessing on the ministry of her indefatigable founder and pastor, this church continued to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, breaking forth on the right hand and on the left, till our beloved country was unhappily involved in the horrors of war.”

Finally, we learn the indivisible nature of doctrine and gospel ministry. One must not minimize the doctrinal conviction of Marshall nor of his utilization of doctrine in his proclamation. The evidence shows that each church plant began with a robust doctrinal position. Like Paul, Marshall knew that “Preach the word!” was the immediate and necessary antidote to the reality that “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” A firm doctrinal basis at the beginning can protect the sheep from the wolves that surely will invade the flock. It can also serve in the generations to come as a witness to the truth once delivered to the saints and be a vital part of a recovery of God’s glory in coming generations.

ⁱ Abraham Marshall, “Daniel Marshall” in *Lives of Virginia Baptist Ministers* Ed. J. B. Taylor, 2 vols (Richmond: Yale & Wyatt, 1837.)1:19.

ⁱⁱ Gillette, 55.

ⁱⁱⁱ Gillette, 52.

^{iv} Gillette, 51.

^v Gillette, 69.

^{vi} Semple, 376

^{vii} Semple, 376

^{viii} “Biographical Memoirs of John Gano” in Wolever, 1:46, 47.

^{ix} William Fristoe, *A Concise History of the Kectocon Baptist Association* (Staunton: Printed by William Gilman Lyford, 1808), 35.

^x Edwards [Warren], 2:43.

^{xi} William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1969 [rev. ed]), 358.

^{xii} J. M. Cramp. *Baptist History* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, nd) 535, 536, 545.

^{xiii} Robert I. Devin, *A History of Grassy Creek Baptist Church, From its Foundation to 1880, with Biographical Sketches of its Pastors and Ministers* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1880) , 43. See also James Donovan Mosteller, *A History of the Kiokee Baptist Church in Georgia* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1952), 267-269. This covenant should be compared to the covenant of the Kiokee church which was founded by Daniel Marshall. The statements are strikingly similar in wording, both decidedly Calvinistic, bringing more validity to the authorship of the Grassy Creek church covenant.

^{xiv} Semple 21

^{xv} Catherine A. Brekus, *Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America 1740-1845* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998) , 62.

^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} Included in Mosteller as “Appendix B,” 267.