

Samuel Powell

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## 1 The issue

I was at church today, talking with Ezra. Apparently, there are 2 state baptist conventions in VA (this is not normal, and I think unique). Evidently, one had split from the other based on some differences in doctrine. Often, each is supported by baptist churches in equal ammounts. These hold their conventions at the same time as each other every year. Virginia Baptist State Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Virginia. The latter had split from the former in 1899. One of the two governs the BCM (Baptist Collegiate Ministry) chapters across the state, and requires that staff attend a church associated with the main group. This sort of contention makes me want to reject organized groups entirely. Not necessarily to never attend, but to dissavow membership, and lean primarily on myself and independent relationship with God. This has helped me realize that I do, indeed, need to have a vibrant, independent relationship with Christ at the center of my spiritual life, but also that I need to work on my ability and willingness to act in grace and Spirit-guided discernment in navigating the disputes of men. My inclination, probably due to my narrow and low view of human nature, my strongly averse reaction to conflict, and my disenchantment with organizations and corporate bodies in general, is to just reject it wholesale when faced with this sort of conflict.