

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

“The Final Word”

Prepared and Compiled by the Elders,
Northside Church of Christ, Calhoun, Georgia

There are some troubling mindsets developing in the brotherhood relating to the material which is abundantly available concerning the controversy surrounding brother Dave Miller. These attitudes have been adopted by brethren who were once considered faithful, who once opposed the false teaching of elder reaffirmation/reconfirmation (elder r/r) [also known as elder re-evaluation/reaffirmation—**Editor**] and marriage, divorce, and remarriage/intent (MDR/intent) as taught and practiced by brother Miller. One of these mindsets first came to our attention while dealing with the elders of the Highland Church, Dalton, GA, and the reasoning they used to justify their endorsement and defense of Dave Miller. We are now hearing other brethren using this same justification for their fellowship with Dave Miller and with Gospel Broadcasting Network (GBN), which program the Highland Church sponsors and the Highland elders oversee (GBN uses Dave Miller in its programs). Various well-known brethren have publicly announced that the information provided by brethren who were present when the matters involving Dave Miller occurred at Brown Trail, the vast documentation on the CD prepared by brother Michael Hatcher and the information printed in *Contending for the Faith (CFTF)* pertaining to these matters is NOT credible since a transcript, article, or recorded presentation alone can't always answer every question one may have about the soundness of a brother's teaching. They insist you must speak with brother Miller personally to determine his **intent**. A case in point: It has been brought to our attention that when brother Marvin Weir inquired of brother Curtis Cates (Lubbock Lectures, Oct. 05) if he agreed with brother Miller's elder r/r doctrine, Cates stated that Miller had looked him in the eye and told him the Brown Trail procedure in

1990 was the elder's idea and he was just carrying out their instructions—and he (Cates) believed him. When brother Weir told brother Cates he was looking him (Cates) in the eye and telling him he knew better, brother Cates then indignantly told him he needed to talk with Miller, rather than asking him (Cates) about Miller's doctrine. Cates then added, "I'm not Dave Miller's press secretary." There is one point that needs to be made about brother Miller's admission to brother Cates that he (Miller) was only carrying out the instructions of his elders. He was under no Scriptural obligation to obey them in carrying out their wishes, but to the contrary, he was Scripturally bound to rebuke them. When one teaches error he becomes a false teacher. It matters little who or what made him do it. Since the evidence shows that brother Miller went ahead and taught the unscriptural elder r/r doctrine, he needs to repent (see Miller's sermon transcription, item #1, below). Brethren who have adopted the **intent** mindset insist that one must speak to Miller directly about his supposed error in spite of the evidence. They contend that without **context** and **intent** one cannot know what Miller actually taught at Brown Trail. While we do not necessarily disagree with this statement as a general principle, we **DO** disagree with their application of it to the evidence relating to the doctrines and practices of Dave Miller. Let us consider this further. Those with this mindset are claiming that in order to know if brother Miller actually taught or practiced error one would have either (1) had to have been at Brown Trail when Miller preached his sermon and when the elder r/r program was carried out or (2) would have subsequently had to call him or talk with him in person to determine the **context** of his statements and his intent when he made them. Only then

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

EDITORIAL...

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

We at *CFTF* trust that 2007 will be spiritually prosperous for all of God's faithful children. Especially are we grateful to our readers for their words of encouragement and their prayers offered to our Heavenly Father on our behalf. Our sentiments regarding our supporters are best expressed in the words of the apostle Paul to the Philippian brethren. He wrote,

Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace (Phil. 1:7).

While we never have sacrificed and suffered for the cause of Christ in the ways and to the extent that Paul did, we do know something of sacrifice and the persecution that Paul said was the common lot of all faithful children of God (Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Tim. 3:12). Thus, we covet your prayers to the end that we will always be able truthfully to say with Paul that we **"are set for the defence of the gospel"** and will ever **"Fight the good fight of faith"** that we too may **"lay hold on eternal life"** (Phil. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:12). To that end we covet your Godly support.

In our last *CFTF* we introduced the study of what logicians call "fallacies of distraction". These fallacies hinder or stop one from reaching a correct conclusion in one's reasoning about a matter. We briefly studied two kinds of *ad hominem* fallacies. Before continuing our study we must remember that one has engaged in the *ad hominem* ONLY when one contends that *a statement is false because the one who made it is a certain kind of person*.

Another such fallacy, somewhat related to the *ad hominem*, is called *Tu quoque* (Latin meaning, "You also"). This fallacy points out that *one's opponent does or believes the same thing as you do*. Or, as children often retort when one accuses another of something—"You're another one" or "You do it too". However, if such accusations are true *they are no defense of one's position at all*. While nothing is settled concerning the truth or falsity of a statement by the use of the *Tu quoque* argument, it does serve to expose the fact that one's opponent is evading the issue by making an *ad hominem* argument.

I never cease to be amazed at how quickly some brethren (even and especially preachers) in their desperation to defend their or someone else's false doctrine and/or conduct, will quickly resort to one or more fallacies of distraction and/or other fallacies in their attempts to keep the public from seeing and/or staying with the real issues in a controversy. When I think that some of these preachers are teaching men to be preachers, I pray that their students will not follow their disingenuous teachers' examples in such matters.

—David P. Brown, Editor

2007 SPRING CFTF LECTURES
“FELLOWSHIP—FROM GOD OR MAN”
FEBRUARY 25—28

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 9:30 A.M. <i>Bible Authority—The Basis for Christian Fellowship</i> | David P. Brown |
| 10:30 A.M. <i>Should the church of Christ Fellowship the Christian Church?</i> | Robin Haley |
| 5:00 P.M. OPEN FORUM | David P. Brown |
| 6:00 P.M. <i>By What Bible Authority Does One Church Extend Fellowship to another Church?</i> | Darrell Broking |

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26

- | | |
|---|--|
| 9:00 A.M. <i>Should Error Regarding the Five Acts of Worship Disrupt Fellowship Between Christians?</i> | Bruce Stulting |
| 10:00 A.M. <i>Fellowship Scriptures: 1 Cor. 5; Rom. 16:17 & Eph. 5:11</i> | Dennis Francis |
| 10:00 A.M.** <i>Fellowship in the Home (1)</i> | Martha Bentley |
| 11:00 A.M. <i>What Fellowship is and What Fellowship is Not</i> | Danny Douglas |
| 1:30 P.M. <i>How Does the Bible Teach Scripturally Broken Fellowship is to be Restored?</i> | Wayne Blake |
| 2:30 P.M. <i>Fellowship in Restoration History and a Study of Unity Movements in the Church</i> | Paul Vaughn |
| 3:30 P.M. OPEN FORUM: General Theme, Matters of Judgment | Moderators: Dub McClish & Dave Watson |
| 6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING | |
| 7:00 P.M. <i>Fellowship and Suffering</i> | Raymond Hagood |
| 8:00 P.M. <i>Church Discipline and Christian Fellowship</i> | Lynn Parker |

TUESDAY, February 27

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|--|--|
| 9:00 A.M. <i>In the Light of Rom. 15:4, What May be Learned About Fellowship From Deut. Seven?</i> | Terry York |
| 10:00 A.M. <i>Is the Ecumenical Movement the Way to Biblical Unity?</i> | Ben Justice |
| 10:00 A.M.** <i>Fellowship in the Home (2)</i> | Martha Bentley |
| 1:00 A.M. <i>The Autonomy of the Church and Fellowship</i> | Roger Jackson |
| 1:30 P.M. <i>Book Review: I Just Want to Be a Christian by Rubel Shelly</i> | Brad Green |
| 2:30 P.M. <i>Fellowship and Respect of Persons</i> | Taylor Hagood |
| 3:30 P.M. OPEN FORUM: General Theme, Matters of Judgment | Moderators: Dub McClish & Dave Watson |
| 6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING | |
| 7:00 P.M. <i>When With Feigned Words They Will Make Merchandise of You</i> | Terry Hightower |
| 8:00 P.M. <i>Do the Certain Associations of Brethren Imply Fellowship?</i> | Johnny Oxendine |

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

- | | |
|---|--|
| 9:00 A.M. <i>By What Authority Does One Church Withdraw Fellowship From a Sister Church?</i> | Michael Hatcher |
| 10:00 A.M. <i>Current Views of Fellowship in the Churches of Christ</i> | Lester Kamp |
| 11:00 A.M. <i>Book Review: Together Again by Rick Atchley and Bob Russell</i> | Geoff Litke |
| 1:30 P.M. <i>Fellowship Scriptures: John 7:20-21; Eph. 4:1-6; Mark 9:38-41</i> | Kenneth Chumbley |
| 2:30 P.M. <i>Book Review: Who Is My Brother? by F. LeGard Smith</i> | John West |
| 3:30 P.M. OPEN FORUM: General Theme, Matters of Judgment | Moderators: Dub McClish & Dave Watson |
| 6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING | |
| 7:00 P.M. <i>Should Organizational Error in the Church Disrupt Fellowship Between Christians?</i> | Kent Bailey |
| 8:00 P.M. <i>Should Error Regarding MDR Disrupt Fellowship Between Christians?</i> | Daniel Denham |

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(Continued from page 1)

would one be able to determine if he is a false teacher. If we are bound by the context/intent mindset, then words would have no meaning or usefulness. We may as well throw the Bible away, for it is hardly possible to ask Jesus, Paul, Peter, or any of the rest of those inspired men what the “intent” of their words was. This is little short of how the liberals have misapplied Matthew 18:15–17 for many years, demanding that, before one can expose a false teacher’s publicly-taught error, one must first go to him privately about it. Words do have meanings, and Dave Miller, a man with an earned PhD, who knows how to use words, knew what he was saying when he taught the error he taught on elder r/r and MDR. Speaking of intent, since he is giving different answers to different ones who ask him questions about his doctrine, it seems that his present intent is to deceive and dissemble. What brother Miller should do is simply repent of his errors. It doesn’t matter what one’s intent is when one teaches error. It is error nonetheless. In October 2005, the Highland elders applied the aforementioned reasoning to some printed material published in the August 2005 issue of CFTF. This issue included a transcription of Miller’s Brown Trail sermon of April 8, 1990, which we have reprinted in this statement (see item #1), in which he set forth and advocated the elder r/r program as it was to be implemented there. We had encouraged the Highland elders to read this sermon, and with their permission, we sent them a copy of it. After reading it, they claimed context and intent could not be determined by reading the words of Miller’s sermon alone. They asserted that one must talk to Miller personally and let him put his sermon into context and explain his intent before one can know the true meaning of what he was saying. By their “rule,” one would have to talk to the preacher every time he teaches a class, preaches a sermon, or writes an article in order to be sure one understands the context and intent of his lesson. Those who are compromising (for whatever reason) with those who now support GBN, Miller/AP, MSOP and such like are now making this very argument that will not hold up in light of the evidence and of God’s Word on the matter. Pressured by these compromisers who have rejected primary, objective evidence of Miller’s errors, many have made phone calls to brother Miller, seeking to learn his context and intent. In these phone conversations, brother Miller has given various explanations as to what he said and did and what occurred at Brown Trail and what he did when he came to Calhoun, GA, in 1999. Each time he seems to vary his story, depending on who is asking the questions. We have heard from brethren who once believed Miller was a false teacher, but now, after talking to Miller personally, have come away with a different opinion, in spite of the evidence. The brethren we have talked to, who have accepted Miller’s explanations, seem to come away scratching their heads and more confused but nonetheless compromised. They have accepted this context/intent doctrine, which basically is an attempt to “explain away” the evidence. These brethren tell us that if Miller would make a public statement regarding his intent for what he did at Brown Trail and Calhoun he could (in their opinion) clear up the accusations and controversy associated with him. But when asked if they counseled brother Miller to make such a public explanation, they all give the same answer: “Yes, we asked him to, but he refused.” WHY??

Now brethren, we must ask, where does the Bible say that we must know the intent of a false teacher before we can make righteous judgment about what he has taught or practiced? Remember Jesus said, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” (Matthew 7:15-20) not by their good intentions. What they are now asking us to do is to ignore the mountain of evidence and just call brother Miller personally to find out his intent. Sadly, this mindset seems to be abundant in our brotherhood today. It is interesting, however, that not all brethren conclude that brother Miller is innocent after talking with him privately. In fact, some come away more convinced than ever that he deserved to be identified as a false teacher and that we should have no fellowship with him until he repents. Brother Miller’s explanation of those who make such conclusions is that such brethren asked “misleading” questions or “misunderstood” or “misrepresented” him. This is precisely why we have sought and still seek more than a private, confidential audience with brother Miller. Private meetings with brother Miller have only created more confusion and division. For this reason we have insisted upon an open public forum so everyone could have access to what was said by both sides of this controversy. There is another mindset we would like to address. Brother Miller said as recently as June 20, 2006, in a phone conversation with Paul Middlebrooks, that Curtis Cates, Bobby Liddell and others had advised him to keep quiet. Assuming that these brethren advised Miller to do this, we ask again... WHY?? Does 1 Peter 3:15 mean anything to these brethren? Why does Miller choose to listen to the advice of brother Cates and Liddell, but not the advice of other brethren who are pleading with him to speak out? Why will Miller listen to those who say, “Be quiet,” and refuse to listen to those who say, “Please make a clear, precise public statement for your own sake and for that of brotherhood unity.” Why do they (i.e., Miller and Cates) remain silent while the church is being divided over this controversy? If brother Miller can set the record straight by explaining the special context of his teachings and his good intentions at Brown Trail and Calhoun, why does he refuse to do it? Brother Cates now insists that those who question brother Miller’s doctrine and practice call brother Miller and talk to him personally. On July 15, 2006, Curtis Cates, Keith Mosher, and others told an audience of about two hundred (Open Forum, Sunny Slope Lectures, Paducah, KY) that brother Miller had been “misrepresented.” They say he did not do what he is being accused of doing at Brown Trail. But we ask, “Where is the proof for their assertion?” Brethren, the evidence is clear and abundant that brother Miller taught error and violated God’s law on fellowship. Evidence cries out that Dave Miller has been Scripturally marked for teaching and practicing error on elder r/r and MDR/intent at Brown Trail. Evidence cries out that Miller violated God’s law on fellowship for bidding Godspeed to the apostate Calhoun, GA, Church in 1999. These same brethren (Cates, Mosher, et al.) encouraged everyone who questions brother Miller’s doctrinal soundness to call him and he would set the record straight. “Just call him,” they said, “He will talk to you!” These are the same men who once stood against and opposed false teachers. Brethren, the evidence is crying out (1 Samuel 15:14). Please consider the following quote from Curtis Cates:

Those who transgress the doctrine of Christ have not God (2 John 9–11). We can have no fellowship with unbeliev-

ers and apostates (Mat. 18:15–17; Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 6:14–18; Eph. 5:11; 2 The. 3:6; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; Tit. 3:10; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 18:1–5). False teachers are heretics; they must not be fellowshipped if they refuse to repudiate their false doctrine and return to the Truth (1994 Annual Denton Lectures, Studies in Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, p. 516). Another mind-set that has become a stumbling block for some is what they perceive to be the inconsistency of some who now oppose brother Miller. They justify their fellowship with brother Miller by claiming that certain brethren had no problem fellowshipping brother Miller prior to the controversy surrounding the Gospel Journal Board (July 2005), so they are not going to be concerned either. Brethren, our concerns with brother Miller began in 1999 when he came and bade Godspeed to the apostate Calhoun Church. We were not aware of the other issues surrounding Dave Miller and Brown Trail until 2001. We carefully followed the developments unfolding at Brown Trail and eventually determined that brother Miller was in error. We have warned brethren about brother Miller since 1999. It wasn't until brother Miller moved to Montgomery, AL, in 2002 that he became more of a concern in our area. One of our members talked to brother Frank Chesser about our concerns with brother Miller in 2003. Our preacher refused to appear on a lectureship with Dave Miller in 2003. We shared 37 pages of documentation setting forth brother Miller's errors with brother Cliff Goodwin in May 2004. We presented the same information to Barry Gilreath, Jr. (one of the Highland elders, overseers of GBN) in September 2004 when we heard that GBN was meeting with Dave Miller about his involvement with them. We gave the same information to brother B. J. Clarke in May 2005. Brethren who claim that no one had a problem with brother Miller prior to the Gospel Journal Board controversy are wrong. The "logic" these brethren are using is faulty, and it will lead one down the wrong path. If we should grant that some have been inconsistent in such matters, such does not justify one's continued fellowship with a false teacher once he learns of his error. Two "wrongs" don't make a "right." One wrong does not justify another wrong. The evidence is abundant. When one learns the truth, he had better follow it. There is no excuse for brethren to continue fellowship with Dave Miller with the massive evidence available to them. We should think very seriously about this type of mindset. We believe it would be good at this point to offer some background on the doctrines that were taught and practiced by brother Dave Miller for those who may not be familiar with them. The elder r/r procedure is one in which a congregation is polled to determine if the members are pleased with its elders. In this process, the elders relinquish their congregational oversight to a committee of non-elders to administer the procedure and count the "votes." If a currently-serving elder does not receive an arbitrarily selected percentage of approving ballots (e.g., 76%), he is not "reaffirmed/reconfirmed," and therefore may no longer serve, even though he may meet the Scriptural qualifications. The evidence shows that Dave Miller first taught and helped implement the elder r/r procedure at the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Bedford, TX, in 1990 and gave his consent to a repeat of the practice in 2002. The evidence further shows, while serving as Director of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School, he defended

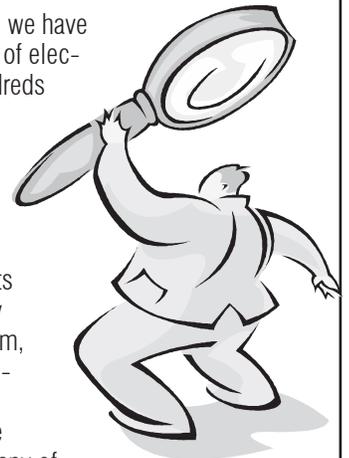
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—Dub and Lavonne McClish

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the marriage and divorce of Everett Chambers, one of his students (whom he later appointed as his Assistant Director). Chambers, a Jamaican, conspired with his naturalized American cousin to marry each other so that he might gain U.S. residency status. Having attained his goal, he divorced his cousin. Miller maintained (and maintains) that Chambers and his cousin were never actually married because there was no intent on their part actually to be married (i.e., their intent was merely to circumvent U.S. immigration laws and defraud the U.S. government). Furthermore, brother Miller violated God's law on fellowship (2 John 9-11) by bidding Godspeed to the marked apostate Calhoun, GA, Church in 1999 after being provided sufficient evidence beforehand of its apostasy. In light of the most recent phone conversations with Dave Miller, which have been made available to us and printed below for your consideration (see item #2 below), it is clear that he continues to believe the elder r/r procedure, as practiced at Brown Trail, is Scriptural, and he is quoted to have said he would repeat it if the situation came up again. Please consider one such conversation between Dave Miller and brother Paul Brantley, an elder of the Bellview Church, Pensacola, FL, on April 24, 2006. Miller has also made similar statements to others as recently as October, 2006, which will appear in Item #2 below.

1. The elder r/r program he promoted and they practiced at Brown Trail was not wrong or unauthorized;
2. He would promote and practice the procedure again if the need arose;
3. If a Scripturally qualified elder received less than 75% of the congregational vote, he would need to resign ;
4. If an elder who is obviously not Scripturally qualified received 75% or more of the congregational vote, he would be allowed to remain in the eldership.

Brother Miller also believes that "intent," as it relates to a civil marriage, determines whether or not the marriage is a Matthew 19:6, God-joined marriage. Please consider a quote from Dave Miller at Brown Trail on August 20, 2000:

If in fact marriage is defined in the Bible and in the dictionary as two people mutually agreeing to marry each other for the purpose of having a marriage—for the purpose of loving and adoring and all the things that are said in vows, but if they go through that ceremony in a counterfeit fashion where that's not their purpose—they are not doing that to get married—they both know they are not doing that to get married—they're doing that as a subversive ploy to cheat the government, to fool the government—then I do not believe they would be considered married Biblically or even from the dictionary perspective....

Merely going through an external service or ceremony does not mean that marriage has occurred. Brethren, because of the aforementioned mindsets, statements, and quotes, and after encouragement from good brethren that we attempt another meeting with brother Miller to set the record straight, we decided, for a third time, to attempt such a meeting. We asked brother David B. Smith (Northside preacher) if he would attempt to setup such a meeting on our behalf. We set forth the following conditions, which were to be agreed upon by both parties before we would meet: (1) We meet face to face, (2) we ask precise T/F questions (brother Miller would be allowed to explain any answer that he felt

needed an explanation), (3) we record the meeting, and (4) we distribute the audio recordings to the brotherhood. Brother Smith made several attempts, by phone, to contact brother Miller before finally reaching him on Tuesday, September 26, 2006. Brother Smith made a sincere plea with him to meet with us and answer our True or False questions. Brother Smith told him that such a meeting would be in his best interest and in the best interest of the brotherhood. However, brother Miller refused to meet with us once again. His refusal should put to rest the argument some are making that brother Miller is willing to meet with those who seek to set the record straight. Now, if such a meeting had been arranged with brother Miller, as indicated above, we were prepared to ask him some precise true or false questions (see true or false questions item #3 below). If he continued to hold to his beliefs regarding elder r/r, MDR/intent, and fellowshipping apostates, we were prepared to offer him some debate propositions dealing with those false doctrines (see proposed debate propositions in item #4 below). If brother Miller had accepted (or should yet accept) our challenge for a debate, at our invitation, brother Harrell Davidson has agreed to represent Northside in said debate. While we were hopeful a meeting would take place it now seems obvious that such will not be the case. After having made several unsuccessful attempts to meet with brother Miller, we have decided to release this document, "The Final Word," to demonstrate that we have done all within our power to help make wrongs right. We now put this in brother Miller's hands, as well as the hands of all who read it, in the interest of truth. We have reprinted below the following material for your consideration:

1. Transcription of Dave Miller's sermon, presented at Brown Trail Church of Christ on April 8, 1990.
2. Phone conversations and correspondence with Dave Miller that have been made public over the last few months.
3. T/F questions we planned to ask brother Miller.
4. The debate propositions we planned to give brother Miller should he affirm that (A) he believes what he taught at Brown Trail Church of Christ regarding elder r/r in April 1990 is Scriptural and that (B) the MDR/intent practice he endorsed and doctrine he taught at Brown Trail is Scriptural.
5. Our conclusions.

Item # 1: Dave Miller's Transcribed Sermon

Preached April 8, 1990, from the pulpit of the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Bedford, Texas "Appointment of New Elders"

A statement was made by our elders several months ago concerning their determination to give this congregation an opportunity to make adjustments in the leadership of this church in the future. Their discussions of this matter have persisted over the last few months. Plans were made several weeks ago more concretely and they asked me to present them with some information that would assist them in carrying out this objective. They then appointed a committee composed of the preacher of this congregation, that is Johnny Ramsey, Don Simpson, Gary Fallis and myself. Maxie Boren has an opportunity to have input on this committee, but is out of touch and out of town so much that his participation will probably be rather minimal. And so in formulating this committee, as well as a number of guide-

lines that were discussed by the committee, we submitted to the eldership for their approval. A system has been set in place by which current elders might be evaluated and additional elders might be added to the body of elders.

It is my task this morning to introduce you to this program as well as to address a particular Biblical matter that in my opinion needs to be addressed. Let's begin by asking ourselves this question: Since we are people of the book, and we believe that whatever we do in religion and life must be authorized and guided by the Word of God—what does the Bible say about the selection of elders. We are aware of the fact that in [sic.] 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and Acts chapter 20 and 1 Peter chapter 5 and other passages describe to us a function within the church, the body of Christ, known as “elders,” or “shepherds,” or “bishops,” or “pastors,” that this is to be a plurality, a group of men, never do we find in the New Testament one bishop, on[e] shepherd, one elder, ruling over a congregation, but there is [sic.] always two or more, a plurality, and that is very clearly taught in the scriptures. But how are these men to be appointed? We find the list of qualifications that they must meet in order to operate in this function, in this capacity. But by what means, by what process, by what procedure are they to be selected and placed into that function? The Bible is largely silent on this matter. However, the Bible has a great deal more to say about that matter than most perhaps [sic.] members of the church realize. And while the details, the specifics of such a procedure are not spelled out, some fundamental principles and guidelines are. And it is to those that I would like to direct you[r] attention.

Let's begin in first, rather in Titus chapter 1, the first chapter of Titus, where we find perhaps the most explicit allusion to the selection of elders. Contextually, Titus is a young evangelist, who among other things has been working among churches of Christ which were situated on the island of Crete. And as part of his responsibilities in preaching and teaching amid those churches was Paul's statement in Titus chapter 1:5, did I say verse six, verse 5. Paul says to Titus, “my own son after the common faith, grace mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior, for this cause I left thee in Crete. That thou should set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee.” Now, if that is all that we had in the New Testament concerning the appointing and selection of elders, we might get the idea that an inspired apostle was authorizing an evangelist, a preacher, to go into local congregations to look over the situation and make personal judgments about who should serve as elders, and therefore we would have Titus going in and saying, “OK, Bro. Jones, Bro. McGilcutty and Bro. Smith, you're going to the elders of this congregation.” There are members of the churches of Christ who have so interpreted this passage and thus have given rise to the doctrine of evangelistic authority. Most prominent among our black brethren [sic.], and they actually teach and practice the idea that the preacher is not under the elders—that he in fact, if anything, presides over the elders, and is to make judgments concerning their selection. I do not find this to be the teaching of this passage or any other passage. Turn with me now to Acts chapter 6, and we'll look at

evidence that indeed proves that point. The context of Acts chapter 6 is the selection of some of the leaders within a local church. Granted this is not a context in which elders are being selected, but again if we are people of the book, if we are going to be guided by New Testament principles, we must go to those passages that give us any sort of insight on a selection process, by which functions and capacities within the church might be fulfilled. And this is really the only passage in all of the Bible that gives us that information. Contextually, the church of Christ is located in the city of Jerusalem. Populating that congregation are Jews and Jews only. There have been no Gentile converts added to the church at this point in time. But within this group of Jewish Christians is a culturally diverse situation. That is, you have Jews, who are Aramaic, who are Hebrew Jews and their background is Hebrew—they speak Hebrew or Aramaic—a Semitic dialect. But there are some other Jews in this congregation who did not grow up under that sort of a Hebrew background, but rather grew up in the Roman empire and in particular areas that were heavily Hellenized. They are what's known in history as Hellenistic Jews—they have been cultured, “inculturated” in a Greek setting. They don't even speak Hebrew, in many cases. They speak Greek. But both groups have a strong Old Testament background.

Now here are these two culturally different groups of people, even though we would see them the same, they're Jews, and they are not getting along with each other. And they begin fussing toward on[e] another because some of the specific responsibilities that need to be taken care of in the church were being neglected—specifically the widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food and other needs, for these older women, members of the church. The apostles—this is a young church that hasn't had a chance to appoint elders yet—and so the apostles which established the church in Acts chapter 2 in this location are concerned about these disturbances that are arising. They need to give themselves continually and consistently and persistently to the preaching of the Word, to prayer, to advancing the church in terms of causing the church to grow in spreading the Gospel around the Empire and so it seems to me that what we have here is the very beginnings of what would ultimately be set completely in order with the writings of such letters as Timothy and Titus, although keep in mind that the contents of Timothy and Titus, though they appear in written form, laid down in the first century that information which was available and operative to Christians wherever inspired men spoke. But it seems to me that what we have here is essentially the designation of what we refer to as “deacons.” In fact the term, a form of the term, “deacon” occurs three times in these verses. But rather than argue whether that is who is being appointed, let's simply note that here is an inspired selection process given by the inspired apostles. And what is that process? Verse 3, “Brethren (that is you members of the church at Jerusalem), you are to look out from among yourselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.” Now isn't that clear? It is the people who do the looking out from among themselves. But they are to not simply look among themselves and say, “Well, I like brother So and So, he's a really good fellow. I think he's a nice man.”

No, you are to look out from among yourselves men who fit certain qualifications. In this case, we are given three qualifications for this group of men, and as I said, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and other passages give us a host of other qualifications, but there are the two fundamental Biblical New Testament guidelines for making selection of capacities within the church of Christ. The people are to look out from among themselves and they are to make those selections based upon inspired instructions. Now if that be the case brethren, the implications are enormous. If indeed this is intended to be the prototype — if this is intended to be the New Testament authority which we have for making selection of officials within the church, then it would be wrong for the preacher to make those selections and it also follows that it would be inappropriate for officials to make those selections where the eldership becomes sort of a self perpetuating board and they add to their number men who they think ought to be added. This passage clearly teaches that it is the congregation, the members, who are to be involved in this process.

Someone says then that you are saying then that elders and leaders are to be selected are to be selected by majority vote. Well, that is not exactly what I am saying, but I am saying that this passage very clearly teaches that the membership at large is to make that decision. I don't think this means though that the church is a democracy, no, because God has already stated the guidelines, the qualifications upon which men can be selected. The fact that he expects members of the church to study the Word of God to know these qualifications, and then to also know the men whom they are selecting, and you have to do both, you've got to know what the Bible teaches is a qualified elder, and you've got to know men well enough to know whether they fit that. It seems to me that does not make it majority vote, so to speak. It is not a popularity contest, someone has said—and I agree with that completely, it is not. We should not select men based upon whom [sic.] we really like and [sic.] we think are popular with other people. We had better do it based on what the New Testament teaches is a qualified man.

Now, by the way, do you see the term that is translated “appoint” in the King James Version in Acts 6:3? Here the apostles is [sic.] saying, “You look out from among yourselves men who meet these qualifications.” Once you have done that, we will appoint them. Now notice that. The apostles don't do the selection, the membership does. But the apostles then formally appoint— or install them. Do you know that the word translated “appoint” in verse 3 is the same word that is translated in Acts in Titus chapter 1 verse 5, “ordain.” Now think about that. By the way the American Standard came along and translated Titus 1:5 “appoint,” doing a couple of things—they recognized that it is the same word that occurs here in Acts 6:3. Number 2, they were trying to soften the King James translators selection of the term “ordain,” which sure enough made it sound like the evangelist made the decision. But we see the same word used in Acts 6:3 where the apostles did not make the decision, they just formally installed them into office. But the members selected them and I suggest to you that is how Titus 1:5 ought to be interpreted, not vice versa. Paul was telling Titus to go among the Grecian churches and formally install or appoint men whom

the membership has looked out from among them. That is the only way to make those two passages harmonize. I would also point out to you that in Acts chapter 14, verse 23, a different term for “appoint” is used. It is a very different Greek term, where we are told that a couple of the apostles went around and ordained elders in every city. But again there is no need for us to assume that they went in and made those selections, although, I for one would not question an inspired apostle's ability to select qualified men. But you see that same term used in Acts chapter 14, verse 23 is used over in 2 Corinthians 8, verse 19, to describe what the membership did—in selecting one individual to carry a contribution. So what I am suggesting to you brethren, based upon these passages, is members of the church of the local congregation, are to look ye out—that they are to consult among themselves and reach an agreement concerning who is qualified to be an elder, and whom [sic.] they perceive to be a leader, and then those men are to be formally appointed or installed into that function. Titus merely inaugurated the selection process in each Cretan city, in each congregation, as the members looked out from among themselves on the bases of these qualifications that Paul had given to Titus, and then appointments were formally confirmed by Titus. If we follow that process, we can be assured, as Paul told the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, the Holy Spirit has made those overseers—but only if we follow the instructions of the Holy Spirit as given in Scripture.

We [sic.], that certainly seems to cover the question of how elders ought to be selected, but what about this idea of reevaluating current elders or reconfirming—and there are some brethren that are really up in arms it seems to me and say that is what the liberals are doing. Well, they may be, but I am unconcerned about that in terms of whether or not it is right or wrong—but I am concerned about what the Bible teaches. Notice number 1, that if the members select elders to begin with based on Acts 6:3, and since the complexion of a congregation in terms of its membership can change over a period of time, over a period of years, an eldership may conceivably no longer consist of the same individuals that the membership would look out from among themselves and appoint. So you see the implication is, it is false to say, “once an elder, always an elder.” That is as false as to say, “once saved, always saved”—that doesn't follow. Not only may a man no longer meet the qualifications, but conceivably a man could meet the qualifications, brethren, and yet not be perceived by that flock as a shepherd. Not be a man to whom they will submit themselves [sic.]. Shepherds cannot lead where sheep will not follow. So a man could be technically qualified to be an elder, and yet if the membership where he attends does not perceive him a leader in whom they respect and trust [sic.], he cannot shepherd effectively. How unwise for me as a preacher to say that I am qualified to be a preacher now you've got to keep me. When 20 or 30 percent of the congregation thinks I am a dumpy preacher. I promise you I'd leave. I wouldn't lock my feet into the dirt and say, “Well I'm qualified, so they'd better accept me.” What an attitude! That attitude alone disqualifies a man. What follows then that [sic.] one of the qualifications of a shepherd is that the membership perceives him to be such, and is

willing to submit, and to follow, to respect, and to trust.

Now there is one other passage that I think we need to have our attention called to and that's in 1 Timothy chapter 5. In addition then to Acts chapter 6 verse 3 concerning the selection of elders, we have this statement in 1 Timothy chapter 5, and I don't think I've ever seen it followed in any church with which I've ever been affiliated. Here we have a context beginning in verse 17 where elders are already in position in the local church, they are local bishops. He talks about how they are to be even paid, especially those who are not only shepherding the congregation spiritually, but also conducting themselves as evangelists, as preachers. He says those individual are worthy of double honor, which is a euphemism in the New Testament for receiving remuneration. But he also says—and by the way verse 18 is an interesting passage, hardly a point that we ought to stop and make, but there are two allusions, verse 18, to previous scriptures. The allusion of the ox treading out the corn is from Deuteronomy 25, which was a principle even under the Old Law about how you ought to treat your animals. But notice the scripture—notice this—verse 18, for the scripture sayeth and he quoted two scriptures—one from Deuteronomy 25 and the next one “the laborer is worthy of his reward.” I've not been able to find that in the Old Testament. But it is Luke 10:17, a statement that Jesus made. Here we find a New Testament epistle referring back(sic.) to another New Testament epistle as scripture, well that's an interesting side point, that has implications for our understanding of scripture. Notice verses 19 and 20, “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses, them (meaning contextually here the elders) that sin rebuke before all that others also may fear.” The principle here is that even though a man is in a position of being an elder in the church, he can disqualify himself, or make mistakes that he shouldn't make. It therefore follows, that a man can be removed from the office of an elder. In fact, there we have the process of doing so. There has to be also two or three witnesses, a principle well grounded in the Old Testament, in God's approach to human relationships, but theoretically if charges could be sustained against an elder being disqualified, he could be removed. That's all we're talking about. We may use the term “evaluation of elders,” we may use the term “reconfirmation.” If those terms concern you, then call it something else, but the principle is that if the membership finds fault with an elder, the membership who put the elder in the first place can remove them [sic.]. And certainly, all that ought to be based upon scriptural teaching, that is the man ought to be found to be faulty scripturally—and spiritually, but I would still maintain that a man could theoretically be qualified and yet have lost his standing with enough of the members that he ought to voluntarily remove himself. Now how do you determine that unless you ask the members how they perceive that man as an elder of the church? No one should be threatened by the prospect of being evaluated, not a one of us.. The preacher shouldn't be, the School of Preaching instructors, the elders, the deacons and all of us as members, ought to have in our mindset, in our attitude, an evaluation mentality, because my friends, the Lord is going to evaluate us one day—and it may be sooner than we think. And our attitude ought to be that we want to serve the

Lord, and serve the flock, and continue to have the approval and respect of the flock, of one another. And if I, or anyone else in a leadership sort of capacity, no longer sustain the respect from a sizeable portion of the flock for whatever reason, the proper attitude would be to remove oneself from that position. A position that depends upon credibility depends upon it! [sic.] And by the way, Johnny [Ramsey] recently told me a Christian doesn't have to be elder to go to heaven.

You know, this is a very sticky situation, and in previous congregations where I've been, this thing has been done. It's not easy. It can be very unpleasant, very difficult, because we are dealing in area of ego, emotions, feelings. And therefore it's going to require every single one of us being gentle, and kind, and loving; firm, yes, truthful, yes, scripturally [sic.], absolutely. But all of us must be very careful that we are able to see things clearly through the eyeglasses of scripture, and not through personal feelings, concerns, emotions. There's not a person in this auditorium, that I know personally, that I do not think the world of and appreciate as a member of the church, but that doesn't mean that I think everyone in here should be an elder. If I do not think you should be an elder of church, does that mean I don't love you and think the world of you as a Christian and as a human being? Of course not! I don't think I should be an elder. I don't think I'm scripturally qualified to be. And if I find out that you agree with that assessment, should I somehow think that you don't like me like you should? Of course not! This is such serious business that we allow, we must not allow our personal egos and emotions to enter in. We must not! We dare not! There's too much at stake here in light of eternity. Very quickly, here is the process outlined and this procedure has been written out in steps and you are certainly welcome to take a look at this. We can post it in the secretary's office for anyone that has any questions. Beginning next Sunday morning, Johnny will be presenting two sermons, one next Sunday morning and one the following Sunday morning—so that's April 15 and 22—on the qualifications and responsibilities of elders, and I know that he will do a good job. That's a short time to cover a lot of ground that he's a Master at capsuling and summarizing what the Bible says [sic.]. I urge you to be present for those lessons and to listen carefully. Then on April 22nd, the 2nd Sunday of these sermons, forms will be distributed to the membership. There will be two types of forms. One of these forms will give you an opportunity to simply state whether or not you think any of the five men who are now serving in the eldership should or should not continue to serve. You won't be asked to sign that form, in fact, our five current elders have made that point, that this is strictly your opportunity without any pressure from anywhere or anyone to state your feelings about the current eldership in light of what the Bible teaches.

The second form will be a form that is designed to identify the scriptural responsibilities or specific qualifications of elders. You will be asked to fill out one form for each man whose name you wish to submit as a potential elder for the church here. You have one week to turn in all of those forms, and we're encouraging every member to do that, not like one form per couple, but each individual member, of responsible age, who wishes to do so. No one is required to do this. It may well be that your affiliation

with the church and with these men is such that you feel that you do not really know about them and what's going on. You do not need to feel compelled to comment. Once those forms are turned in, which will be by April 29, the committee of preachers, whom the elders have asked to monitor this process, will sit down and go through these. And I want to stress to you that in light of Acts 6:3 and everything else that we've said, these preachers are not going to be making these decision for you. But there are some fundamental guidelines that will be followed. Present elders would need to receive a sizeable percentage of support from this congregation. As I suggested to you that as a preacher, if we polled the congregation and found out that 25% of the church think I stink as a preacher and wishes that I would leave—I would probably leave. Because for me to work effectively with you, you have got to want me to be here. And so that only follows.

And then, of course, the other forms there would need to be again a sizeable percentage of people who turn in say one man's name, the submission of one's man name, would surely show up several times among this membership [sic.] if that individual is indeed perceived to be eldership material. So that process in and of itself will weed some individuals out. And then of course, it would be the responsibility of the committee to interview and to speak with and talk with those individuals who are being considered to be elders in the future. And so our committee interviews will sit down with these men. There's nothing secretive about this, or nothing ominous. We'll sit down with the Bible and with that man and discuss his spiritual condition in light of those qualifications. Ultimately, out of that process then will come names who will be presented to the congregation on May 13th is the way that's set up at this time. And on that date then, when those names are presented to the congregation, a two-week period will be allowed for the submission of scriptural objections to the committee, which will be held in strictest confidence by that committee. We see no reason to render strife among members—problems that one member may have with another member. We want to try to handle this tastefully and in a Christian way and yet to face squarely the issues that are raised by any potential objections that may come in.

Then, theoretically, once those can be sorted out, on May 27th, the last Sunday of the month of May, we will be able to formally appoint, ordain those men who will serve as elders of this congregation. Now that may or may not include the five present ones. That's up to you. That may, or may not include, additional ones. That's up to you. Let me stress however, brethren, that between now and then, you have some serious responsibilities and quite frankly, some heavy burdens. May you not take this lightly. This isn't like running down and voting for Clayton Williams. This is serious! You know he or someone else may mess up Texas but God forbid that we mess up the church. This has eternal consequences. And I have always been convinced, ever since I began studying the subject of elders, that it would be terrible for a person to just sit down and in five minutes say, "Well, I think brother So and So is a good fellow," and write his name down and turn it in. I think that is terrible! What we ought to do is take 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and

sit down and study for, I would be so bold as to say, hours, applying that teaching to the individual that I am thinking about, and making certain that I can honestly say, "Yes" But we tend to pull out one or two things and say that he really does that well, so that's it! And he may fit 90% of these tremendously and yet be glaringly deficient in another or two. We've got to stand before God and face these spiritual decisions with all of their consequences.

And I'll tell you another thing we'd better do, rather than thinking this all depends on us—and that's what we do, we think this all depends on us. We'd better do an awful lot of praying between now and then. I mean we'd better pray, pray, pray that God's will will be done in this undertaking. Not our will, not our desires, not our perceptions, but I think it ought to be that we'd better pray, deeply and fervently, that God's will will be done. We need to be sober, serious, objective, and that's hard to do, isn't it, because we're dealing with people that we love. But we've got to be objective, and honestly allow scripture to mold our perceptions of each individual that we might consider, not our past experiences necessarily, unless those specifically are germane to what the Bible says. Can we honestly and genuinely say scripture is what formulates our perceptions with an individual. That's what we've got to do, and that means we need to listen closely to the two sermons that Johnny preaches, we need to do study on our own if we have not done that in recent months or years on what the Bible says, and we've got to be honest in facing up to the teaching of those passages. If you are in our audience this morning, especially if you're a visitor, we in some sense want to apologize for not having a more evangelistic message that is designed to bring you into confrontation of your own spiritual condition. On the other hand, brethren our children—and we ourselves—need this kind of fundamental plain talk about how the church is functioning among us. We are not to shy away from that. We ought to rejoice that as a body of God's people we are privileged to take the Word of God and to honestly face ourselves. As we said in the beginning, we will do that just as soon as the Lord returns. He wants us to do it now, and to make prayerful, careful decisions. But if you are in our audience this morning and you need to respond to the Gospel invitation to become a Christian, we would love to take a few moments and discuss that with you. If you'll come forward and make your desire known, we'll take that time to do that. If you are a member of the Lord's church and you need at this time in this assembly to come forward and publicly acknowledge sin in your life. Here is a group of people, whom I have found in the two or so years that I've been here to be people who relish the opportunity to express love and concern and appreciation for one another, as together we try to alter the blunders that we've made and grow closer to God in His will. And so, what a place to re-dedicate one's life to the Lord, to make confession of wrong. There is no other place on the face of the earth that would be a better environment for doing that. Not the counselor's couch, but before other Christians, the body that is striving to work together. Do you need to come. If you do, please do that as we stand and sing.

Item # 2: Reports on recent phone

conversations/correspondence with Dave Miller

Those who support brother Dave Miller, as we have already mentioned, have said much about the need to call him and get his explanation of what happened at Brown Trail and Calhoun before we make judgment against him. While we are not opposed to anyone who wishes to speak to brother Miller privately, we do not believe this will solve the controversy surrounding him. The evidence is clear as to what brother Miller did that has brought about so much conflict and division. The reports of phone conversations, printed below, bears this out. Brother Miller and his supporters need to sit down in a public forum and discuss the issues so all can see and hear the matter first-hand. Please note the material below, which has been made public for the sake of truth, and see whether or not he has (1) been willing to meet with everyone who desired such or (2) cleared up any charges made against him to those to whom he did give an audience. Miller's silence at this point is in contempt of 1 Peter 3:15. Truth should never be silent when souls are stake.

Northside elders' first two attempts to meet with Miller:

We decided, in September 2005 to meet with brother Miller to question him about some of his doctrinal positions and to discuss the controversy and confusion they were causing. We asked brother Wesley Simons (a "neutral" party, since brethren Barry Gilreath, Sr., and Jim Dearman, representatives of GBN, had told Miller that Wesley Simons "could be trusted") to arrange our meeting with brother Miller. We wanted to ask him some very specific True or False questions regarding elder r/r and MDR/intent and about his endorsement of the apostate Calhoun, GA, Church of Christ in 1999. We requested that our conversations be recorded so no one could misrepresent what brother Miller said to us or what we said to him. Brother Simons graciously agreed to do as we requested. He made two attempts to arrange such a meeting, but brother Miller refused both times.

Terry Hightower's attempt to communicate with Miller:

Some brethren have conversed with Miller over the past several months, either personally or over the phone, and various ones have come away with various answers to the same questions. Some others have written brother Miller letters and/or sent him e-mail inquiries to which he has refused to respond (e.g., we have a copy of a very congenial e-mail inquiry brother Terry Hightower wrote to brother Miller on February 15, 2006, which he has not even acknowledged receiving, much less answered).

Chad Dollahite's first phone visit with Miller:

Brother Miller has told various ones different accounts of his trip to Calhoun in 1999. Apparently, his story about his meeting with the apostate Calhoun Congregation varies, depending on the person(s) with whom he is talking. For example (as earlier noted), in September 2005, brother Dollahite (now on the GBN staff) called and talked to Miller about his 1999 visit to and endorsement of the Calhoun Congregation. Brother Dollahite said that brother Miller indicated that, after visiting with the elders and preacher of the Calhoun Church, he decided that the ones who left (i.e., those who constitute

the core of the Northside Congregation) were the ones in error. This version is quite different from the original version brother Miller told the Northside brethren in 1999, and he has even told other versions to other brethren.

Paul Brantley's second phone visit with Miller:

Brother Paul Brantley (as earlier indicated, an elder of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL) called and asked brother Miller some questions in August 2005. Brother Michael Hatcher, Bellview preacher, has told us that brother Brantley called brother Miller again on April 24, 2006, at which time brother Miller told him the following:

1. The elder r/r program he promoted and they practiced at Brown Trail was not wrong or unauthorized;
2. He would promote and practice the procedure again if the need arose;
3. If a Scripturally qualified elder received less than 75% of the congregational vote, he would need to resign;
4. If an elder who is obviously not Scripturally qualified received 75% or more of the congregational vote, he would be allowed to remain in the eldership;
5. He (i.e., Miller) does not recall telling anyone that he said the elder r/r procedure at Brown Trail was a "mistake" (although brother Keith Mosher has widely reported Miller said as much to him, and various others have repeated same);
6. He (i.e., Miller) is tired of receiving such calls and dealing with such questions ;
7. He (i.e., Miller) has said all he is going to say on the subject, and he will issue no further statements.

Brother Miller went on to "scold" brother Brantley, asking if he had a flock to oversee. Since he does, Miller told brother Brantley he should quit bothering him and take care of his own flock. Basically, Miller told him to mind his own business. The implications of Miller's remarks to brother Brantley are that Miller knows of nothing he has taught or done for which he should repent. Readers can verify all of this with brother Brantley should they be so inclined.

Chad Dollahite's second phone visit with Miller:

Below is an excerpt from a letter brother Dollahite wrote to us after his second phone conversation with Dave Miller:

I would also like to address the answers to questions put to Dave Miller by Paul Brantley, as mentioned in your most recent statement. Your statement reads as follows: Brother Paul Brantley (an elder of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL) called and asked brother Miller some questions in August 2005. Brother Michael Hatcher, Bellview preacher, has told us that brother Brantley called brother Miller again on April 24, 2006, at which time brother Miller told him the following:

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5. He (i.e., Miller) does not recall telling anyone that he said the elder r/r procedure at Brown Trail was a “mistake” (although brother Keith Mosher has widely reported Miller said as much to him, and various others have repeated same);
 6. He (i.e., Miller) is tired of receiving such calls and dealing with such questions;
 7. He (i.e., Miller) has said all he is going to say on the subject, and he will issue no further statements.

I spoke to Dave Miller on June 1, 2006 (via telephone), and he told me that the answers to (1) and (2) are correct, though they were qualified answers. Brother Miller categorically denied that he answered (3) and (4) as quoted. He stated that (5) is correct, though he was simply stating the fact that he cannot recall such. The answers to (6) and (7) are also correct, as brother Miller said he simply is weary from dealing with these questions and their taking time away from other duties in his work. He also added that the whole tone of that conversation, from start to finish, was rather confrontational, and each question was very leading. I do not believe you brethren would want to misquote anyone, and I am not going to get into an argument over which one of these men is twisting the truth, but I am just letting you know that I contacted Dave Miller directly, and this is what he told me.

Paul Middlebrooks’ phone visit with Miller:

This morning (6/20/06) Paul Methvin called me and said that he had just gotten off the phone with Dave Miller. Methvin said Dave told him that he does not support MDR as said by certain brethren. Methvin stated that Dave told him as well he does not support Elder Reaffirmation. Methvin told me I was more than welcome to call Dave that he was sitting there by the phone and gave me the number. When I called Dave (6/20/06) I told him who I was and why I was calling. I also told Dave that I was writing down what he was going to say to me and that it would be posted. On each one of these points I have listed below, I had Dave to repeat to me several times to make sure I would not misrepresent what he was saying. He reconfirmed each one. So I called Dave Miller and this is how the conversation went:

1. Dave said that he would have a problem with the Tahoe family encampment as we do. (I’m sure Methvin didn’t hear that).
2. Dave said he believes the only reason someone could get divorced is save for fornication [sic.].
3. Dave said he does not believe that a congregation has any right to remove a qualified elder from an eldership.
4. Dave said he quickly skimmed through the packet on the Calhoun Church and in his judgment did not find a reason not to go. Dave said when he got to Calhoun and talked to them about it (and from what he seen while he was at Calhoun), he did not see a liberal congregation.
5. Dave said that Paul Brantley from Pensacola misrepresented what he said.
6. Dave said that Dub McClish, David Brown, and Michael Hatcher have never contacted him.

7. Dave said at the Denton lectures Dub McClish had investigated him and fellowshiped him.
8. Dave said at East Hill, in Pulaski, TN, David Brown and Michael Hatcher was [sic.] on that lectureship with him and nothing was said.
9. I asked Dave if he would write up a new statement to clear everything up and to remove this horrible stumbling block in the brotherhood. Dave said that he has been advised by “Curtis Cates,” “Bobby Liddell,” and other wise brethren that he trusted not to do that. So he is not going to.
10. I asked Dave if he would be willing to come to Northside and have a meeting to clear all of this up, and he said NO, that he probably would not have time.

Brethren I pleaded with him and said “please” several times in asking him to step forward and do something. He said he had gone as far with it as he was going to go. I thought you good Brethren should know how the phone conversation went and now you know what I know.

Johnny Burkhart’s phone visit with Miller:

I spoke with Dave Miller yesterday morning (8/01/06). I didn’t accomplish anything, but I guess I am like George McMichael on the old Real McCoy show, “I had my say.” I mentioned to him that in ‘97 the folks in Bellview had “marked” or withdrawn from him and he told me I was the first to tell him that. He doesn’t seem to view this matter (elder r/r) as a “big deal.” He mentioned his book, *Piloting the Strait*, and I pointed out that this matter was going to be a greater problem in the brotherhood than the “Change Movement.” Also I thought it was ironic he wrote that book because what Rubel Shelly is to the “Change Movement” he (Dave) is to this issue. He thinks this matter will go away because only a handful of “radicals” are concerned. Moreover he told me there are 1.3 million members of the church and only 10,000 probably know about this. I told him that really didn’t matter because “Truth is not based upon who can line up the most folks.” Some folks make decisions based upon friendships, money, or politics. Others base their decisions and lives upon “Truth,” and there were those who are willing to die for “Truth” and ultimately Truth would win the day. I emphasized that this matter is not going to go away (his opinions of and those of MSOP notwithstanding). I also asked if he had heard that Garland Elkins stated he would not be on a lectureship with him (I told him I had heard this but I was not for sure whether it was accurate). He said he had not heard that. I told him that if that was the case then that, from my perspective, was a step in the right direction. Basically he took the same approach as those at MSOP took (talked in circles and changed the subject when you tried to pin them down). In my opinion, a good dose of humility would go along way in solving this matter, but I seriously doubt if he, MSOP, or GBN have ever or will ever consider that.

Wayne Blake’s phone visit with Miller:

I talked to Dave Miller Monday October 16, 2006 at approximately 4:15 p.m. C.S.T. He was really not in a talkative mood, and I guess I am not high enough on the chain to be able to just call him. He told me that he would not need to

answer any questions because his letter he sent out [9/23/05] was all he needed to say. I asked him if this was a letter of declaration or repentance (as some have said). He said it was a letter of explanation and not repentance. He feels he has nothing of which to repent. To him, this whole matter is “making a mountain out of a mole hill.” He feels that a lot of people have been spreading fabrications (his word, he never said the word, “lies”). He feels that if he allowed everyone to keep calling him he would never get his work done. I asked him about the 75% and he basically pinned that on the elders. He was just the one who did the “leg work.” When asked if he had a conversation with Terry Hightower in the 90’s he stated he didn’t have a discussion about this [elder r/r], just remembered Terry mentioning it to him. He feels he has nothing to repent of, brethren. A “group” is spreading fabrications and he doesn’t understand why they are doing such. The call only lasted about 8 minutes because he felt the letter spoke for itself. P.S. This info can be shared if you want. I have no problem with getting this information out. It’s sad, but its how he prefers to do things.

Conclusion

This compilation of contacts and attempted contacts with Dave Miller does not include the many letters written in 1999 and 2006 by members of the Northside church of Christ relating to his appearance at and endorsement of the apostate Calhoun, GA, church, which he never answered.

Now, in light of the foregoing facts, we are made to wonder what certain brethren who continue to insist you talk to brother Miller personally hope to accomplish. A private meeting at this point would serve no purpose for the cause of truth or unity. The phone conversations above reveals a Dave Miller who is in a “denial” mode, who keeps changing his story, and whose pride in these matters has become his stumbling block.

Item# 3

TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS FOR DAVE MILLER QUESTIONS ON MDRAS THEY RELATE TO INTENT:

1. True or False: If a man and woman enter into a marriage by complying with the appropriate civil law, but one or both of them do not intend to be married, no Matthew 19:6 God-joined marriage took place.
2. True or False: Everett Chambers admitted he never intended to enter into his marriage with his cousin so as to actually be married.
3. True or False: Everett Chambers had a Matthew 19:6 God-joined marriage to his cousin from July 2, 1993 through February 17, 1997.
4. True or False: If two eligible people marry for the sole purpose of obtaining citizenship for one of them, they would not be joined in a Matthew 19:6 marriage.
5. True or False: God does not recognize a marriage to have occurred if at least one party does not intend to be married.
6. True or False: If one party in a marriage makes vows with mental reservations, the result is a marriage God does not recognized.
7. True or False: Someone can make marriage vows (i.e., comply with civil law) without intending to keep

said vows and God will not hold him/her accountable for it.

8. True or False: If two eligible people marry for the sole purpose of cheating the government, but later fall in love and decide they want to stay together, they would need to do nothing further in order to be married to each other.
9. True or False: If two eligible people marry for the sole purpose of cheating the government, but later fall in love and decide they want to stay together, they would need to divorce and remarry.
10. True or False: God does not recognize a marriage to have occurred if at least one party does not intend to enter into a marriage.
11. True or False: When two business men enter into a contract to do business with each other, no contract actually exists if one of them did not intend to enter into the contract.
12. True or False: The “intent” doctrine regarding marriage, as practiced by Everett Chambers and defended by me, David Miller, is parallel to the Roman Catholic doctrine of “mental reservation.”

QUESTIONS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THEY RELATE TO MAC DEAVER:

13. True or False: I, Dave Miller, am in fellowship with the Pearl Street Church of Christ in Denton, TX.
14. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe Mac Deaver’s teaching, as it relates to the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, is Scriptural.
15. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe Mac Deaver’s teaching, as it relates to modern-day Holy Spirit baptism, is Scriptural.
16. True or False: I, Dave Miller, am in fellowship with Mac Deaver.

QUESTIONS ON FELLOWSHIP AS THEY RELATE TO THE LIBERAL/APOSTATE CALHOUN CHURCH:

17. True or False: Fellowship is a Biblical doctrine bound by the laws of God.
18. True or False: Giving and Receiving of financial support, for an authorized work, constitutes Biblical

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fellowship and is therefore governed by the law of God.

19. True or False: Participation with a KNOWN apostate church is a violation of God's law on fellowship.
20. True or False: Endorsing a KNOWN apostate church, her elders and preacher, is a violation of God's law on fellowship.
21. True or False: Endorsing a KNOWN apostate church, her elders and preacher, is not a violation of God's law on fellowship, if said endorsement was not intended as an endorsement. (If true, please supply the passage(s) _____).
22. True or False: It is Scriptural to withdraw from an entire congregation if and when said congregation clearly (with documentation) apostatizes from the truth.
23. True or False: It is Scriptural to withdraw fellowship from the elders of a congregation ONLY, while continuing to be in fellowship with the members and preacher of said congregation.
24. True or False: Brethren who go ahead and extend fellowship to an apostate congregation (by attending and endorsing it), in spite of being provided with documentation/evidence of said apostasy, violate God's law on fellowship and thereby commit sin.
25. True or False: In 1999 I, Dave Miller, received an "Open Letter" (twenty eight pages) from the brethren of the Northside Church documenting the error of the apostate Calhoun Church of Christ prior to my visit with the Calhoun Congregation.
26. True or False: I, Dave Miller, read the "Open Letter" prior to visiting the apostate Calhoun church.
27. True or False: I, Dave Miller, received audio tapes of Jerry Dyer's (a false teacher) Conflict Resolution Seminar conducted at the apostate Calhoun church in February 1999.
28. True or False: I, Dave Miller, listened to the audio tapes of Jerry Dyer before going to the apostate Calhoun church.
29. True or False: Based on said documentation I, Dave Miller, was able to determine the unsoundness of the Calhoun church before attending said church.
30. True or False: I, Dave Miller, violated God's law on fellowship by bidding Godspeed to the marked apostate Calhoun Church of Christ.

QUESTIONS ON ELDER R/R RELATING TO BROWN TRAIL IN 1990:

31. True or False: The Brown Trail Church of Christ elders charged an "Elder Selection Screening Committee" (hereafter, the committee) of Brown Trail members with implementing, regulating, and monitoring the elder reevaluation/reconfirmation (hereafter, elder r/r) procedure at Brown Trail Church of Christ, April 8–May 27, 1990.
32. True or False: Said committee, therefore, stood between the existing Brown Trail elders and the congregation during the elder r/r procedure.
33. True or False: Said committee therefore rendered the existing Brown Trail elders as only "figure heads

without authority" elders during the reevaluation process.

34. True or False: The Brown Trail elders were therefore in submission to the findings of and were accountable to said committee, which placed the committee in authority over the existing Brown Trail elders during the elder r/r process.
35. True or False: It is possible for an elder who is presently serving and who has never resigned to be "re-appointed."
36. True or False: The elder r/r process, as enacted at Brown Trail, prevented existing elders (who are to oversee all of the members and all of the work [Acts 20:28]) from having any voice in who would serve as the Brown Trail elders after the elder r/r procedure.
37. True or False: The Scriptures authorize a man or a committee of men to exercise authority over duly appointed elders in a congregation.
38. True or False: The Scriptures authorize duly appointed elders to relinquish their authority over a congregation to a man or a committee of men.
39. True or False: A congregation is obligated to submit to its elders, even if said elders implement an act of worship, a work, or a plan involving congregational organization that is unauthorized by Scripture.
40. True or False: When elders implement that which is unauthorized, members who participate in the error are absolved of any guilt by saying, "It was the elders' idea, not mine."
41. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe that the elder r/r program, as carried out at Brown Trail in 1990, is authorized by Scripture.
42. True or False: I, Dave Miller, can produce the Scripture(s) which authorize the Brown Trail elder r/r program.
43. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe the Brown Trail elder r/r program was merely an expedient means of elder selection/appointment/dismissal.
44. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe that there can be no such thing as an "expedient" means of implementing an unauthorized procedure or work.
45. True or False: I, Dave Miller, served on the "Elder Selection Screening Committee," which planned and implemented the Brown Trail Church of Christ elder r/r procedure, April–May 27, 1990.
46. True or False: I, Dave Miller, helped draft and approved the wording of the "Biblical Rationale" statement issued in preparation for the Brown Trail Church of Christ elder r/r.
47. True or False: Although the other committee members and the Brown Trail elders approved it, I, Dave Miller, was the principal architect of the Brown Trail elder r/r plan of 1990. ("...And they [BT elders] asked me to present them with some information that would assist them in carrying out this objective" [Miller sermon, April 8, 1990]).
48. True or False: If I, Dave Miller, were in another situation similar to the one at Brown Trail in 1990, I would not hesitate to repeat the elder r/r program.
49. True or False: I, Dave Miller, would recommend that

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- other congregations employ the Brown Trail elder r/r program under circumstances similar to those at Brown Trail in 1990.
50. True or False: I, Dave Miller, have recommended to other congregations that they employ the elder r/r program implemented by Brown Trail in 1990.
51. True or False: I, Dave Miller, am aware that the elder r/r program among churches of Christ originated in extremely liberal congregations and continues to be identified almost exclusively with them, except for Brown Trail.
53. True or False: I, Dave Miller, gathered material on the elder r/r programs from liberal congregations in the process of formulating the program which I presented to the Brown Trail elders and to the remainder of the committee.
54. True or False: I, Dave Miller, do not remember ever telling anyone (including Keith Mosher) that "I made a mistake" in advocating the elder r/r program at Brown Trail.
55. True or False: I, Dave Miller, stated in my sermon at Brown Trail on April 8, 1990: "Conceivably a man could meet the qualifications, brethren, and yet not be perceived by that flock as a shepherd, not be a man to whom they will submit themselves."
56. True or False: To be perceived...as a shepherd is a Scriptural qualification of an elder (If "True," please supply the passage(s) _____).
57. True or False: I, Dave Miller, stated in my sermon at Brown Trail on April 8, 1990: "So a man could be technically qualified to be an elder, and yet if the membership where he attends does not perceive him a leader in [sic.] whom they respect and trust, he cannot shepherd effectively."
58. True or False: The stipulation "does not perceive him as a leader," is a negative Scriptural qualification of an elder, as is "no striker," and "not given to much wine." (If true, please supply the passage(s) _____).
59. True or False: I, Dave Miller, stated in my April 8, 1990, Brown Trail sermon that "Shepherds cannot lead where sheep will not follow," in the context of saying that a Scripturally qualified elder is disqualified if the "sheep" do not "perceive" him as a

“shepherd.”

- 60. True or False: The Chief Shepherd (our Lord) should be disqualified because the vast majority of men do not “perceive” Him to be a Shepherd and refuse to follow him.
- 61. True or False: I, Dave Miller, believe that if 25 percent of a congregation “perceives” a man to be unqualified (though he is Scripturally qualified), he should not be appointed or he should not be “reaffirmed” if he is presently serving.

**Item# 4
Debate Propositions
Elder Re-evaluation/Reaffirmation**

“The Scriptures teach that the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as taught and practiced by the Brown Trail Church of Christ and Dave Miller usurps the authority of Scriptural elders.”

Harrell Davidson Affirms: _____

Dave Miller Denies: _____

“The Scriptures teach that the practice of Eldership re-evaluation and reaffirmation, as taught and practiced at the Brown Trail Church of Christ, is a Scriptural (authorized) practice in the functioning of the eldership.”

Dave Miller Affirms: _____

Harrell Davidson Denies: _____

MDR ”Intent”

“The Scriptures teach that when a person who is Scripturally authorized to marry, contracts a legal marriage for the purpose of gaining legal entrance into the United States, said person contracts a marriage (whether said person realizes it or not) that is a Matthew 19:6 God-joined marriage.”

Harrell Davidson Affirms: _____

Dave Miller Denies _____

“All other things being Scripturally equal, when two persons **intend** marriage with one another **for the purpose** of gaining entrance into the United States, God refuses to join said persons together in a Matt. 19:6 marriage.”

Dave Miller Affirms: _____

Harrell Davidson Denies: _____

**Item# 5
Conclusion**

With the foregoing material in mind, please consider our “Final Word” on this matter. The evidence of brother Miller’s unscriptural teachings and fellowship practices are abundant. If he now wishes to resolve the controversy which surrounds

him then let him meet us or someone else in an Open Public Forum and answer the questions we have set forth. We see no other way to resolve this conflict than for brother Miller to meet in some public forum and state his position clearly as to what he believes on the issues surrounding him. Not only would his doing so be in his best interest but it would be in the best interest of all those who genuinely want to restore unity and THE good fellowship we once enjoyed. This matter is now in the hands of brother Miller and all those who support him despite the abundant evidence of his error. We want to encourage a more open dialog among all brethren to meet and deal with issues like this one before they get out of hand. If brother Miller changes his mind and wishes to meet with us in the future we will gladly do so but only if he agrees to the stipulations we set forth earlier: (1) We meet face to face, (2) we ask precise T/F questions (Miller would be allowed to explain any answer he felt that needed an explanation), (3) we record the meeting, and (4) we distribute audio recordings to the brotherhood. Brethren, this is our “final word” on this matter. We have no intentions of pursuing another audience with Dave Miller. If we err in our dealing in this matter we would count you a dear friend if you would point it out to us. We do not say that with any haughtiness; we only want to do that which is right in the sight of almighty God. May we **“Prove all things; and hold fast to that which is good.”** (1 Thess. 5:21).

Elders, Northside Church of Christ, Calhoun, GA
Ron Hall
Terry York

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“EXPRESSION OF CONCERN”

SENT TO ELDERS, SOUTHSIDE, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: Since 1998, the Southside Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, has conducted the Annual Lubbock Lectures the second week of October. From the start, it had stood firmly for the Truth by using for its writers/speakers only men of uncompromising convictions. (The Annual Lubbock Lectures were, in fact, patterned after the Annual Denton Lectures, which enjoyed a twenty-two year stretch of faithfulness.) When this year’s lectureship schedule became public, several who read it were both amazed and disturbed at some of the men who were to speak. (The “Expression of Concern” below fully explains the basis of our amazement and disturbance.) Several brethren discussed the fact that some sort of communication should be made to the Southside elders relating to this year’s roster. We doubted that these two men were aware of the implications of said invitations that involved more than one-third of the men invited. We believed a personal contact would be the best initial approach. Consequently, brother Marvin Weir began in August trying to reach brother Dale Stone, one of the Southside elders (with whom brother Weir has had a long, close, and cordial relationship), to discuss these concerns. Over the course of seven weeks, he left numerous messages on brother Stone’s answering machine with no response. Finally, brother Stone returned one of his calls a few days before the lectureship began. Brother Stone indicated that brother Weir had told him some things he did not know about the current division among brethren and that after he and his fellow-elder, brother

Malcolm Young, discussed them, they might want to contact Marvin for further discussion. Brother Weir encouraged him to do so and there was a ray of hope that they would respond, seeking additional information and documentation.

As a means of providing the Southside elders with at least some printed documentation and material to read, re-read, and carefully consider, the following “Expression of Concern,” with the names of twenty-six men affixed, was mailed to brethren Stone and Young on October 26 (several days after the lectureship). The great majority of these names are of men who have spoken on the Lubbock Lectures over the years, several of them having done so numerous times. Although approximately four months have elapsed since that phone conversation and more than three months have passed since they received the “Expression of Concern,” the Southside elders **have made no response whatsoever**. It was not the intent of this “Expression of Concern” or of brother Weir’s phone call to dictate anything to the Southside elders. These were genuine, heartfelt, appeals to these men to rethink their direction and their alliances, as implied by this year’s lectureship. Southside has been a great and badly needed congregation on the high plains of west Texas, where faithful congregations are so very few. Even now, it is the prayer of many who have had a close relationship with this congregation, that brethren Stone and Young will prayerfully consider the new direction in which they have allowed themselves to be led.

—Dub McClish



Beloved brethren Stone and Young:

We, the undersigned, know of your history of dedication to the Truth of God’s Word, to personal integrity, and to righteous behavior in yourselves and in others. Most of us have observed this first-hand from our visits with you at Southside during one or more of your annual lectureships and/or on other occasions. While some of us have only been privileged to observe this dedication from afar, we are nonetheless convinced of it.

When the list of your speakers for the 2006 lectureship began circulation, we were shocked, amazed, perplexed, and disappointed. (To conclude that these reactions had anything to do with the fact that none of us was included is both unwarranted and false.) The list of speakers includes men whom your preacher (and the director of your lectureship) would not have even thought about inviting to fill the Southside pulpit only a year ago, and for good reasons. He did not associate with them, he hardly knew them, and he was even suspicious and critical of some of them. Now he has inexplicably decided to embrace them. We fear that you men may not be familiar with some of these men and have allowed them [to] fill your pulpit without sufficient information concerning them. We realize that you had never heard of many of us, as well, until your preacher invited us to speak on your lectureship. There

is an important distinction that must be stated relating to these matters, however: Your preacher since July 2005 is not the same preacher you had until July 2005, although he still goes by the same name and lives in the same house. He has changed his convictions, and consequently his circle of fellowship and friendship significantly since that time. Consequently, the “kind” of men he chose for your lectureship this year is very different (in emphasis, direction, those with whom they cordially associate, etc.) from the “kind” of men who appeared on the Lubbock Lectures in all previous years. The inclusion of a large percentage of this year’s roster signaled, if nothing else had done so, a remarkable and dramatic change of emphasis and direction in your preacher—and of the Southside Congregation, and it is not the right or a good direction and emphasis.

Let us be more specific:

1. Eleven of your speakers signed the Apologetics Press “Statement of Support,” issued in June 2005, as part of the damage control resulting from the Bert Thompson scandal (see enclosure). In the wake of brother Thompson’s removal as AP’s Executive Director, brother Dave Miller was appointed “Interim Executive Director,” a position he has occupied for more than a year. Brother Miller is a false teacher,

concerning which teaching he has not repented. Brother Tommy Hicks is well aware of this fact, as indicated by his statement on July 26, 2005, in an e-mail message to brother Kent Bailey: "Specifically, regarding the false doctrines in which Dave Miller involved himself (i.e., elders "re-evaluation" doctrine and the marriage/divorce "intent" doctrine a la Everett Chambers), we stand with you and every other sound brother—in opposition to them." All of those who signed the AP "Statement of Support" have **implicitly** endorsed Dave Miller and his errors (although some of these opposed both him and his errors **before** the AP scandal). Moreover, some of those on your lectureship who opposed brother Miller's errors **before** they signed the AP "Statement of Support," have, **since** signing the statement, been **explicitly** endorsing and defending him, in spite of his errors. The eleven men on the Lubbock Lectures who signed the AP "Statement of Support" are: **Curtis Cates, Jim Dearman, Barry Gilreath, Barry Grider, Sean Hochdorf, Tom Holland, Joseph Meador, Jason Roberts, Paul Sain, Robert Taylor, and William Woodson.** If brother Hicks still stands opposed to Dave Miller and his errors, he has acted hypocritically in inviting eleven men who are on record as endorsing, upholding, and defending, to one degree or another, brother Miller and his errors. Do brother Miller's errors not matter any more to your preacher? Are brother Miller's errors no longer errors? If your preacher no longer opposes brother Miller or counts his errors worthy of opposing, it is incumbent upon him to make this know[n] to the brotherhood.

2. Besides the eleven men named above, you invited brother **Brad Harrub** to speak on your lectureship. Brother Harrub is a prominent employee of Apologetics Press and is co-editor with brother Dave Miller of the periodical, *Reason & Revelation*, published by Apologetics Press. The same things stated in the previous paragraph relating to your preacher's opposition to Dave Miller and his errors applies in the case of Brad Harrub. Either your preacher no longer opposes brother Miller and his errors, or if he still claims to do so, he has acted inconsistently and hypocritically by inviting one of brother Miller's closest associates at AP to speak on your lectureship. Again we ask, do brother Miller's errors not matter any more? In addition, brother Harrub recently engaged in fellowship with several liberals, including brother **Truitt Adair**, Director of Sunset International Bible Institute (Lake Tahoe Family Encampment [7/22–28] and a Spiritual Growth Workshop, Fresno, CA [9/27–10/1]). If brother Harrub were consistent, he would have no problem speaking on the Sunset campus itself, without reproving Sunset for its numerous doctrinal errors of the past and/or present, if invited to do so. By having him on the Southside Lectures, your preacher is within an inch of extending fellowship to Sunset itself, an institution he has for many years rightly exposed and opposed because of its errors. Are there no longer

any restrictions on fellowship in this new "unity-in-diversity" behavior? [*Harrub has since left AP, but not because of Dave Miller's errors and he has not repented of fellowshiping with and speaking to liberal churches without rebuking their errors—EDITOR*]

3. Brother **Mark Hanstein** is among your speakers. He is Academic Dean of Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, Colorado (formerly, Bear Valley School of Preaching). Those of us who have known your preacher much longer than you men have known him, know that he would not have entertained the idea of inviting a representative of that school into your pulpit this time a year ago, and with good reason because of question marks that have surrounded it for several years. Furthermore, the Bear Valley Congregation (location of the school) engaged in its own elder reaffirmation/reconfirmation procedure about four years ago similar to the one brother Miller engineered at Brown Trail in 1990 and defended when Brown Trail repeated the procedure in 2002. We all wonder if your preacher still opposes this procedure as he stated he did as recently as July 2005.

4. Brother **Freddie Clayton** was among your speakers. He is a defender of the para-church organization, "Church of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.," headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee. In the 1999 Lubbock Lectures, your preacher gave to brother Marvin Weir the assignment of exposing the American Christian Missionary Society, founded in 1849, which institution eventually played a major part in the disastrous division of 1906. Brother Weir also dealt with present-day institutions **that are parallel to the missionary society** in structure, particularly citing the "Church of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.," as a case in point (*Looking Unto Jesus*, pp. 336–338). Your preacher apparently agreed with brother Weir's conclusions, because he printed and published this material in the lectureship book and commended the oral lecture that included this material. Does your preacher now believe the "Church of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.," which he once agreed was unauthorized, is now authorized? His invitation to brother Clayton implies as much.

The Apologetics Press scandal, resulting in the appointment of brother Dave Miller as its Executive Director in June 2005, led to the questioning of how brethren Curtis Cates and Joseph Meador, both TGJ Board members, could sign the AP "Statement of Support," thereby implicitly endorsing its Director, a false teacher. These questions were especially germane since *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL* had earlier published brother Marvin Weir's article (October 2002) exposing brother Miller's participation in the elder reaffirmation/reconfirmation program at Brown Trail, not only in 1990, but again in 2002—which article was applauded by various TGJ Board members and concerning which no Board member (including your preacher) expressed any reservations. The aforementioned questions led to the ouster of brethren Dub McClish and Dave Watson from the editorial staff of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*. Since those two events (June and July, 2005, respectively), an astounding realignment of relation-

The Error of Balaam

Lester Kamp

ships has taken place that some have fairly characterized as a new “unity-in-diversity” movement on the part of some of those once considered sound and faithful men. The list of speakers on your lectureship this year is a prime example of this radical new approach to fellowship. Among your speakers are men who have been critical of each other for years (harshly so in many cases), if not out of fellowship with each other, but who apparently have rather suddenly decided they can “go along” in order to “get along.” Some of the men on your lectureship have rarely, if ever, been invited through the years to speak on lectureships considered to be sound and faithful (e.g., Annual Denton Lectures, MSOP Lectures, Bellview Lectures, Spring Lectures, Power Lectures, and **Lubbock Lectures**) and for good reason—because of the question marks concerning them and those with whom they have been willing to associate in an approving way. Some of them must have been surprised (and perhaps even a bit confused) to receive an invitation to speak at Lubbock. These facts demonstrate enormous inconsistency and hypocrisy, and all because of one principal aim—to justify supporting a human institution, Apologetics Press, even if it means supporting an impenitent false teacher. Men who have for many years applied plainly and correctly such pivotal passages on fellowship as Romans 16:17–18, Ephesians 5:11, and 2 John 9–11, have inexplicably forgotten their meaning.

We love and appreciate you men because you have been stalwart and strong in the faith. This lectureship’s roster was incompatible with those great virtues. Please do not consider our expressions of concern as any attempt to interfere in the autonomy of the Southside Congregation. Our appeal to you is just that—an appeal—for you to reconsider carefully the direction in which your preacher is now leading the great Southside Congregation, as evidenced by the men on this year’s lectureship. It is decidedly not the strong, uncompromising direction in which you have been going for many years. Your geographical area, like so many others, has few congregations that faithfully hold to the Old Paths. Those congregations are getting fewer each year. We know that you men at one time had full confidence (and we pray that you still do have) in those of us who have affixed our names below and that you will therefore soberly consider our plea that you look diligently into the issues we have raised. We earnestly pray that Southside will not—has not—become another casualty in the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged. We beg you to carefully consider our earnest expression of genuine concern.

Kent Bailey
Lynn Parker
Dennis (Skip) Francis
Darrell Broking
Gary Summers
Michael Hatcher
Frank Carriger
David B. Watson
Lester Kamp
Darrell Conley
Jess Whitlock
Lee Moses
Daniel Denham

Danny Douglas
Jerry Brewer
Roelf Ruffner
Gary Grizzell
David Brown
Don Tarbet
Terry Hightower
Ken Chumbley
Marvin Weir
Dub McClish
Harrell Davidson
Paul Vaughn
Johnny Oxendine

Balaam of the Old Testament is known for his willingness to “preach” whatever was requested for “wages.” Peter stated, **“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness”** (II Peter 2:15). There are many modern day preachers who run **“greedily after the error of Balaam for reward”** (Jude 11); there are many even today who “hold the doctrine of Balaam” (Revelation 2:14). Robert Taylor accurately observed, “Balaam’s soul was for sale to the highest bidder” (James and Jude, page 94).

When institutions depend for their survival on raising money from outside the institution, they become particularly vulnerable to the temptation to allow “money to do the talking”; or as another described it: “monetary expedience becomes lord.” The larger the school (including faculty and facility) the more dependent it is on substantial financial support. Many congregations have lost their spiritual moorings because of the money that continues to be needed simply to operate and maintain its new, elaborate facilities. Some elders have refused, therefore, to take a strong (Biblical) stand on “controversial” issues because they realize that many of those who contribute large sums of money will not tolerate their doing so. Wealthy individuals because of the congregation’s dependence on their money determine the teaching of such congregations.

Preachers have compromised the Truth of God’s Word just to keep the money (salary) coming in. Sometimes both of these factors contribute to the same situation. Preachers are afraid to preach “the whole counsel of God” because they realize that there are those “big contributors” within the congregation who will stop their contributions and/or go elsewhere if certain things are taught. Some Bible topics which many no longer tolerate are: Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage, Modest Apparel, Social Drinking, Materialism, and such like. Many do not want to hear what the Bible teaches on these matters and will do all they can to prevent the Bible’s being taught on these subjects. For some, it is not what is right according to the Bible; but who favors or opposes certain doctrines that determines “right” or “wrong.”

Cronyism (brotherhood “politics”) can also play a role in such compromises of Truth. In order for some preachers to take a stand on certain subjects they must first determine the pulse of the brotherhood—at least the beliefs of those fellow-preachers with whom they are close (cronies). For them, it is not “What does the Bible say?” but “What do my friends say?” or “What is the position of my alma mater (whether college or preacher training school)? Over the years, I have known many preachers who have determined their “convictions” based simply upon what they believe is the “majority” view. Brethren, such ought not so to be! Truth is not determined by money or by those who have it and give it to certain works. Truth is the absolute, unchanging standard of God’s Word! Right is right and must be upheld even when we stand alone. The threat of hard times brought on by the loss of funds should not determine what we preach! Refusing to preach on

certain subjects and/or refusing to uphold what is right always constitutes compromise. Failing to preach “the whole counsel of God” is as wrong as blatantly preaching false doctrine! Allowing the pressures of money or the doctrinal position of close friends to refrain from standing upon the Word of God is just as wrong (sinful)!

In 1988 Tom Bright wrote an article about “blind loyalty” to ACU when it became known that some of the professors there were teaching evolution. Many would not believe the facts because they could not accept the assertion that their alma mater was teaching error. He wrote,

Blind loyalty to things of man is never a quality to be coveted. As we look through “tinted glasses,” our vision becomes blurred and we can see only the object of our affection in the light of that which we want to see. We become blind to the truth, and will defend the object of our affection regardless of the consequences. Loyalty to anything which has had a direct impact upon our life, and in which we have been heavily involved is not uncommon. Likewise, neither is blindness to the truth, even to the extent of a “whitewashing” and a cover-up. ...Again, we affirm that loyalty is to be commended. But when this loyalty becomes blind, even to the point of being idolatry, then the result can be nothing less than disastrous. (“When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry” by Tom L. Bright, *Contending for the Faith*, February 1988, pages 8-9.)

What brother Bright wrote many years ago remains true today! Sometimes institutions receive greater loyalty than does the Truth of God’s Word. These institutions may have been good works in times past and for an extended period of time. But over time, problems have been allowed to creep in, and error is now taught and/or endorsed. Colleges are not the only objects of blind loyalty.

It should not surprise us (though it certainly grieves us) to learn of other institutions that we have grown to love and respect for their works’ sake (and their previous stand for the Truth) over the years compromising the absolute standard of God’s Word for the sake of money and maintaining one’s religious “political” ties.

We now have a director of a preacher training school in Austin, Texas, and a director of a preacher training school in Memphis, Tennessee, who have publicly endorsed an institution (Apologetics Press [AP]), in spite of the false teachings of a member of its staff, brother David Miller. These brethren knew at the time of their endorsement of AP that he had been publicly marked by numerous brethren because of his errors on marriage-divorce-remarriage and the novel concept of the periodic “reaffirmation/re-evaluation of elders.” Brother Miller has since been appointed Executive Director of AP, but the brethren who endorsed him have still made no retraction of their endorsement.

The director of the Memphis school is now defending the errors of brother Miller—errors which he was steadfastly opposing less than a year ago. The director of the school in Austin has even described those of us who continue to contend for the faith and to expose the influence of money and brotherhood “politics” as “a few who are in a small, but no less toxic, loyalty circle, negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have.” Note: Standing for the Truth is toxic

only to sin and those who love it; contending for the faith is not based on loyalty to men, but to God’s Word. Ultimately, these two brethren, along with others, made decisions based upon the threat of the loss of funds and the influence of their cronies rather than upon the Truth and those standing for it. Many others, because of “cronyism” have “circled the wagons” in a blind attempt to defend them.

Listen to brother Bright again,

It goes without saying that many congregations are literally dominated by the influence that a particular “college” wields upon it by the allegiance of its students. Nor can it be denied that some of the schools of preaching also carry such weight. ...I do not believe that a person should be standing and waiting with eager anticipation for the first negative thing to be said about a “Christian College,” and then pick it up and “run with it.” Nor do I believe that members of the body of Christ should have such allegiance to their alma mater that they become blind, even to the point of refusing to consider charges of the most serious nature, and then participate in a cover-up which is second to none (“When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry—II,” *CFTF*, April 1988, page 5).

The clear observations of brother Andrew Connally are appropriate here,

“There are hirelings in the church today as there have always been. Like Balaam greed has turned their hearts from God to filthy lucre. ... Some of our men have let their jobs mean more to them than truth and they have allowed their jobs to become greater in their eyes than God!...Like Diotrophes they have sold out to the rich, the powerful, the majority and gone with the majority in many instances.” (“The Spirit of Compromise,” *Ancient Errors and Modern Issues*, ed. Bill Jackson [Austin, TX: Southwest Church of Christ, 1985], page 252).

Brethren, we need to wake up!

—Lester Kamp
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[The previous unedited article is brother Kamp’s editorial in *Matters of the Faith*, Vol. 10, #1, January–March, 2006, pp. 1-4. In the following unedited letter from Curtis Cates we will see how said editorial, at the instigation of brethren Curtis Cates, director of the Memphis School of Preaching and Mike Hisaw, the preacher for of the Carriage Oaks Church of Christ, Bossier City Louisiana, caused the elders of the same to cease publishing and mailing said journal.

Hisaw, a graduate of the MSOP, was offended by Kamp’s editorial and informed Cates about it. At Cates’ request Hisaw sent him a copy of said article. The unedited letter to follow is Cates’ “defense” of himself (such as it is) to the Carriage Oaks elders. *For reference purposes we have numbered each paragraph of said letter.*

The elders of the Spring Church of Christ now oversee the publishing and mailing of *Matters of the Faith*.—**Editor**]

CURTIS CATES' DEFENSE

February 22, 2006

The Elders
Carriage Oaks Church of Christ
5661 Shed Road
Bossier City, LA 7111

Dear brethren:

(1) I have long admired you brethren and your unswerving loyalty to the pure, unadulterated Word of Truth. I shall always remember that Carriage Oaks was the first gospel meeting in which I was able to preach after my prostate surgery. You brethren were very supportive of my preaching, and you treated me royally. That was April 21-24, 2002, and I appreciate it.

(2) You brethren have a tremendous preacher, brother Mike Hisaw. He is one of the most gifted men who ever came through the Memphis School of Preaching, a man of impeccable character, principle, uprightness, and faithfulness to the Old Paths. He and his family are deeply loved and appreciated by brother Garland Elkins, brother Bobby Liddell, the other faculty, the Forest Hill eldership, and all others here. When I learned that you brethren had hired him, I rejoiced.

(3) Brother Hisaw, being the man of fairness and integrity that he is, called me and informed me of an article on "The Error of Balaam" that evidently is scheduled to appear in Matters of the Faith. I requested that he send me a copy of the article, which he did. Since I know you brethren and since I have always held you folks to be honorable men, I mentioned to him that I would like to write you brethren in confidence; please be assured that I am not in any way trying to put him in difficulty with you brethren. It was my idea, and knowing you brethren, I feel comfortable doing so. I feel that you are open to allowing me to give a defense from the charges, just as Paul stated, "My defence to them that examine me is this" (I Cor. 9:3). I believe you will prayerfully weigh my defense and receive it in the same spirit in which it is written.

(4) First, brother Joseph Meador (Southwest School of bible Studies [and the elders who oversee that work]) and I (Memphis School of Preaching [and the elders here at Forest Hill]) are described in the terms of Balaam. Dear friends, you will recall that that fellow endeavored to curse God's own people and was motivated by covetousness [which Paul says is idolatry]. He was an evil person.

(5) Second, the writer singled out brother Meador and me as having "publicly endorsed an institution (Apologetics Press [AP])," whereas there have been many faithful brethren who signed the "Statement of Support," including an outstanding gospel preacher whom the article specifically quoted, brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr. It seems to be evident the writer has a special bias and axe to grind against brother Meador and me.

(6) Third, we have been charged in the article with endorsement of "reaffirmation/re-evaluation of elders." Brethren, brother Bobby Liddell, our Associate, preached against this false doctrine in Missouri in October, 2005, and I endorsed everything he said. I preached against it in November, 2005, in Alabama. The charge is false! Brethren, we stand where we have always stood. Relative to brother Dave Miller, he denies that he ever held or holds to this error; he has even written that in a statement. I heard a preacher say on one occasion, "I would not believe it, even if it were to come out of his own mouth." I wondered within myself, What hope does a person have with

a preacher with that type spirit? I am glad he is not going to be my judge. My friends, I have always tried to lean toward the milk of human kindness, and I take it you brethren have also.

(7) Fourth, the article falsely charges that we endorse error marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Brethren, I teach what I have always taught on this subject. These are serious accusations, brethren. Where is the proof; the writer certainly does not give any. It is one thing to make a charge, it is quite another thing to prove it, as you know. Brother Miller also denies having ever defended error on marriage, divorce, and remarriage; you can check with him on that.

(8) Fifth, the virtually only thing which I have in my name, my character. My father preached the gospel sixty years, and I have preached the same gospel for forty-eight years. I have always taken very seriously the inspired words of Solomon, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1). I have repeatedly thanked the Lord for the good name I inherited from my dear father (Curtis C. Cates), now departed, and I have worked hard to keep it good and in my feeble way to add luster to it. Annette and I also have two sons, Andy and Dan, who are faithful gospel preachers.

(9) I will just have to tell you, brethren, this article is a defamation of and casts aspersions upon my character; they are false, injurious charges. It not only judges my motive, it claims to know the motivations of my heart—the evil report being that I am selling out the truth, and that for money! I know who started this vicious charge, and this article is a party to the propagation of it.

(10) As I stated earlier, what I am writing is in confidence. My wife and I have always sacrificed to preach the gospel and to work educating preachers for nearly four decades. We worked hard to become trained so we could do what we are doing. She earned the Master of Library Service degree, and I earned the Doctor of Education degree at the University of Alabama. She headed up two libraries in Christian Colleges and then was Research Librarian at Rhodes College in Memphis. Finally when she could cease working at Rhodes and keep her insurance [on which I greatly depend], I was able to "hire" her to head up the MSOP for \$12,000 a year—whereas at Rhodes she would be making \$45,000 plus benefits. In other words, we are sacrificing three-fourths of her pay for her to serve the MSOP. You think our critics would do this, brethren? [And, please be assured that we are not doing this for the glory of men, but rather to God's glory. I am simply answering the vicious defamation of character].

(11) I took a cut in pay to come to the MSOP twenty-four years ago, after having been a college vice president and college dean. I am quite sure that compared to the cost of living, I have taken quite a cut in pay since I have been here. And, I want to ask you to think about something. What do you think the average college dean or president makes today, brethren? Is anyone so naïve as to think I am here because of money? But, that is the charge! Brethren, I will tell you; I am human enough that such a defamation of my character and attack on my previously good name hurts. I feel like you brethren can understand and sympathize; I really feel that you will not wish to be a party to the defamation. I thank God that some still have confidence in my character and my strivings for Him.

(12) But, the writer might say, "Well, I was speaking not only of Curtis Cates but also of the Forest Hill elders." Brethren, you may not know that the full payment on this school/church location is made by the Forest Hill congregation; other congregations and individuals have helped to build the school building and library. The church at Forest Hill

also pays the teachers' salaries and the utilities, putting well over a half million dollars in the MSOP each year. Where is the proof that we have compromised the truth [as Balaam] for money? That is an evil, baseless charge and false; I know these men. They will not compromise the truth for anything!

(13) When they asked me to consider the work, I asked the elders. "What would it take to get you to compromise the truth?" The elders said [specifically brother Kirby, and the other elders concurred], "We are not going to compromise the truth, if we do not have two students." Where is the student who states that he has been taught false doctrine here, brethren? Ask your own preacher, an alumnus of the School, if he was taught false doctrine. He knows brethren Elkins, Liddell, Mosher, Dan Cates, Grider, Jones, Martin, Bland, and me. What error has ever been taught from this pulpit? What error have the faculty ever preached, brethren? It would seem that anyone who puts out such an article should be able to prove its various elements, charges, and injuries. Shedding innocent blood in destroying people's characters and sowing discord among brethren is (sic) serious (Prov. 6:16-19).

(14) Sixth, on top of the above, the implication is made that the Southwest elders and director and the Forest Hill elders and MSOP are participating in a "coverup." Brethren, do you believe that? Then, the implication is that brother Meador and I are "hirelings," motivated by "filthy lucre," and "like Diotrefes [we] have sold out to the rich." Brethren, do you really believe that? I do not think you believe that, and I am humbly requesting that you not print it.

(15) Can you imagine that brother Meador and I by implication are charged with "compromising the truth of God's Word just to keep the money (salary) coming in"? Brethren, our faculty has had some students who make far more money than we do. But, the writer of the article "continues to expose the influence of money, and brotherhood 'politics'." Amazing!

(16) Dear brethren, please think seriously before allowing these attacks to go forth from Carriage Oaks. Do you brethren not feel that enough harm to the precious, beautiful bride of Christ has already been done? Whom will it help, brethren? I do not think it would help anyone, not your congregation, not us, not Christ, not anyone. I shall pray for you. Please pray for us.

Affectionately in Christ,
[signed]
Curtis A. Cates
Director

CAC:jfk



CATES' LETTER EXAMINED

David P. Brown

(Cates' Paragraphs 1-4) Cates is verbose in expressing his admiration for the Carriage Oaks elders. Obviously in so doing he is promoting himself while seeking their sympathy. He lavishes high praise on their preacher, Mike Hisaw and declares the joy he experienced when they "hired them." We recall being described by Cates in much the same manner, until we dared question him, then we became tainted with "radicalism," "extremism," and so on. Having related to the elders how he obtained his copy of *Matters of the Faith*, Cates told Hisaw he "would like to write" said elders "in confidence" because he felt they were "open to" him defending himself "just as Paul stated" in I Cor. 9:3.

Kamp's editorial was **not** a "confidential" docu-

ment. Everything with which his editorial deals is public in nature, pertains to more brethren than Cates, and has circulated among several thousand people. Since it is the case that Cates faxed his letter to said elders, were they the only people who saw his letter? Unless said elders sat by the fax machine until Cates' super-secret document arrived, at least one other person saw it before the elders did. In truth, Cates did not want anyone who could refute it to have access to it.

Cates said he was following Paul's example in defending himself, but he did no such thing. To follow Paul's example Cates was/is obligated to defend himself in at least as public a forum as Kamp's editorial was circulated.

Paul wrote the Galatian epistle for all the churches of Galatia. Among other things the recipients read, "**But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, ...**" Then he wrote, "**But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said before them all...**" (Gal. 2:11, 14). The passage Cates quoted to the Carriage Oaks elders (1 Cor. 9:3) was in a letter that was to be circulated among the churches—*this letter contained Paul's own public declaration of his defense*. If Cates does not think Paul's defense of himself was/is public in nature, how did he find out about what Paul said to the Corinthians almost half a world away and two thousand years removed? We cannot get Cates and company to meet with us when we have an orderly and fair open forum to discuss said matters relatively close to his home territory, but notice how large a letter he wrote "in confidence" to said elders—an easy thing to do when one thinks one's opponents will not see it, much less have the opportunity to reply to it. It is too bad that Cates et al. did/will not follow Paul's example in dealing with said matters.

Covert operations are the order of the day for Cates and his "buddyhood" concerning their dealings with the public errors of Dave Miller, Stan Crowley, and matters connected therewith. They know their pitiful efforts to defend their fellowship and support of Miller, Crowley, and such like cannot stand being scrutinized in the light of God's Word and the facts bearing on said cases (John 3:19).

Cate's comments in his paragraph #4 clearly reveals that he certainly got Kamp's point and application. However, we will not hold our breath till he does the Scriptural thing about it.

(Cates' Paragraph 5-7) Kamp has no "axe to grind" against Cates or Meador. Out of those men who "publicly endorsed" AP only Cates and Meador are named because they were involved in the *TGJ* conspiracy to oust Dub McClish and Dave Watson as editor and associate editor respectively. Cates and Meador desired a change in the direction of *TGJ*. They made-up the ruse that McClish's reputation was so damaged that for him to continue as editor would destroy *TGJ*. The true driving force behind their actions was their desire to place *TGJ* under the editorial control of brethren who would not deal with brethren on the basis of facts and truth while forthrightly examining brotherhood issues—they wanted "balanced" brethren to be in the editorial chair(s) of *TGJ*. But in the light of the facts concerning Meador's very public use of Gestalt Therapy in his professional counseling practice that has involved him over a period of years in Humanistic, Existential, and Hindu disciplines, he may have more problems than he has thus far experienced.

In paragraph #6 when Cates wrote "we stand where we have always stood," at best he wrote a gross absurdity. Cates knows that he had had no friendly dealings with Brown Trail for several years, primarily because of Miller's false doctrine of elder r/r practiced by BT and Miller in 1990. Further, for

those of us who have known Cates, he knows that we know that fact. Cates applauded Dub McClish's exposure of BT and Miller in the 1997 Bellview Lectures and in their book. Cates and the rest of the TGJ Board did not object when McClish printed Marvin Weir's exposure of BT and Miller in the Oct. 2002 *TGJ*, following BT's repeat of the process in 2002. Only after Miller began to court the favor of Cates from his roost at AP, and he was questioned about his and Meador's names on the support list of AP, did Cate's convert to (1) a dislike of Weir's article, (2) that Miller was a fine fellow, (3) BT's version (that contradicts the facts of their teaching and practise) of elder r/r was not error, and (4) Miller was more useful to him than was McClish and Watson.

By their support and defense of Miller and his doctrines Cates and his fellow travelers have been driven into fellowship with brethren and institutions they previously and Scripturally would not fellowship (for example William Woodson, East TN School of Preaching; BT, Bear Valley, etc.) and refuse fellowship with brethren they had associated with in the Lord's work throughout the world. *Will the new Cates' fellowship policies stretch far enough to let Meador, with his newly revealed doctrinal baggage, stay in TGJ's embrace?*

Why would Cates indicate that Miller never has "held or holds" the elder r/r error simply because he denies doing so? How far is Cates willing to go down the road of self-deception? For years Rubel Shelly denied he had apostatized. There were those who defended him in the face of incontrovertible evidence produced by his own words and deeds. Is not Cates doing the same with Miller and his errors? Is not the evidence in his words and deeds just as incontrovertible relative to the errors of elder r/r, MDR/intent, fellowship, and perhaps direct operation of the Holy Spirit?

Cates "leaned toward the milk of human kindness" when he needed to preserve income for MSOP and no one dared question or contradict him. Does anyone fail to see Cates attempt to make the Carriage Oaks elders feel that if they did not accept his plea on behalf of himself and Miller, that they are harsh and unkind. *Cates "milk" has a bite to it.*

What Cates and his fellows actually teach on r/r of elders MDR/intent doctrine and the false doctrine on MDR taught by Stan Crowley of Shertz, Texas is one thing, but who they fellowship and support says more about what he and his fellows believe on the previous issues than what they actually preach or write. Cates and his fellow travelers are collaborators with Miller and Crowley in the promulgation of their doctrines. They do not hesitate to bid these false teachers "God speed" and thus they partake of their evil deeds (2 John 11).

If the Scriptures do not authorize the faithful to oppose the false doctrines of Miller, Crowley and friends in their errors on MDR, etc., then where is the Bible authority to oppose the late James D. Bales, Jim Woodroof, Olan Hicks, et al. in their errors on MDR—or any other false teacher/doctrine? Must we get Cates and company's decision on what is and is not error as well as their permission before we can oppose it and the people who teach it?

(Cates' Paragraphs 8–15) Is Cates the only person who values his name? Was it Cates and friend's "milk-of-human-kindness" and "balance" that motivated them to label us as "toxic," "radical," "extremists," etc.? Does Cates think that he has worked any harder to obtain, keep, and protect his good name than we have?

Nothing in Kamp's editorial judged Cate's motive. It did

STATE and EMPHASIZE his own stated motive for his actions relative to continued support and defense of Miller/AP and his decisions/actions relative to the editorship/direction of *TGJ*. That motive was fear of loss of financial support for MSOP.

Cates' moaning, groaning, and whining regarding how much he and sister Cates have financially sacrificed is one of the most pitiful whimpering messes we have ever read. It has NOTHING to do with the issue under consideration. *Further, in all of this sordid conglomeration of error who has ever charged Cates with having as his motive PERSONAL financial gain/loss?* Yet, he says, "That is the charge" —talk about manufacturing a straw man and attacking it. His own previously stated motivation is fear of financial loss for MSOP.

Cates clearly reveals that he knows the charge against him is not one of personal greed when he introduces the Forest Hill elders and asks for the proof "that we have compromised the truth (as Balaam) for money?" Out of his own mouth, as previously indicated, Cates said that a very generous contributor threatened financial loss to the school if he did not get rid of Dub McClish as editor of *TGJ*? Why did McClish need to go? Because he dared to tell the truth about the AP scandal and oppose the error of a false teacher at the head of a sacred cow called AP.

When Cates asked which faculty member was guilty of teaching error, he missed the point. The point is that by continued support, defense, and endorsement of Miller/AP, MSOP, Forest Hill, etc. are forced into fellowship with AP's false teacher director. Not one of them (including the Forest Hill elders) has had the courage to break ranks. Their decision to hang with Miller/AP was pivotal in the editor/direction change of *TGJ*, which has thrown open the floodgates of the new "unity-in-diversity," "balanced" agenda of these fellows. *It will be interesting to see if Meador's three fellow TGJ Board members will "hang" with him on the recent revelations about him, as noted earlier.*

NO COVER-UP CATES SAYS. Did not TGJ Board (president and v. president, respectively) try to "cover-up" the fact that McClish and Watson were forced out of their editorial positions by saying, "We didn't fire them, they just resigned," along with Tommy Hick's comment that "There was no writing on the wall" about new editors for *TGJ* before McClish and Watson "resigned"? Have they not continued to try to "cover-up" the fact that McClish and Watson were forced out because they dared write about some issues/institutions/persons that to Cates and company had become "untouchables"? Furthermore, the exposure of the influence of money and brotherhood "politics" is at the very core of the current problems, Cates's denials notwithstanding.

Cates and his fellow travelers' idea of spiritual "balance" is belief and action on the basis of a consensus of certain brethren—persons chosen by themselves to form a core group to determine what and who is right and what and who is wrong. But the only Scripturally "balanced" brethren are those who believe and act **only** as the rightly divided Word of God authorizes them so to do regardless of the consequences to be suffered for so doing (Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:15; Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; John 12:48; Jude 3). Yes, more than "enough" harm has been done to the Lord's church by all of this controversy and chaos, but *who struck the match that lit the fuse, causing the explosion?*

—P. O. Box 2357
Spring, TX
77383-2357

DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

-Alabama-

Holly Pond-Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., (256) 796-6802, (205) 429-2026.

Tuscaloosa-East Pointe Church of Christ one block from Exit 76, off I-20, I-59, Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed., 7 p.m. Abiding in God's Word—The Old Paths. U of A student, visitor, or resident? Welcome! (205)556-3062.

-England-

Cambridgeshire-Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

-Florida-

Ocoee-Ocoee Church of Christ, 2 East Magnolia Street, Ocoee, FL 34761. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. David Hartbarger, Evangelist, (407) 656-2516, ocoeechurchofchrist@yahoo.com, www.ocoecoc.org.

Pensacola-Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Michael Hatcher, evangelist, (850) 455-7595.

-Georgia-

Cartersville- Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris Pkwy NW 30120-4222. 770-382-6775, www.cartersvillechurchofchrist.org. Sun. 10, 11a.m., 6:30 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Bobby D. Gayton, evangelist- email: bdgayton@juno.com.

-North Carolina-

Rocky Mount-Scheffield Drive Church of Christ, 3309 Scheffield Dr., Rocky Mount, NC 27802 (252) 937-7997.

-Oklahoma-

Porum-Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

- Tennessee-

Lenoir City-Lenoir City Church of Christ, 1280 Simpson Road West, P.O. Box 292 Lenoir City, TN 37771 . Sun. 9:30, 10:30AM, 6:00PM, Wed. 7:00PM., Kent Bailey, Evangelist Tel: 865-986-3223 or 865-986-5698).

Murfreesboro-Church of Christ, 837 Esther Lane, Murfreesboro, TN, Sun. Bible class 9:00 a.m., Worship 10:00 a.m., Fellowship meal 11:00 a.m., Devotional 12:00 p.m.; Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. For directions and other information please visit our website at www.murfreesborochurchofchrist.org. evangelist, Steve Yeatts.

-Texas-

Denton area—Northpoint Church of Christ, 5101 E. University Dr. (Greenbelt Business Park). Mailing address: Northpoint Church of Christ, Greenbelt Business Park, 5101 E. University Dr., Box 12, Denton, TX 76208. E-mail: northpointcoc@hotmail.com. Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 6:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: 940.323.9797; tgj@charter.net.

Houston area-Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (281) 353-2707. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of the Spring Contending for the Faith Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February. www.churchesofchrist.com.

Hubbard-105 NE 6th St., Hubbard, TX 76648, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Delbert J. Goines, evangelist; djgoines@writeme.com.

Huntsville-1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. Huntsville, TX 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (936) 438-8202.

Hurst (Fort Worth area)-Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, Hurst, TX 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. (817) 282-3239, Toney Smith and Dan Flournoy, evangelists.

New Braunfels-1130 Hwy. 306, 1.5 miles west of I-35. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

Richwood-1600 Brazosport, Richwood, TX. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (979) 265-4256.

-Wyoming-

Cheyenne-High Plains Church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tel. (307) 635-2482. evangelist: Tim Cozad.

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