

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THE SILENCE OF MUSIC

Gary W. Summers and Marvin L. Weir

THE OCCASION OF THIS ARTICLE (SUMMERS)

In December of 2002 *Contending for the Faith* published “Being Fair,” written by me. The thrust of that material was to demonstrate that much-respected brethren **Thomas B. Warren** and **Andrew Connally** did not subscribe to the current view that **Mac Deaver** (hereafter M. Deaver) teaches with respect to the Holy Spirit’s alleged direct influence upon the Christian. Mac also insisted that **Goebel Music** (hereafter Music) agreed with his position, and it was pointed out that there was no evidence to substantiate that claim.

M. Deaver objected strenuously to every point I made—especially about Music. On January 2, 2003 he wrote in a personal letter:

I have talked with Goebel on the phone since receiving your latest letter. You seem to think that he simply would not say to you on the phone that he and I are in agreement. In this you simply are mistaken. Wishing something to be so does not make it so. Gary, do you really want to know what Goebel Music believes? Or are you afraid of finding out? Why do you think he dedicated his Holy Spirit reference work to brother Warren and to my father? Shouldn’t that at least provide you with a clue as to where he stands?

Up until this point it was my philosophy that M. Deaver was assuming things that he wanted to believe, but his challenge was bold and daring. Still, it seemed preposterous. Could the man we all admired so much for his consistent stand for the truth, the one who stood tall against the liberals who would have destroyed Pearl Street back in the late 70s, the stalwart soldier who opened brethren’s eyes with the outstanding book, *Be-*

hold the Pattern—could this beloved brother possibly agree with M. Deaver’s error regarding the Holy Spirit?

It remained unthinkable despite M. Deaver’s claims, and I told him so. On January 24, 2003, M. Deaver’s replied to my letter and again urged me to call or write Music “...somehow I get the impression you fear the phone call and what you will learn. Music is not hostile. Why not have Marvin [Weir] (hereafter Weir) call him, if you cannot bring yourself to do it?”

Actually, I eventually did both. I called and talked to Goebel: he neither acknowledged nor denied agreeing with M. Deaver. I also called Weir because we had discussed this very point a year earlier. At that time (February 2002) Weir had made at least two attempts to schedule a meeting with Music, but nothing was ever set up. The elders at Pearl Street had written him a letter (May 2002), which was never mailed, because one elder (**Joe Chism**) suggested, “we owe Goebel” a personal meeting instead. Because of brother Music’s poor health at that time, everyone decided to forego any discussion about his views on M. Deaver’s doctrine.

In 2003, however, largely due to M. Deaver’s letters previously reviewed, two discussions were arranged. Weir and two brothers from Rowlett met with Music on Saturday, March 15th. A meeting with the PS elders and me was set up for the following Saturday, March 22nd. Music had invited me to attend in our phone conversation and had indicated that the meeting could be taped. However, I was not permitted to attend it. As we were preparing to depart for the meeting at Music’s house, Joe Chism informed me, “Goebel

(Continued on Page 8)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor
mclight@bwoodtx.com

COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. Whole Congregation Rate: Any congregation entering each family of its entire membership with single copies being mailed directly to each home receives a \$3.00 discount off the Single Subscription Rate, i.e., such whole congregation subscriptions are payable in advance at the rate of \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

Contending for the Faith was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence, we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by Contending for the Faith. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needed. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

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

Editorial...

A BIBLICAL OBLIGATION

It has always been the practice of *Contending for the Faith* to approach and treat the topics/persons appearing on its pages according to the direct statements, examples, and implications of the words of the Bible in general and the New Testament in particular. This is the case because God has seen fit to communicate his will to us in the form of language—words. Without direct statements, examples and what they imply, language, if it could continue to be correctly identified as such, would lose most of its power to communicate. And, with the loss of its communicative element, language would lose its ability to authorize in much detail beyond what could be expressed in single words. It is, therefore, important to know that direct statements, examples, and what they imply is not an invention of man. It is as natural an element of the communicative nature of language as is a baby's natural inclination and ability to nurse—the false teachers of the “new hermeneutics” notwithstanding. Therefore, whether orally or in print, if we are to be well-pleasing to God we have no choice but to examine all subjects under the infallible guidelines set out by the direct statements, examples, and implications found *only* in the words of the Bible in general and the New Testament in particular (Colossians 3:17; Luke 8:11; John 12:48; Ephesians 3: 3, 4; 6:17; I Timothy 4:16; II Timothy 2:15; 3:16, 17; Titus 1:2; II Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21-25; I Peter 4:11).

CORRECT TO SPEAK IT —WRONG TO PRINT IT

However, among those who stand for the right and oppose the wrong are some who believe it is correct to orally expose false doctrine, false teachers and their erroneous conduct, but not to do it in print. Since the Bible does not authorize this mindset, we shall not adopt it; to the contrary we shall oppose it. Seeing that there is no biblical authority for this kind of thinking, we know not why anyone claiming to follow only what the Bible authorizes would practice it. Nevertheless, regarding certain error and the propagators of it, some “defenders of the faith” refuse to do in print what they readily do orally. Regardless of why these brethren occupy this inconsistent position, let it be again stated that the Bible makes no such distinction. Therefore, to best of our ability *CFTF* will make only those distinctions made by the divine volume.

FALSE CHARGES LAID AGAINST US

Some people have labeled us “Witch Hunters,” “Watchdogs” and much worse. They label us accordingly because these terms are meant to convey the idea that on the pages of *CFTF* we hunt and/or watch for things that are not there and/or that is all we ever do. Indeed, they say we will go so far as to manufacture witches and boogie bears. However, we challenge anyone to search the pages of *CFTF* from its beginning to the present and in so doing note how accurate the paper has been in identifying and scripturally dealing with error and those who teach it. And, such people *are* spiritual witches—the “Non-Witch Hunters” along with “Non-Watchdogs” notwithstanding.

Of course those who lovingly(?) label us to be “Witch Hunters” and “Watchdogs” do not intend such to be a compliment. However, we must plead guilty to being “Witch Hunters” and “Watchdogs” as the Bible defines such and obligates us to be. This is the case because over the years we have certainly found a number of witches and, as good watchdogs, we immediately set about to warn the people about the danger they hold for the church.

It is interesting to note that the Law of Moses called for the death of witches and made rebellion against God synonymous with witchcraft (Exodus 22:18; I Samuel 15:23). Furthermore, in the New Testament, Paul placed witchcraft between idolatry and hatred in his list of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Of course I am just a backward, ole boy from Arkansas, but it seems to me from the aforementioned scriptures alone that a part of the practice of pure and undefiled religion is keeping oneself “**unspotted from the world**” (James 1:27). And, the New Testament gives us many details on how not to be a worldly, spotted person.

Furthermore, God never condemned a faithful watchman. To the contrary, he appointed them to their position and expected them faithfully to do their work (Ezekiel 3:17-19). However, God frankly warned the watchman of the consequences to him if he was found derelict in his duty—something that few among certain brethren consider worth noting (Ezekiel 3:20; Romans 15:4).

Also, through the prophet Isaiah, God did not mince words regarding how he viewed the watchmen who failed to discharge their obligations. Indeed, he compared them to “watchdogs” that did not perform their work. Listen to the prophet as he condemns them. **‘His watchmen are blind: they are all igno-**

In This Issue...

THE SILENCE OF MUSIC Gary W. Summers & Marvin L. Weir	1
<i>Editorial...</i> A BIBLICAL OBLIGATION David Brown	2
<i>Assistant Editorial...</i> WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT? Michael Light	6
CHURCHES AND PUBLIC CHARITIES <i>THE SEQUEL</i> Kenneth D. Cohn, CPA	10
DEAVER'S DIRECT OPERATION Stephen Wiggins	17
DEAVER'S ACTS 2:41 ARGUMENT IMPLIES CALVINISM Marion R. Fox	22
THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: NO ROOM FOR DOGMATISM Keith A. Mosher, Sr.	24
BELIEF IN GOD'S WONDERFUL PROVIDENCE Victor M. Eskew	25
<i>One Woman's Perspective...</i> “LAST TRAIN INTO CHINA” Annette B. Cates	27
THE SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN Wayne Price	27
<i>The Last Word...</i> Enmity Because of Truth? Kent Bailey	31

rant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping; lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough..." (Isaiah 56:10, 11).

What shall we say then to these charges that are meant to label us to be something less than Godly? In the light of the scriptures we can only say that we are thankful that some have taken note of the fact that we are not dumb dogs nor the companions of witches. Indeed, it seems that the witches among us do not mind barking loud and long at us in an attempt to raise their alarm to warn their own motley breed of "pot lickers" that we have gone a witch-hunting

AMAZING HYPOCRISY

It is sad but true that the Lord's church has always had certain poor souls in it who condemn and oppose those they deem guilty of "the sin of labeling" and so on—but engage in condemnation and labeling themselves in opposing us. And their inconsistency and hypocrisy does not trouble them at all. These same pious people are highly offended because of those who judge others—but they readily judge those whom they deem guilty of judging. They are quick to judge our motives by charging us with being unloving in what we do—but they do not consider themselves unloving as they judge and label us. They employ harsh language when they call us "knuckleheads," "witch-hunters," "watchdogs" "legalists," "Pharisees" and the like or worse—but they do not see that they are using what they call harsh language when it is directed toward us.

They are inconsistent at best, hypocrites at worst and unrighteous characters through and through. They are blind guides. Of such people Jesus said: **"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matthew 15:14).

A FORGOTTEN AND/OR AN IGNORED PART OF CHRISTIAN LIVING?

We also know that a part of Christian living involves defending faithful brethren against the onslaughts of evil men. It is a shame that certain brethren (some of them think they are exceedingly faithful to the Lord) adamantly refuse to publicly and without apology stand along side a Christian when unrighteous characters are doing all within their power to destroy one's Godly reputation.

An example of such sinful conduct is seen in the actions of a certain elder in Austin, Texas. Without correct evidence and no interest in getting it, he slandered a faithful brother verbally. But to this slandered brother's face he presents himself as a friend. What

was it that Jesus said about "whited sepulchers"—how they appear on the outside in contrast to the reality of the corruption found within (Matthew 23: 27, 28)? At least over the last several years some have opened their eyes to his gossip, backbiting and hypocrisy.

I am persuaded that the lack of proper action on the part of these so-called friends is nothing more or less than desertion under fire and dereliction of duty in the face of the enemy. They are cowards. In carnal warfare, if it could be proven that such was the case with a soldier, the sentence for such a crime could be death. And it should be.

"I HAVE HEARD MANY SUCH THINGS: MISERABLE COMFORTERS ARE YE ALL" (JOB 16:1)

Indeed we have experienced the solace (?) offered by certain brethren who declare they are behind us in the fight against error. But they are so far behind us, if we had a telescope strong enough to see them, we would only see their cowering, quivering forms peeping out from under their own beds as they begged someone to protect them. And, if they are doing anything they are doing their best to shoot us in the back.

JUST WHAT GOD WANTED—A ROCK IN THE GIANT'S FOREHEAD AND A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART TO PUT IT THERE

Saul and his unfaithful army at the time when Goliath called for a champion from the army of Israel to come out and fight him may best characterize some of today's so-called soldiers of the Cross of Christ. When David witnessed the unholy rabble's fearful and unfaithful response to Goliath's challenge (I Samuel 17:23-25), he put the following question to some of "Israel's finest": **"What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God"** (I Samuel 17:26). Following his brother Eliab's rebuke (typical of the unjustified criticisms launched against God's faithful by weak-kneed brethren), David asked two rhetorical questions. The questions and their obvious answers should be closely considered and pondered by all members of the church of Christ. David asked: **"What have I done now? Is there not a cause"** (I Samuel 17:29)? To make a long story a little shorter, David ended the whole sordid affair by knocking Goliath in the head with a rock and cutting off his head with the giant Philistine's own sword. Yes, that was a faithful and loving act of ser-

vice to God on the part of David—but I seriously doubt that the Philistines thought it was. And, we may be certain that Goliath was not thrilled with the outcome.

IN THIS ISSUE

In our February *CFTF* and, the Lord willing, other issues to follow, we are dealing with some of **Mac Deaver's** (hereafter M. Deaver) doctrine on the alleged direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. We will also examine some of the error of the present Pearl Street Church of Christ elders (**Joe Chism, Randy Morse** and **Harry Ledbetter**) pertaining to **Dub McClish's** (hereafter McClish) legal, ethical and biblical use of what the Internal Revenue Service calls a 501 (c)(3) public charity. Also appearing in this *CFTF* is material dealing with **Goebel Music's** (hereafter Music) activity in some of the Pearl Street elders' (hereafter PS elders) high jinks.

TO THE PEARL STREET ELDERS— PLEASE RELEASE THE AUDIOTAPES

We call on the PS elders to release the *audio-tapes (unedited and unaltered in any form or fashion) of the Pearl Street elders' meetings held on May 10 and May 14, 2003*. McClish is in complete favor of allowing the public distribution and hearing of said tapes. Are the PS elders refusing to release the tapes because they will reveal in Harry Ledbetter's own voice his accusation that Joe Chism was the cause of the problems in the PS eldership because of his (Joe Chism's) claim that he agreed with M. Deaver on the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian? Are the PS elders afraid to release the aforementioned tapes because they will prove that McClish is a liar?

After I had sent true/false questions to them, the PS elders answered me in a letter dated September 7, 2003 wherein they declined to answer the questions I sent them. They also informed me that they had recommended to Music and **Wayne French** (deacon at Pearl Street) not to answer any questions. However, in refusing to answer questions sent to him regarding what he understood the PS elders believed on this subject, M. Deaver directed me to the elders and Music for answers regarding what they believed (May we conclude that the Holy Spirit directly moved him to tell us to do that?). But right now that's a trip to a broken cistern. And it is the PS elders who have knocked the bottom out of it. Strange the Holy Spirit did not know to tell M. Deaver that it would do me no good to seek answers from the PS elders.

Moreover, in an Internet chat room in mid-November **Jacob Morse** (son of P.S. elder Randy Morse)

attempted to defend the PS elders in their slander of McClish. When pointed questions and comments were directed toward him by a number of chat room participants, in his frustration, he directed the questioners to the PS elders for their answers. Evidently the poor young man along with M. Deaver did not know that the order of the day from the PS elders was the sound of silence.

The PS elders ended their September 7, 2003 letter to me wherein they declined to answer my true/false questions with: **"We can assure the brotherhood, without reservations, that no elder at Pearl Street holds the false Deaver views relating to the Work of the Holy Spirit (bolded by elders)."** Well, I am sure that M. Deaver is happy to know just where he stands with the present PS elders. He told me to ask them about where they stood and their plain and bold statement is that M. Deaver, his father Roy, M. Deaver's sons, Weylan and Todd are all false teachers. As the late **June Carter Cash** used to say regarding such debacles, "Life gets tedious, don't it?" Now this gets rather interesting. M. Deaver states that Music agrees with him. Music will not answer "yea" or "nay" as to whether he agrees with M. Deaver. And, Music is under the oversight of the PS elders. So here is what we have: the elders at Pearl Street say M. Deaver is a false teacher. M. Deaver says that Music agrees with him. And Music, like Uncle Remus' Tar Baby, well, "He don't say nuth'n." If M. Deaver is telling the truth about Music agreeing with him on the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian, then the PS elders are overseeing a man, Music, who himself is a false teacher. The question is: "Is M. Deaver telling the truth about Music believing the same as he does concerning the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian?" I suggest that M. Deaver put all of that in a three line syllogism and see what conclusion pops out. And, this does not begin to touch the error regarding the IRS of which the PS elders and Music are too proud to repent and confess. Where is M. Deaver in that error? Well, as ole Uncle Remus' B'rer Fox found it expedient to do, "He jis lay lo." Of course, while M. Deaver continues to "lay lo" and Music, "he don't say nuth'n"—they both continue to benefit from what the Internal Revenue Service calls a 501 (c)(3) public charity. The Holy Spirit evidently has not directed either man to make a comment on the truth or falsity of the ignorant position taken by the PS elders on the matter.

Again, why will not the PS elders release the

aforementioned audiotapes? Surely the tapes will at least confirm that the PS elders' have always believed that M. Deaver and company are false teachers. IN RELEASING THOSE TAPES WHAT DO PEARL STREET ELDERS HAVE TO LOSE? "Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!" It looks like it will take a direct operation of the Holy Spirit to unravel the tangled mess their brazen dishonesty has twisted together.

HONORABLE MEN ALL

And amended version of **Marc Anthony's** funeral oration for **Julius Caesar** from Shakespeare's tragedy seems appropriate for a closing to this editorial. Indeed how it does apply to the PS elders, for they are all honorable men.

*Friends, Christians, brethren, lend me your ears;
The noble Harry Ledbetter
Hath told you that Dub McClish was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Dub McClish answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Harry Ledbetter and the rest
of the Pearl Street elders—
For Harry Ledbetter is an honorable man;
So are all the Pearl Street elders, all honorable men.*

*...He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Harry Ledbetter says he was ambitious
And Harry Ledbetter is an honorable man.
Dub McClish hath brought much acclaim to Pearl
Street
And she hath benefited greatly from the reputation
thereof.
Did this in Dub McClish seem ambitious?
When Pearl Street was in need,
hath not Dub McClish wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Harry Ledbetter says he was ambitious;
And Harry Ledbetter is an honorable man.
...Look, in this place of his coat ran Randy Morse's
dagger through:
See what a rent the envious Joe Chism made:
Through this the well-beloved Harry Ledbetter
stabb'd;
And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of McClish follow'd it,
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Harry Ledbetter so unkindly knock'd, or no;
For Harry Ledbetter, as you know,
was Dub's close friend.*

ET TU, BROTHER LEDBETTER?

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

Assistant Editorial...

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Perhaps no other biblical topic has been more misunderstood and misrepresented than that of the Holy Spirit. For decades the church has dealt with the Pentecostal types of the world, and more than just a few even in the Lord's body. Sadly, two extremes currently seem to permeate the brotherhood; those who credit the Holy Spirit with virtually no work in our lives today, and those who credit Him with far too much. This issue of *Contending for the Faith* will attempt to provide the reader with a basic study of the Holy Spirit as well as some false positions put forth concerning him. It is impossible given our limited space to address every attribute and/or every false doctrine relative to the Spirit. However, we will do what we can to notice a few truths concerning the Holy Spirit's nature, as well as address a certain false position which

seems to be troubling some within the body.

HE IS A SPIRIT

We should not have an aversion to the fact that the Holy Spirit is a spiritual being. This fact has sent some into a frenzy of purely imagined positions concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit. God (the Father) is also referred to as a spirit (John 4:24). Jesus Christ (the Son) is called a spirit (II Corinthians 3:17). Each of the persons of the Godhead is referred to as a spirit. Hence, the Holy Spirit is no more mysterious than God or Christ.

HE IS ALSO A PERSON

The fact that the Holy Spirit is a spiritual being in no way negates his being a person. God is a person, Christ is a person and so is the Holy Spirit. Far too

many have reduced the Holy Spirit to nothing more than some type of influence, or some “mysterious it.” *The Key To Science of Theology* (a Mormon document) states, “The spirit is a divine fluid.” While this definition has absolutely no biblical basis, it does typify the attitude of far too many in the religious world.

Like the Father, the Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). Even in the church we have men who claim direct leadings (supernatural information, etc. . .) from the Spirit which puts them at odds with the truth (not to mention the claim itself being anti-biblical [Acts 20:32]). Biblical language repeatedly refers to the Holy Spirit in ways that reaffirm his personage (John 14:26; 15:26; Luke 16:13,14). Personal pronouns, masculine in gender and singular in number are used no less than eleven times in these verses relative to the Holy Spirit.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Holy Spirit is said to have a mind (Romans 8:27). He possesses knowledge (I Corinthians 2:11; 14:11). He has power of volition and power to forbid (I Corinthians 2:11; Acts 16:6,7; 21:11-14). He has goodness and the power to love (Psalm 143:10; Philippians 2:1). By Him we can have comfort (Romans 8:26; John 14:16f; Acts 9:31). Of his works the Bible says he: speaks (Acts 2:4), testifies (John 15:26), teaches (John 14:26), guides (John 16:13), leads (Acts 16:6f) searches (I Corinthians 2:10f), intercedes (Romans 8:26) and reveals (I Corinthians 2:10).

The Bible also reveals some of the emotions the person of the Holy Spirit has. Notice, the Spirit can be: lied to (Acts 5:3,9), resisted (Acts 7:51), despised (Hebrews 10:29), grieved (Ephesians 4:30), quenched (I Thessalonians 5:19) and blasphemed (Matthew 12:31, 32). All of these traits clearly show that the Holy Spirit is as much God as is the Son and the Father. They also show that he is as real and can be known and appreciated (and should be) as much as the others.

THE WORD AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Much has been made in the last few years of the fact that the Holy Spirit and the word (the Bible) are not the same. The truthfulness of this position is obvious and is not in dispute. But the attempt by some to affirm that the Spirit works on the hearts and minds of men apart from (they will style it “in conjunction with”) the word is without merit. The Bible does not affirm a direct Spirit on spirit working of the Holy Spirit. What the Holy Spirit does to us he does through the instrumentality of the word of God. One writer (Z.T.

Sweeney, *The Spirit and the Word*, pp. 122-125) in answering the question, “What are the things that might be accomplished by a direct personal indwelling (for the sake of this discussion— operation) of the Holy Spirit in Us?” said:

1. He might give us faith. But through the word he does that (Romans 10:17).

2. He might enable us to enjoy a new birth. But through the word he does that (I Peter 1:23).

3. He might give us light. But through the word he does that (Psalm 119:130).

4. He might give us wisdom. But through the word he does that (II Timothy 3:14, 15; Psalm 19:7).

5. He might convert us. But he does that through the word (Psalm 19:7).

6. He might open our eyes. But he does that through the word (Psalm 19:8).

7. He might give us understanding. But he does that through the word (Psalm 119:104).

8. He might quicken us. But he does that through the word (Psalm 119:50).

9. He might save us. But he does that through the word (James 1:21).

10. He might sanctify us. But he does that through the word (John 17:17).

11. He might purify us. But he does that through the word (I Peter 1:22).

12. He might cleanse us. But that he does through the word (John 15:3).

13. He might make us free from sin. But he does that through the word (Romans 6:17,18).

14. He might impart a divine nature. But he does that through the word (II Peter 1:4).

15. He might fit us for glory. But he does that through the word (Acts 20:32).

16. He might strengthen us. But he does that through the word (Psalm 119:28).

This list could be expanded but it should suffice to make the point. All that we need to get from this earth to glory is provided for us in the word of God. When we see allegedly smart men denying this fact we are made to wonder how they have missed this fundamental fact. No man yet has given an example of one thing the Holy Spirit does for the child of God that the Bible does not do. The reason for this is because such an example does not exist. And the day they attempt to give one they will simply be digressing further from the truth. It has been said that, “The Bible and common sense is sufficient to get a man to glory.” I too agree with that statement.

—Michael Light, Assistant Editor

The Silence of Music

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

called and told me he does not want you at this meeting.” Music also refused to let the meeting be taped.

M. Deaver sent one final letter to me (February 20) prior to these meetings. He did not advise me to call and question Music in this communication; instead he wrote: “I suggest that you talk with brother Joe Chism. Have you asked him what he believes with regard to the Holy Spirit? The view that I uphold is not a new view at all.” This statement was made shortly after Joe Chism had said in an elders’ meeting (in which I was present): “I’ve been telling people that I don’t agree with Mac; he agrees with me: I’ve believed that doctrine for forty years.” (If the reader is beginning to see a connection between M. Deaver, Music, and Joe Chism, it is no accident.)

RELUCTANCE (WEIR)

The four-year silence of Music as to whether or not he agrees with and supports the teaching of M. Deaver on the Holy Spirit is deafening. During the year 2000 Music was upset that he was losing support because certain charges were being levied against him regarding his convictions on whether or not the Holy Spirit works directly on man’s spirit in providing strength and wisdom to the Christian. Because of conversations with Music, I steadfastly refused to believe that he was in agreement with what M. Deaver was advocating about the direct work of the Holy Spirit. But M. Deaver was writing to the contrary. In the *Biblical Notes Quarterly* (January-March 2002) M. Deaver wrote:

Goebel Music agrees with us and we agree with him.... You can search till you are blue in the face and you will never find where we suggest for a moment that Goebel and the Deavers are in disagreement over the Holy Spirit (3).

In spite of what M. Deaver was saying, some congregations continued their support of Music even though various brethren by now were suggesting and/or insisting that he was in agreement with M. Deaver. Music indicated that he was purposely not keeping up (through periodicals, telephone calls, etc.) with what M. Deaver was teaching and thus was not currently aware of all the issues involved in the controversy. I strongly encouraged Music to formulate a statement to be dispersed to the brotherhood *denying* that he believed (if such were true) that the Holy Spirit works directly upon man’s spirit in providing strength and wisdom to the Christian (Ephesians 3:16; James 1:5). Music countered by saying that he did not want to do anything to jeopardize the impact of his new book—*A Resource and Reference Volume on the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit*. The book was copyrighted in 2000 and has been dis-

tributed to many states and foreign countries, but as of this date no statement from Music has been issued to deny or affirm the charges that were made against him.

In the debate with **Jerry Moffitt** at Pearl Street in Denton (November 2000) M. Deaver affirmed: “*The Bible teaches that, in addition to His sanctifying influence through His Word, the Holy Spirit operates directly to sanctify the heart of the faithful Christian.*” When two other brethren and I met with Music on March 15, 2003, he would not answer with a “yes” or “no” when we asked him if he agreed with M. Deaver’s proposition. He said, “I would have to give that some thought.” Then he said, “Ask me what Goebel believes and I will tell you.” We then asked, “Goebel, do you believe that the Holy Spirit works directly on man’s spirit in providing strength and wisdom to the Christian?” Instead of giving a “yes” or “no” answer to the question, he stated that he believes Romans 8:26.

Concerned parties have asked this question of Music more than once, and there is yet to be a “yes” or “no” answer given. *Why?* Assuredly, Music has not been asked to answer a trick question. If M. Deaver and numerous other brethren can answer this question, why cannot Music answer it? Faithful supporters deserve a straightforward answer to such questions from those they support. All who believe the Bible believe in Romans 8:26. God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit help the faithful Christian—but *how?* While we all believe Romans 8:26, we do *not* all believe that the Holy Spirit operates directly on man’s spirit.

REFUSAL TO ANSWER

A steadfast refusal to answer a legitimate question can be quite revealing. What if one inquires, “Do you believe in theistic evolution?” The answer forthcoming is, “I believe in Genesis 1:1.” To affirm belief in Genesis 1:1 does not answer where one stands regarding theistic evolution. The question must be answered either “yes” or “no.” The same is true regarding the question, “Do you believe that the Holy Spirit works directly on man’s spirit in providing strength and wisdom to the Christian?” If Music believes that Romans 8:26 affirms such to be true, then why not give a “yes” or “no” answer to the question?

M. Deaver was asked a question at the debate during the Annual Denton Lectures similar to the following:

Mac, per your belief that the Holy Spirit directly strengthens man’s spirit, if I sincerely pray for strength

to overcome some temptation but instead it overcomes me, can I not conclude that the Holy Spirit failed to strengthen me sufficiently?

The answer M. Deaver gave was: “It’s just like the Word of God—one can accept or reject it.” I beg to disagree! One can indeed either accept or reject the word of God, but *if* the Holy Spirit is *directly* (not through the word) strengthening me, I do not have this option. Will one charge the Holy Spirit with only a partial strengthening that is not sufficient to the task at hand, or will one simply say that the Holy Spirit’s direct strengthening can be refused? I mention this incident because Music was made aware of the previous question and answer, but he never would comment as to his convictions regarding this matter.

M. Deaver states loudly and distinctly that Music is in full agreement with his position on the Holy Spirit. He has declared such to be the case both publicly and privately. Music’s response to an inquiring brotherhood has been neither loud nor distinct but rather completely evasive. Music insists that he did not give M. Deaver permission to use his name in regard to this matter, but such does *not* address where Music stands.

SILENCE (SUMMERS)

The meeting the men of Rowlett had with Music was taped, and they went back through the discussion later in a men’s meeting. Weir was authorized to write Music a letter (May 8, 2003) in which he lamented that Music, after two hours, had still not answered their question. Reluctantly, they decided to discontinue their \$600 a month support effective June of 2003.

After I moved to Florida, I wrote three letters to Music on this issue, pleading with him to deny any agreement with M. Deaver, if he did indeed disagree. In the first one (August 15, 2003) I told him how much I had admired his work over the years and how I had defended his name. Then I pleaded with him to declare his views by agreeing with or denying the propositions M. Deaver affirmed and denied in the Deaver-Moffitt Debate. He ignored my request entirely but sent me a copy of his book on the Holy Spirit (August 21, 2003), concerning which he asked that I “**READ IT IN ITS COMPLETE ENTIRETY—FROM THE VERY FIRST, YES, EVEN THE PREFACE, ETC., EVERY WORD!**” (emphasis Music’s).

In my second letter (October 17, 2003) I told him it “is not realistic to request that someone read 1,414 pages of material before” agreeing to answer a question. I then reminded him of his own words from page 41 of *Behold the Pattern*: “The life of Jesus Christ forms the most beautiful example the Christian can imitate.” I agreed and reminded him of **Alexander Campbell’s** assessment of Jesus from page 42: “He unsheathed His sword at the Jordan River, and threw away the scabbard.” The following application was then made:

Brother Music, I always thought that this description fit you—until this past year. Are you following the example of Jesus in your steadfast refusal to answer a simple question? Do you really think the Lord would ask someone to read a 1400+ page book before talking with him? Wouldn’t that attitude have surprised the woman at the well? Brother Music, why have you sheathed your sword? To paraphrase the great outspoken prophet Elijah (who never learned the art of hedging), “If Mac is right, then join him and tell the rest of us we are wrong; if he is wrong, why don’t you tell him plainly, so that he can understand it?”

His October 24, 2003 response once again failed to provide an answer. Instead he wrote:

GARY, YOU, YOURSELF, CAN HELP ANSWER YOUR OWN QUESTIONS IF YOU WILL ONLY STUDY, EXAMINE TRUTHFULLY ALL THE MATERIAL! HOWEVER, IF YOU KNOW IT ALL AND CAN DOCUMENT IT BY THE WORD OF GOD, THEN JUST CONTINUE AS YOU ARE DOING (emphasis Music’s).

He said he was sending a copy of his letter to the PS elders, “**AS I WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM....**”

In my third letter (October 31, 2003) I reminded him of the purpose for which I had initially written:

In my first letter of August 11th I outlined my predicament to you with respect to my defense of your reputation. I supplied you with the comments Mac Deaver had made, assuring me that I was losing my credibility. You have been given statements which would clarify once and for all whether or not, in fact, you agree with his position.

I urged him to speak directly to this point. His third letter (November 6, 2003) was brief, and he did not address the subject at all.

We have all been very patient and respectful in trying to get Music to tell us where he stands—especially considering that M. Deaver has time and again assured us that they are in agreement. No one has jumped to any conclusions or acted rashly here, but nearly four years have gone by, and Music is silent. Ironically, over the past few months the elders at Pearl Street have repeatedly pressed McClish to debate M. Deaver at the Pearl Street building and expressed amazement that he will not do so. Yet no one is calling on Music to *debate* his views. We have only begged him to *declare* them, which he has steadfastly refused to do. Perhaps the PS elders should urge Music to make known his position on the direct influence of the Spirit, since he is working “so closely together” with them. Brethren, especially those supporting Music, have a right to expect clarity from him. Perhaps some who are especially close to him might encourage him to be forthright in this matter.

—5410 Lake Howell
Winter Park, Florida 32792-1097

CHURCHES AND PUBLIC CHARITIES THE SEQUEL

Kenneth D. Cohn, CPA

In an open letter to the brotherhood dated July 31, 2003, the eldership (**Joe Chism, Harry H. Ledbetter,** and **Randy Morse**) of the Pearl Street Church of Christ (referred to hereafter as “PS”) in Denton, Texas made certain serious accusations against brother **Dub McClish** (referred to hereafter as “McClish”) respecting Evangelistic Services, Inc. (“ESI”), a public charity McClish established under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (“IRC”) to expedite his preaching and teaching the Gospel. (Unless the source of a document is otherwise credited herein, all references to documents may be viewed in the original by logging on to the website, www.aboutpearlstreet.com and following the appropriate links.) In response to a previous open letter by the PS elders dated July 24, 2003, I emailed them asking for additional information so that the accusations made against McClish could be properly evaluated. No response was received. Indeed, no response to a request for information has ever been received directly from the PS elders. On the other hand, McClish provided specific facts, conversations, dates, and the like, when requested. *On the basis of the facts provided, I concluded that the accusations made by the PS elders are without substance and patently false.*

SOME CLAIM OF THE PS ELDERS

In the July 24th and July 31st letters, the PS elders claimed, among other things, that McClish was operating a “barely legal” and “unscriptural” public charity. They recommended that McClish’s supporters divert their contributions to brother **Goebel Music**. In these letters, the PS elders made certain knowledge claims respecting public charities that did not agree with the IRC, court cases, IRS publications, or just plain common sense. After reading these letters, I decided to write an article about churches and public charities to provide the discerning reader with sufficient technical information to properly evaluate the PS statements respecting Section 501(c)(3) public charities. (That article appeared in the September 2003 issue of *Contending for the Faith* and is posted on the above referenced website. This article should be read in conjunction with the September article. McClish did not ask me to write either article.)

My article did little or possibly no good for the PS elders. Appearing over their signatures, a letter dated September 24, 2003 (accessed on the above website

by choosing the link “PS Elders on McClish-No. 3 & McClish Response” under the section entitled “The Pearl Street Letters and McClish Responses”), was distributed to the brotherhood characterizing my September article as a “caustic critique” consisting “**mainly** of ridicule, accusations, misrepresentations and sarcasm” (bold added). The reader of the September article may judge for himself whether it consisted *mainly* of ridicule, accusations, misrepresentations and sarcasm. However, their claim is a tactic to divert attention away from the real issue—did I misrepresent any facts? *If so, which facts did I misrepresent?*

The September 24th letter further states that my article was “obviously prejudiced” presumably against them and in favor of McClish. Prejudice is an adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts. I meticulously examined the information available to me, both their writings and McClish’s writings, and I drew the proper conclusions. *The PS elders provided nothing of what I requested from them.* I had to ask McClish to provide what the PS elders wrote or referenced, which he graciously and promptly provided. (Although I have never known McClish to lie, I will still reason with the evidence and draw only the conclusions warranted thereby. If he were to tell me that a hen dipped snuff, I would believe him, but still I am going to look under her wing for the snuff can.)

The PS elders have claimed that ESI is (1) a “barely legal” organization, (2) the recipient of money laundered by them, (3) a legal, but unethical organization, (4) an unscriptural organization like a missionary society, and (5) organized for tax evasion purposes. I will first address the tax evasion issue in the immediately following section and then respond to the unscriptural organization assertion. In the third major section, I will set forth a rejoinder to selected statements made by the PS elders. Then I will make some closing comments.

TAX EVASION AND TAX AVOIDANCE

Although the PS elders stated that ESI is not an illegal organization, they claimed that ESI was “organized apparently for the sole purpose of **evading** taxes” (bold added), which, if so, would clearly be an illegal purpose. IRC Section 7201 states:

Any person who willfully attempts in any manner to evade or defeat any tax imposed by this title or the payment thereof shall, in addition to other penalties

provided by law, be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than \$100,000 (\$500,000 in the case of a corporation), or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both, together with the costs of prosecution.

However, the Internal Revenue Service Manual also states:

Avoidance of taxes is not a criminal offense. Any attempt to reduce, avoid, minimize, or alleviate taxes by legitimate means is permissible. The distinction between avoidance and evasion is fine, yet definite. One who avoids tax does not conceal or misrepresent. He shapes events to reduce or eliminate tax liability and, upon the happening of the events, makes a complete disclosure. Evasion, on the other hand, involves deceit, subterfuge, camouflage, concealment, some attempt to color or obscure events, or makes things seem other than they are. For example, the creation of a bona fide partnership to reduce the tax liability of a business by dividing the income among several individual partners is tax avoidance. However, the facts of a particular case may show that an alleged partnership was not, in fact, established and that one or more of the alleged partners secretly returned his or her share of the profits to the real owner of the business, who, in turn, did not report this income. This would be an instance of attempted evasion (Section 9.1.3.3.2.1).

DUTY TO CAESAR

When supporters of McClish's work contributed funds to PS and claimed a charitable deduction on their income tax returns, were they *evading* taxes (a criminal act) or *avoiding* taxes (a permissible and expected act in complete harmony with Matthew 22:21)? Any rational person operating a commercial enterprise would to the best of his/her ability structure transactions and shape business events in expectation of reducing his tax burden. The PS elders and all other rational persons do the same. Yet, when McClish, also a rational person, does the same as the PS elders and all other rational persons in this regard, the PS elders accuse him of tax *evasion*.

All Christians have a duty to **“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s”** (Matthew 22:21). *Where in Holy Writ is the obligation enjoined upon the Christian to render therefore unto Caesar the things which are not Caesar’s and that Caesar never required to be rendered to him? Will the PS elders provide an answer? Paul says in Romans 13:7 to “Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due ...”* (NKJV). Governing authorities specify what is their due. There is no obligation here or anywhere else in the Bible to pay the government more or less than the amount that it has specified is due. If there is some tax relief or benefit made available by the government to certain taxpayers, such as preachers, and such taxpayers take full advantage thereof,

neither Romans 13:7 nor any other Scripture is violated.

Is it wrong for preachers to take advantage of tax laws not available to non-preachers? The apostle Paul was a Roman citizen. When he was about to be examined under scourging in Jerusalem upon orders of the commander of the Roman garrison, he inquired of the centurion whether it was lawful to scourge an uncondemned Roman citizen. Of course, it was not lawful and he was not scourged. That benefit of Roman law was not available to the Jews, Paul's brothers in the flesh, who lacked Roman citizenship. If the apostle Peter were in the same circumstances as Paul, he could not have escaped scourging. Jesus, not a Roman citizen, was scourged mercilessly by the Roman soldiers. He could not have used Roman law for personal gain. If it was right for Paul to use the law of his day for personal advantage not available to all others, why is it wrong, as claimed by the PS elders, for McClish to use the law today for tax relief not available to all others. If the use of Roman law by Paul and United States law by McClish are not parallel, then why not?

IS ESI LIKE A MISSIONARY SOCIETY?

The concept of a missionary society is not peculiar to the Lord's church. Many denominational churches employ it in one manifestation or another. A missionary society, in its conventional sense, is a group of individuals, usually connected organically to a religious body, that assumes to itself the obligation of the church to preach the Gospel or to perform some other duty delegated to the church in Holy Writ. Missionary societies, or any controlling body within a religious order, emanate from the concept of the church in its universal sense. The Bible does speak of the church in a universal sense with Christ as its head and only officer. The apostles were ambassadors of Christ and were never, in their apostolic capacity, officers of the church. Elders over a local church are officers only of that local church.

During the 19th Century restoration movement, the question arose as to how best to carry on evangelism. In answering this question, **W. K. Pendleton**, son-in-law of **Alexander Campbell**, reasoned thus: God gave the church universal the responsibility to evangelize the world; He did not specify the method that the church universal was to use; therefore, the church universal may employ any expedient method it chooses; Pendleton considered the missionary society to be that expedient method. There are two serious flaws in his reasoning: First, it ignores the fact that the method has been given. Although the Bible does speak of the church in its universal sense to which all New Testament Christians belong, the Bible speaks of only the local church (the largest and smallest organized entity of the worldwide body of Christ) carrying out evangelism or any other obligation imposed on the universal church. The

pattern for evangelism is clear: Christians in local congregations teach others; thereby people are converted to Christ and, with all other things being scripturally equal, in time they are organized according to the New Testament pattern. This process is continually repeated. Second, if the church universal is to carry out the obligations laid on the church, then by implication there must be a universal organization to carry it out. History proves that when men endeavor to carry out the obligations of the local church within a church universal framework, the result has been the formation of an organization that makes laws for the church. It becomes a substitute for the church universal. We see this in Roman Catholicism with their pope and magisterium and in Protestant denominationalism with their synods, conventions, conferences, councils, and the like.

The result of reasoning like Pendleton's was the missionary society. In the typical operation of the missionary society, participating churches send delegates that, in turn, make decisions to be imposed on the local congregations. The participating congregations must accept the majority decision of the delegates if they wish to remain in the missionary society (and in fellowship with member churches). When a missionary society makes decisions (rules, laws, or opinions) to be imposed on the local church, it has become a substitute for the church universal. When a local church cedes its obligation to preach the gospel to the missionary society, it has given up something that the Bible authorizes only it to do. When elders over a local church cede legislative authority over optional matters to the majority will of the delegates to the missionary society, they have, without New Testament authority, given up their obligation to rule in matters of expediency. It is precisely for these reasons that faithful brethren oppose such arrangements.

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CHURCH

Today, any organization that is a substitute for the church, legislates for the church, or assumes the obligations that scripturally are laid only on the local church, is correctly likened to the missionary society. With the rise of "anti-ism," certain scriptural arrangements among local churches to carry on evangelism or benevolence were erroneously likened to the missionary society.

The PS elders make the claim that ESI, with its stated mission, is an unscriptural organization. In doing so, they make the erroneous assumption that ESI is preaching and teaching the Gospel, the obligation of the local church. The PS elders assert that preaching in the First Century "was accomplished without **any extra-biblical organization like a missionary society or public charity.**" The placement of the words "missionary society" and "public charity" in the same statement is likely contrived to suggest that ESI is a

missionary society and, therefore, is unscriptural. A missionary society may be a Section 501(c)(3) public charity, *but one similarity does not make the organizations equivalent.*

ESI, a Texas non-profit corporation, is a creation of the state and qualified by the United States of America as a Section 501(c)(3) public charity to *expedite* the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. ESI is not a natural person; accordingly, it cannot preach or teach anything. Dub McClish, as a natural person, is preaching and teaching the Gospel. He was a member of PS, a New Testament church, and under the oversight of the PS elders. Therefore, PS, the local church, was fulfilling, in part, the Great Commission to "**Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**" (Mark 16:15) through the work of McClish. ESI only expedited what the individual, McClish, was doing as a preacher of the Gospel.

Unlike McClish, ESI does not preach the Gospel to every creature; it does not preach the Gospel to **any** creature. It cannot do something that is physically impossible for it to do. It is a mechanism of the state to provide tax advantages in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel by McClish. The existence or nonexistence of ESI had no effect at all on the obligation of PS, the local church, to preach the Gospel to every creature, accomplished, in part, through the work of McClish. ESI made no decisions to be imposed on PS or her elders. In fact, ESI makes no decisions at all; it cannot since it is not a natural person. The PS eldership, having had oversight of the natural person McClish, ceded no legislative authority to ESI in matters of expediency. Therefore, in no respect is ESI like a missionary society.

"ANTI" ARGUMENTS

The arguments the PS elders make against ESI are the same ones our "anti" brethren have made over the years to oppose, for example, support of orphans' homes. In various arguments, they have charged that any such arrangement is a substitute for the church because it (1) assumes obligations that only the local church can do (which they have not proved), or (2) works through a corporation. Do the PS elders object to the use of a non-profit corporation to expedite works of the church in preaching or benevolence? (Perhaps they would consider corporations "extra-biblical organizations" since the Bible does not mention corporations.) Benevolence and preaching in the First Century were accomplished without the legal entities existing today (modern legal and economic systems are vastly more complex), but that does not make the expeditious use of such entities today unscriptural.

For example, Cherokee Home for Children in Cherokee, Texas is a restored home for children bereft of parents to which PS has sent support. It is also a

Texas non-profit corporation and a public charity, and yet PS has not characterized it as being an extra-biblical benevolent organization (although they should do so to be consistent with their position on ESI). The reality is that PS is supporting the Cherokee *home* (not the natural home, but the restored home) and not the Cherokee *corporation*. The Cherokee corporation is merely a funding, risk management, and tax mechanism to expedite what the Cherokee home was established to do as a home acting in the place of the natural home—provide care for children bereft of parents. Likewise, ESI is merely a mechanism to expedite what McClish does—preaching the Gospel. Whether or not the Cherokee corporation existed, the restored home would still be there helping Christians discharge a part of their obligation as set out in James 1:27. And, whether or not ESI existed, McClish would still be discharging his obligation to preach the Gospel as such passages as Mark 16:15 and II Timothy 2:2 authorize him to do. For emphasis I say again: The corporations merely give legal advantage to the Cherokee restored home and to the preacher McClish, respectively, as each discharges obligations placed upon them by the authority of Jesus in the words of the New Testament (Colossians 3:17; Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7).

COMPARING EACH ACTION

A comparison of each action taken (positive element) or not taken (negative element) by the PS elders in respect of Cherokee and ESI will emphasize their inconsistent treatment of ESI. Has PS received tax-deductible contributions, directly or indirectly, in support of the Cherokee home and McClish? *Yes, it has.* Have the PS elders written checks out of such tax-deductible funds to Cherokee Home for Children, the corporation, and to ESI? *Yes, they have.* Does the Cherokee home use the funds held by the Cherokee corporation to operate the home? *Yes, it does.* Does Dub McClish use the funds held by ESI to preach and teach the Gospel? *Yes, he does.* Do the PS elders, functioning as elders, have control over Cherokee Home for Children, the home? *No, they do not.* Cherokee is a home and the PS elders, functioning as elders, have no authority over the home. Did the PS elders, functioning as elders, have control over the preacher McClish? *Yes, they did.* How was this the case? Because they and McClish agreed that the PS elders would have oversight of his work. Was PS, the local church, fulfilling the Great Commission, in part, through its member, preacher McClish? *Yes, it was.* Was ESI fulfilling the Great Commission by preaching the Gospel? *No, it is incapable of doing so.* Do/did the PS elders, functioning as elders, have control over the Board of Directors of Cherokee Home for Children, the corporation, or ESI? *No, for governance of such corporations is not within the scope of their authority as elders.* Did the PS elders cede their authority as elders to the

Board of Directors of Cherokee or ESI? *No, they did not.* Neither the Board of Directors of Cherokee nor ESI make decisions that are/were imposed on PS. The PS elders make/made all decisions within PS to expedite the work of PS including whether or not to send funds to Cherokee, the corporation, in support of Cherokee, the home, or to ESI, the corporation, in support of Dub McClish, the preacher.

Which one of these positive elements is not authorized by the New Testament? Which of the negative elements is authorized by the New Testament? Or, which one of these positive elements is forbidden by the “**perfect law of liberty**” (James 1:25)? Which one of the negative elements is authorized by the same? The answer: Not one of the positive elements previously listed violates a direct statement, an example or what is implied by the words of the New Testament. Conversely, one cannot find a direct statement, an example, or an implication which authorizes a listed negative element. All actions taken were authorized by the word of God. *Since each and every one of the positive elements is authorized by the New Testament and not one of the negative elements was put into action, the whole is authorized.* Nevertheless, the PS elders condemn ESI but not Cherokee. Thus, the PS elders and their supporters find themselves in the sad and unenviable position of opposing an expedient authorized by God.

NOTHING CHANGES

To borrow the apostle Paul’s words, “**as we said before, so say I now again**” (Galatians 1:9a): As a New Testament church, PS fulfills its obligation, in part, to “**to visit the fatherless**” (James 2:1) by supporting the Cherokee restored home. It also fulfilled its obligation, in part, to “**preach the gospel to every creature**” (Mark 16:15) when it supported the work of preacher McClish. Nothing changes nor is any scripture violated merely because PS sends/sent the funds to Cherokee, the corporation, or to ESI. To reiterate, ESI can do no preaching or teaching—it is not a natural person. McClish does the preaching and teaching. ESI merely expedites the preaching and teaching by McClish by minimizing taxes and preserving continuity of his work if the overseeing eldership is changed—as indeed it was.

If a thing is *authorized* by the New Testament to be used in the furtherance of the Gospel, it does not become *unauthorized and thus unscriptural* merely because the government makes available some advantage in its use. The apostle Paul used the Roman government to pay his passage to Rome so he could preach there (Acts 23:11, 25:12). As the apostle Paul used what the government of his day offered to minimize his expenses in preaching the Gospel, so McClish is using what the United States government offers to minimize his expenses (taxes) in preaching the Gospel. Like Paul, McClish is using good stewardship of the funds avail-

able to him.

A REJOINDER

In the following paragraphs, I will set forth a rejoinder to selected statements in the PS elders' September 24th letter. For ease of reference, I will designate first the page and then the paragraph, item, or question as appropriate. Personally, I am appalled at the profound ignorance of law and misuse of the Bible exhibited by whoever wrote the September letter. *As we say in Texas, if ignorance goes for \$40 a barrel, I want drilling rights on that man's head.*

PS ELDERS CONFESS MONEY LAUNDERING

Page 1, paragraph 2—The PS elders apologized and asked forgiveness for laundering the money of McClish's supporters received by PS and remitted to ESI. Legally, money laundering is conduct or acts designed in whole or part to conceal or disguise the nature, location, source, ownership, or control of money to avoid a transaction reporting requirement under state or federal law or to disguise the fact that the money was acquired by illegal means. Money laundering is a felony and the PS elders, having confessed openly, should therefore immediately surrender to a U.S. marshal for arraignment and prosecution. The PS elders have admitted that ESI is a legal operation. Furthermore, the sources and uses of funds received by ESI are fully disclosed on its Form 990 filed annually and open to public scrutiny. Therefore, they imply that McClish's **supporters** acquired their funds from illegal sources. If PS was laundering money, the right course for the PS elders is to turn in the contributors for arraignment and prosecution at the same time they turn themselves in. If the PS elders are saying that clean money is being "laundered" into dirty money, it is inescapable that their "washing machine" is doing the laundering and that they are using "dirt" for detergent.

Page 1, paragraph 3—The PS elders asserted that I ridiculed them for having taken more than ten years to discover that ole deceiver, McClish, in their midst even though Harry Ledbetter actively coordinated financial arrangements between PS and ESI for all of those years. They attempted to justify the delay in identifying McClish's alleged deception by claiming "when he turns and rends you, without cause, his deceptions become more easily identified." This statement reveals more than they intended because it reveals the true motivation for their attacks on McClish. The term "turning and rending" used by the PS elders is intended to portray McClish as viciously overturning the sweet harmony existing among the PS elders. Critical in their statement is the timeframe of the "when." It was "when" McClish opposed brother Chism's advocacy of the doctrine propagated mainly by **Mac Deaver** that declares a direct influence or working of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of man. Such opposition

resulted in McClish's resignation from the PS eldership. It was at this point that the PS elders needed a way to quickly discredit his opposition. Their ill-conceived attack on ESI was the result.

IT'S ALL ABOUT ENDING THE LECTURESHIP?

Page 1, paragraph 6—The PS elders issued a bold statement, **'BRETHREN, IT IS ALL ABOUT OUR ENDING THE LECTURESHIP,'** and then proceeded to write six pages attacking McClish's public charity, ESI. Since they allege it is all about ending the lectureship, it is strange indeed that they found it necessary to focus so much attention on ESI and to seek information on other public charities, such as Memphis School of Preaching, Apologetics Press, Inc., Fishers of Men, and other organizations. What do ESI or any of these other organizations have to do with **"OUR ENDING THE LECTURESHIP"**? Perhaps there is another motive at work here. The tapes of the PS elders' meetings conducted on May 10 and 14, 2003 would likely settle the assertion that it is about ending the Annual Denton Lectures or whether it has to do with brother Chism's advocacy of the Deaver doctrine. *The PS elders are holding on to those tapes tighter than they would a brand new \$100 bill. Why will they not release these tapes? Perhaps the tapes do not support their claims and accusations.*

Page 3, paragraph 1—The PS elders claim that the IRS stated emphatically that PS and ESI are not the same. They are correct. PS and ESI *are not* the same. PS is a public charity operating as a church and ESI is a public charity operating as a *work* of the church. Both are tax-exempt Section 501(c)(3) public charities. Because PS is a church, it did not have to apply to the IRS for exemption nor is it required to file an annual report on Form 990. On the other hand, ESI had to apply for exemption and is subject to stringent disclosure and reporting requirements. In Texas, both PS and ESI are exempt from income taxes, sales taxes, and property taxes. Both may accept tax deductible contributions. Both may have employees. Both are required to report payments to individuals for services rendered as wages on Form W-2, or as miscellaneous income on Form 1099. Both are required upon dissolution to transfer remaining assets to another public charity or the government. The PS elders claim not to be experts on Section 501(c)(3) organizations, but then write pages as if they were. They claim that the IRS is educating them. "O wretched men that you are. Who will deliver you from this body of law?" Please, let me help you!

FALSE CHARGES

Page 3, statement 2—The PS elders claim that they have not charged McClish with operating an illegal organization. They did, however, charge McClish (through an unnamed "Christian brother, who is a law-

yer familiar with such public charities”) with operating a “barely legal” organization. They claim to have in their possession over 150 government documents pertaining to public charities. No doubt they are still reading them, for which I am grateful because they indicate more could be said—the perfect antidote to an overdose of aspirin. The PS elders state, “Incidentally, the IRS has given us every indication that they would welcome a written request to audit this charity.” (Can you just picture some IRS agent arriving at work each morning with eager expectation that someone has requested in writing that ESI be audited? Imagine the disappointment at not receiving said request.) The PS elders, who by their own admission are partners in the alleged deception, could make this written request, but will not. Why not? Because they would have to give substantive reasons for such a request and they cannot. (“**IT IS ALL ABOUT ENDING THE LECTURESHIP**” is not a substantive reason.) Perhaps someone will request the IRS audit PS for admitted money laundering.

PS ELDERS’ QUESTIONS

Page 3, question 1—The PS elders question the need for the ESI public charity. First, it affords exemption from income and other taxes thereby extending the impact of contributions in support of McClish’s preaching and teaching efforts. As a matter of public policy, federal and state governments have favored public charities, including churches, as serving the public good. Such favor is evidenced by (1) tax benefits available to public charities that are not available to commercial enterprises; and (2) tax deductions for donors. Second, as the PS elders have unwittingly demonstrated, ESI preserves the continuity of McClish’s work when it is necessary to move the oversight of his work to another eldership, which necessity arose when he resigned as a PS elder. The third need is really a benefit to PS. They were relieved from the obligation to issue a W-2 to McClish for amounts paid to him or maintain payroll records on him. That obligation was assumed by ESI. *I wonder if PS issues a W-2 or Form 1099 to Goebel Music for support funds paid to him by PS. Since they oversee his work, they have that obligation and may have done so. But let them so state.* Fourth, ESI, as a corporation, provides some measure of risk protection (as all corporations do).

Page 3, question 2—The PS elders question why they were not told from the beginning about ESI and its work. Okay, let’s review. For over ten years the PS elders received funds earmarked for McClish’s preaching and teaching work. For those same years, at least one of the PS elders wrote checks payable to ESI for those funds. Furthermore, the PS elders claim that the information in their possession was obtained from “documents that are completely open for public scrutiny” (including theirs). Yet, oblivious to it all, they did not have

a clue what ESI was for. Suddenly, when McClish, to use their words, “turns and rends them,” it becomes clear to them that they had been deceived.

Page 3, questions 3 and 4—The PS elders wonder why McClish’s supporters were not asked to make their support checks payable to ESI. It is very simple. McClish’s work, which was expedited by ESI, was under the oversight of the PS elders. Therefore, funds were sent to PS. If the PS elders objected to McClish’s preaching and teaching work, they could have withheld funds from ESI. The PS elders state “[T]he deception involved in this matter should be obvious to anyone who can see through a ladder.” I see the deception in this matter, but it is their ladder through which I am looking. Only an *individual* can perform the organizational purpose of ESI, preaching and teaching the Gospel, and the *individual*, Dub McClish, is now and has always been under the oversight of an eldership. ESI, the corporation, is not under the oversight of an eldership, and never has been. McClish’s automobile has never been under the oversight of an eldership, yet both ESI and his automobile expedite his work, which *is* under the oversight of an eldership.

Page 4, question 5—Apparently, the PS elders would like all other preachers to be informed about the great “deal” that McClish has enjoyed through ESI. I can help. I teach a tax course for preachers and churches that includes the means to achieve statutorily the great “deal” the PS elders long for all preachers to have. In spite of having been told, the PS elders apparently still do not know that their own preachers have available the same tax benefits through PS as enjoyed by McClish through ESI. Such benefits are available to preachers through their employing churches and I would be pleased to inform them how to achieve such. And yes, I do think of the money the church and preachers can save through use of these legal techniques, and so should all who claim to be stewards of the Lord’s money.

Page 4, question 6—The PS elders want to know why McClish claimed on the qualification request form (IRS Form 1023) that ESI is a church. One familiar with church reporting requirements knows the IRS (or any governmental agency) adheres to a denominational church concept and assumes an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Whether it is exemption from income taxes or self-employment taxes, the categories offered on the applicable IRS forms do not fit conceptually or definitionally the church as the Bible defines the church. One must either modify the form (and possibly confuse the IRS) or select the category that best conforms to the way the true church works. McClish chose to modify the form by indicating that ESI is “a work of the church,” which modification was easily identifiable on the form examined by the PS elders. It was also easily identifiable by the IRS, which approved the application without comment.

**A CHALLENGE, AN OFFER, AN APPEAL,
A WARNING, AND A PREDICTION**

The PS elders state that they “**WANT MCCLISH TO CHALLENGE US IN WRITING ON ANY ERROR WE HAVE SAID ABOUT EVANGELISTIC SERVICES....**” He has. One only has to reference the website noted at the beginning of this article to see the many false charges made by the PS elders and the refutation of those charges by McClish. Be that as it may, I have also challenged them in writing by refuting their many erroneous statements about ESI. My refutations are not invalidated and unworthy of note merely because McClish has not put them in writing. As a certified public accountant, my critique of the PS elders’ statements about public charities is no less authoritative than McClish’s. Let them rebut my refutations of their claims made about ESI. Furthermore, I challenge the PS elders to debate me—publicly, in writing or orally—respecting ESI. I will do so provided (1) they are as open with the documentation in their possession (such as the aforementioned tapes) as McClish has been with his and (2) they deal with specific facts. I offer additional explanation or clarification to anyone not yet clear

respecting any aspect of ESI. I *appeal* to the PS elders to repent of their efforts to: (1) destroy McClish, (2) cover up the views of the Holy Spirit held by brother Joe Chism, (3) conceal information (such as the aforementioned tapes), and (4) arouse suspicion in the minds of the tax novice through the making of false claims about ESI and McClish’s tax situation. The PS elders expressed a “concern” for McClish’s soul. They should not be so concerned for his soul that they lose their own souls. The late brother **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** often said that you just cannot warn some brethren. Nevertheless, I issue this *warning*. Repent now before it is everlastingly too late. Sad though it may be, the PS elders likely will not repent. Pride will not let them. If they continue on their present course, I *predict* that the PS elders will lead PS off into some form of liberalism. Faithful brethren, having full knowledge of the facts, will have nothing to do with them. Where else can they go?

—4015 Evening Trail Dr.
Spring, Texas 77388-4937
Email: texankdc@hotmail.com

Twenty First Annual...

**Southwest Arkansas Lectures
THE PARABLES OF JESUS
MARCH 19th - 21st, 2004**

Friday, March 19th

7:00 pm	The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)	Robert Taylor
8:00 pm	The Parable of Counting the Cost (Luke 14:25-33)	Toney Smith

Saturday, March 20th

9:00 am	The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)	John Moore
10:00 am	Lessons from the Elder Brother (Luke 15:25-32)	Robert Taylor
11:00 am	The Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8)	Bobby Liddell
12:00 pm	Lunch Break	
1:30 pm	The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35)	Jerry Martin
2:30 pm	The Parable of the Fish Net (Matthew 13:47-50)	Barry Grider
3:30 pm	The Parable of the Builders (Matthew 7:24-27)	Michael Light
4:30 pm	The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)	David Brown

Sunday, March 21st

9:00 am	The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-21)	James Boyd
10:00 am	The Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13)	Keith Mosher
11:30 am	Lunch Break	
1:30 pm	Congregational Singing	
2:15 pm	The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32)	Waymon Swain
3:15 pm	The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)	Mark Mosher

**CULLENDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST
2707 MT. HOLLY ROAD ♦ CAMDEN, ARKANSAS 71701 ♦ 870.231.5228
audio and video tapes of lectures will be available from James Green**

DEAVER'S DIRECT OPERATION

Stephen Wiggins

Fifteen years ago in his periodical, *Biblical Notes*, **Roy Deaver** (hereafter R. Deaver) wrote the following concerning the Spirit's work as it pertains to influence exerted on a person's inward man in both conversion and Christian living:

For near fifty years... I have preached the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of men, but the Spirit's working always in and through, by means of, the written word of God, both in the matter of conversion and in the guiding of the Christian—never separate and apart from the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This I will continue to preach (Mar/Apr, 1989).

I believe R. Deaver is right on target here. The Bible teaches, and so R. Deaver was content to preach for fifty years, that the Holy Spirit's influence exerted on the mind of man in both conversion (John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38) and Christian living (Ephesians 3:16, 6:17) is accomplished "always in and through" the instrumentality of God's word.

In a 1997 oral debate **Mac Deaver** (hereafter M. Deaver) was asked if the above statement was true or false. He stated it was false. When it was then pointed out that it was his father (and moderator during the debate) who penned the statement M. Deaver's reply was "I didn't know it was daddy who wrote it," conveying he would have answered differently if he would have known the source of the quotation. Some four years prior to his affirming in this debate that the Holy Spirit "directly" operates upon the mind of man in Christian living M. Deaver wrote an article which I published in *Hammer & Tongs*. He stated:

...as long as we agree that the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs and edifies *only through the word of God*, whatever other differences there may be on the subject ought not to have the least effect on the question of our fellowship" (Nov/Dec 1993, emp. supp).

Once again, I believe this statement hits the bullseye and is in harmony with what the Bible conveys. M. Deaver is here talking about continued fellowship among brethren and truth being the basis for such fellowship. He maintains that the only way this fellowship may be biblically maintained among brethren is that if all "agree that the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs and edifies *only through the word of God*."

Ironically both R. and M. Deaver at one time knew

and taught the truth on the work of the Spirit. R. Deaver even declared that he had taught this for fifty years and would continue so to preach. M. Deaver also adamantly refused fellowship to any brethren who taught a "direct" influence of the Spirit. Both father and son at one time believed that the Bible did *not* teach a direct operation of the Spirit in either conversion or Christian living. Both declared such to be false doctrine. But these brethren have done a "switcheroo" which has resulted in some of the most pathetic and ridiculous doctrinal aberrations ever ascribed to by once faithful brethren. A few examples will illustrate.

DEAVERITE DOCTRINES

(1) Jesus anticipated the miraculous results of the apostles' baptism in the Holy Spirit when he informed them the Spirit's work would involve a bringing to their "remembrance" all that he had earlier taught them (John 14:26). This is clearly a promise of *inspiration* as it pertains to the revelation of divine truth through the apostles. But M. Deaver supposes this same promise applies to him, although "to a lesser degree" he tells us.

At the 1997 debate, R. Deaver had for sale **Furman Kearley's** book, *God's Indwelling Spirit*. Within its pages Kearley asserts that, when one is preaching, the Spirit is there to directly "stimulate our minds so we remember the right scriptures at the right time... [and to] help us to arrange our thoughts and to bring to our remembrance information that will be of help to us in making the right decision in the right situation" (pp. 44,46). M. Deaver is the first pulpiteer with whom I have ever been involved in a debate that claimed the inspiration of John 14:26, with the exception of the Holy Rollers, of course.

But this is how shoddy the Deaver exegetical effort has become. To take a promise of the Spirit's direct, miraculous work in connection with their apostolic office and apply it to all Christians is nothing short of Pentecostalism. Somebody should tell that self-appointed Nashvillian apostle, **Don Finto**, to move over because M. Deaver is a comin' through!

(2) The Deaverite doctrine asserts the child of God must be directly "enabled" by the Spirit in order to successfully live a faithful Christian life. Without this direct assistance, one cannot fully obey the commandments of God. The Deavers maintain that the alien sin-

ner, one “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1), is convicted and converted by the Spirit’s influence only through the word of God. But once that individual becomes a Christian this spiritual influence through the word is no longer sufficient.

Now, for some inexplicable reason, the person who becomes a Christian is debilitated and cannot function faithfully without a direct operation of the Spirit. One must now be “enabled” by the direct influence of the Spirit to achieve that which he has insufficient ability to accomplish on his own, namely obedience to God’s word. What the alien sinner can do in attaining obedience to God’s will without the Spirit’s direct operation, the Christian cannot do, and, therefore, must have a direct operation in order to maintain complete obedience (cf. R. Deaver in *What Do You Know About The Holy Spirit*, [Third Annual Fort Worth Lectures conducted by the Brown Trail Church of Christ, 1980, p. 249]).

Under the Old Law, Jesus taught that a person could obey the commandments and possess eternal life (Luke 10:25-28). This was done without a direct operation of the Spirit on the individual. But now it is different. The child of God under the New Covenant, per the Deaver contention, cannot be obedient without the Spirit’s influence by way of direct assistance. One must have this “enabling” influence in order to be faithful. The Calvinistic concept is that one cannot obey God even if he wanted to because of human depravity stemming from inherited sin. We fear the Deavers have unwittingly resurrected that worn out and oft refuted Calvinistic foolishness.

A SUPPOSITION

(3) M. Deaver supposes the Holy Spirit directly assists him in understanding the meaning of scripture. This is akin to that regurgitated sectarian nonsense of the Spirit’s “illumination” wherein one’s mind is enlightened as to the meaning of scripture by direct touch. It is not surprising the Deavers contend for such. For the same passage (John 14:26) which M. Deaver supposes gives him a promise of direct assistance for his memory also affirms that the Spirit shall “teach you all things.” If M. Deaver applies one to himself then why not the other?

In oral debate M. Deaver was asked to cite a passage in which he *does not* need the Spirit’s direct help in order to understand its meaning. He was then asked to cite another passage in which he *does* need the Spirit’s assistance. The passage he gave which he claims to need no assistance from the Spirit is Genesis 1:1. The passage he cited in which he does need the Spirit’s direct help is Ephesians 3:16.

His answer is a peculiar one indeed because, if there was any passage in the whole Bible the Deavers need the Spirit’s direct aid on, it would be the very first

verse of the biblical record seeing they teach an unscriptural slant of the so-called “gap theory” on Genesis 1:1-2 (cf. R. Deaver, *Romans: God’s Plan For Man’s Righteousness* ~ pp. 167-170). And then the very passage he claims to need the Spirit’s help is the one that speaks of the Spirit’s strengthening the inward man. But if direct assistance from the Spirit is needed to understand this passage, why is he wasting his time explaining the passage to others in debate or his monthly publication which he had used extensively to promote his newfangled ideas on the direct work of the Spirit? According to M. Deaver one cannot understand the passage without the Spirit’s direct operation anyway. Just let the Spirit illuminate and teach others what the Deavers suppose to be true. Does the Spirit need his help in teaching more clearly what he (M. Deaver) claims is directly illuminated by the Spirit anyway.

Who informed M. Deaver as to what passages he must have help on and those on which he needs no assistance from the Spirit? Did the Spirit reveal this to him in direct fashion as well? It is my personal opinion what he needs more than anything else is an elementary course in the exegetical process. As it is now, this brother has put the Spirit in the position of taking the blame for his shoddy and inept efforts at interpreting God’s word.

DIRECT SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION AND DIVINE WISDOM

I fear that M. Deaver has adopted an elitist mentality in that he (with his alleged inerrant Spiritual illumination) holds a monopoly on the truth. Everybody else is a cut under his skillful dexterity. Because they woefully plagued with inadequate abilities when it comes to interpreting God’s word. I have seen this very mentality when debating the “realized eschatology” brethren who have cultivated an esoteric view of biblical interpretation. They alone possess the key of knowledge to divine truth. It likewise surfaces when contending with sectarian preachers of the charismatic persuasion. It becomes difficult for these (like M. Deaver), who see themselves as possessing an illuminated mind resulting from the Spirit’s direct help, not to be condescending toward others deemed void of the same abilities and supernatural advantages. Some have gotten the distinct impression from the way in which he has treated reputable brethren in the recent past that he has become bloated with a self-serving arrogance and conceit as to rival the Renaissance pope of your choice, and thus stands in need of a generous dose of common humility.

(4) The Deavers fancy that the promise of wisdom in connection with prayer of James 1:5 comes about by the Spirit’s direct operation. The Deaver assumption is that God directly infuses a degree of wisdom into one’s mind in answer to prayer. But what

they assume this: is because God gives something in answer to prayer it must be given in directly. Not so. God dispensed wisdom to the faithful in olden times (Proverbs 2:6). But we would be amiss to suppose this was accomplished by some direct operation. Just because God is said to supply man with something does not imply it is by direct or miraculous impact. God “opens” the hearts of non Christians and “gives” repentance to the one never having obeyed the gospel (Acts 11:18; 16:14; II Timothy 2:25). But who among the Deaver clan will now affirm this is accomplished by the Spirit’s direct influence?

The Deaver clamor on James 1:5 best illustrates the throes of desperation to which these brethren will stoop in order to attach some sort of credence to their man-made theology. They take a passage that does not even mention the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned anywhere in the book of James) and concoct an entire doctrinal platform as to how the Spirit supplies wisdom in answer to prayer. But the real corker is how they get the Spirit operating *directly* in dispensing this wisdom when the Spirit is not even mentioned. It beats me how these brethren can conjure up an elaborate doctrine on the direct operation of the Holy Spirit from passages that do not even refer to the work of the Spirit, much less the *direct* work of the Spirit in Christian living. If this does not illustrate their shabby exegetical efforts in mishandling God’s word, I do not know what does. How pathetic. How pitiful.

Consider that God gives us our daily bread in answer to prayer (Matthew 6:11). God provides the means and opportunities whereby we may attain such blessings from the Divine source. It is biblically affirmed that he “gives” these daily provisions. Just as he feeds the birds of the air, so he provides for all his earthly creatures. But one need not think this mutually excludes human responsibility on our part (II Thessalonians 3:10).

This is no less true with the wisdom that God provides. We are instructed to “**buy**” both truth and wisdom “**and sell it not**” (Proverbs 23:23). Certainly an individual may become a recipient of both truth and wisdom today. And I believe that one may become a beneficiary of both in answer to prayer (Matthew 7:7-8) coupled with an exercise of human responsibility to attain such. Our ascertaining such blessings from God is not wholly based on human effort. God does his part as the source and provider of all blessings. God gives

and we receive. But one thing for sure, the Bible does not teach, the Deaverite contention notwithstanding, that wisdom is given by the Spirit’s direct operation. It is not miraculously infused into one’s mind. Having attained and received such a blessing, one then exhibits this wisdom “from above” by the “good life” that he lives in harmony with divine precept (James 3:13-18).

In fact, after observing the way M. Deaver has conducted himself by sending out material where brethren go to hold gospel meetings in an attempt to discredit and sabotage their work in the kingdom, I maintain that, if anyone needs a blessing of wisdom, it is Deaver himself. His take on wisdom is anything but “**pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated.**” He has all but ruined his influence in a brotherhood that once loved and appreciated his efforts before he became so radical and bitter. He has all but alienated himself from good brethren who once used him widely, all of this as a result, at least in part, of his acrimonious conduct.

THE ALL SUFFICIENCY OF THE BIBLE

(5)The Deaverite doctrine of the Spirit’s direct operation impeaches the all-sufficiency of God’s word. It is an irreverent slam against inspired revelation from God to man. M. Deaver’s assertion is that the Bible is sufficient “informationally,” in that there is no need for further inspired revelation in addition to the Bible. But whereas the biblical information is sufficient, there must be an additional influence to motivate the Christian in obedience to God. The Spirit’s influence through the written word is lacking and, therefore, does not supply man with all he needs “motivationally” to remain a faithful Christian.

Here again the Deaver dichotomy is that the alien

PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

The book “The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. I, 2nd edition” by Marion Fox is now available. It has been revised extensively (replying to a number of the Deaver errors). The book has doubled in length. The revised edition of Volume I has the same chapter titles of the first edition. Some appendices have been added to help clarify the arguments in the book.

It will sell for \$21.95 plus \$3.05 for shipping and handling.

Order from:

Five F Publishing Co.
4004 Twisted Trail Rd. • Oklahoma City, OK
73150-1910
e-mail: mrfox@prodigy.net

sinner has all he needs by way of information and motivation from the Spirit through inspiration's words. But when it comes to one who has already obeyed the gospel, it is a different matter. The Christian finds all the *information* he needs in the Bible to live the Christian life; but he needs additional *motivation* and assistance in order to "enable" him to live faithfully. This is where the direct operation of the Spirit comes into play. The Bible, as God's inspired word, is insufficient to accomplish complicate edification according to M. Deaver. There must be what he calls a "supra-literary" influence above and beyond what the gospel provides to remain faithful. Note what brother **Guy N. Woods** says of this Deaver claim:

The contention, that the Holy Spirit, encourages, strengthens, and motivates apart from the word, is an impeachment of the sacred writings, because it strikes at their claim of all-sufficiency. If there are influences wrought upon us, apart from and in addition to the revealed word of God, this word is not sufficient, and it requires these alleged additional influences to provide all that God intends for us. Yet, the book claims to supply our every need in every area of divine instruction. If it does, there is no other influences wrought upon us in this area; if it does not, its claims are false. But, if it may not be trusted in this matter, how may it be in any other? (*How The Holy Spirit Dwells In The Christian*, p. 11).

PIIONEER PREACHERS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

(6) Another of M. Deaver's declarations is that the majority of Restoration preachers believed and preached the same doctrine he now espouses on the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. The implication of this pretentious claim is that he is the one who is standing in the great heritage of the Restoration Movement while all the naysayers have not only forsaken biblical truth but our spiritual forefathers in the faith as well.

But if this is true, why did brother R. Deaver adamantly and forcefully state with all the confidence he could muster that he had preached for fifty years and would continue to preach the working of the Spirit's influence upon mankind "always in and through, by means of, the written word of God, both in the matter of conversion and in the guiding of the Christian?" Was he preaching for half a century the direct opposite of what we are now told and expected to believe is so plainly taught by the New Testament; something so clear that pioneers in the faith easily gleaned from the pages of holy writ.

And, if M. Deaver believed and preached for some thirty years that "the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs, and edifies only through the word of God," what is his excuse for being so ignorant of both biblical and Restoration literature for so long? Better yet, why did it take thirty to fifty years for the Holy Spirit to enlighten these brethren to the truth of a direct opera-

tion? Was the Spirit incapable of such then but now all of a sudden possesses the ability and willingness to illuminate the Deavers as the chosen few in regard to the very meaning of scriptural passages?

Weylan Deaver has gone on record touting that those who oppose the Deaverite doctrine of a direct operation are guilty of "anti-ism." But if there is any truth to this, father and son must first confess to preaching and practicing anti-ism for fifty and thirty years, respectively. What I am certain happened is that once M. Deaver accepted his new heresy and convinced himself it was legitimate, he then sought to bolster extra-biblical support from leading lights of the Restoration. It was a brassy and bold move. But, alas, we know better.

(7) M. Deaver's favorite passage which he supposes teaches his pet theory of direct operation is Ephesians 3:16 wherein Paul prays that the Christian "may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man." What our brother is guilty of here is what is commonly called the "fallacy of overspecification" (**D. A. Carson**, *Exegetical Fallacies*, pp. 110-115). In other words our brother needs to "**learn not to go beyond the things which are written**" (I Corinthians 4:6, ASV-1901). M. Deaver does this very thing by assuming the passage teaches the Spirit's direct touch when in fact no such thing is conveyed by the passage. It is pure assumption at its worst. If he can take a passage which speaks of the Spirit's work in Christian living and merely assume it is a reference to a direct operation, what hermeneutical principle would deter one from making the same sloppy application to the conversion process? Consistency, where art thou?

DIRECT STRENGTH

The fact is God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit all are said to strengthen the Christian (I Timothy 4:17; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 3:16). But Deity accomplishes this feat, not by some imaginary "supra-literary," direct impact on the heart of man, but by and through the agency of the gospel "**which is able to build you up**" and to equip us sufficiently for the eternal inheritance (Acts 20:32; II Timothy 3:16-17). M. Deaver himself stated only ten years ago that "the Holy Spirit... edifies only through the word of God." No doubt it was from the Bible he learned this and preached it for thirty years. And now he wants us to believe the Spirit has directly illuminated and enlightened his mind on how different it is now.

If he was the kind of responsible student some suppose him to be, he would have considered contextually Paul's plea for the Ephesian brethren to be strengthened by the "**Spirit in the inward man.**" For the apostle goes on to spell out clearly how the Spirit's strengthening process is accomplished. In 6:10-18 one

is instructed to “**be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might**” by buckling on “**the whole armor of God.**” This involves the Christian adorning the proper attire of truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, the gospel, “**and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**” All of this is then supplemented with prayer, supplication, and vigilance “**at all seasons in the Spirit.**” Somebody should tell him, if he would be content to stay with the word of God in matters like this he will not go wrong. It is when he presumptuously postulates his own suppositions that trouble arises.

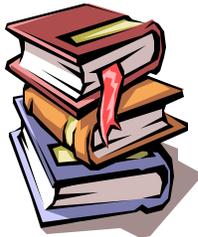
CONCLUSION

There are two things for which I have deep concern. The first pertains to the Deaver clan themselves. I cringe to think of the Deaver family, once stalwart in the faith whose very name was synonymous with soundness, passing from this life to stand before the Great “I Am” with blood stained hands, having subverted the souls of good brethren and promoted schisms within the body of Christ over their foolish and senseless dogma. It is too late for **Bob Berard** who had cast his lot with the Deaverite contention before his untimely death. Indeed the “**Judge of all the earth**” (Genesis 18:25) will do right by him. And I pray God’s mercy for both him and the Deavers. But know that for the Deavers who remain this side of eternity it is not too

late to make things right with both God and brethren who voice concern for their spiritual welfare.

The second pertains to the brotherhood as a whole. The liberal element is having a heyday with the Spirit buzzing about in frenzied fashion. **Rubel Shelly** has got the Spirit somersaulting in Nashville and **Max Lucado** got the same song and dance in San Antonio. All of this is akin to the Deaverite doctrine as it pertains to this one principle: that the tap root of all the modernistic nonsense promoted by the liberal element is the Holy Spirit’s direct operation. The liberals attribute their “progress” to none other than what the Spirit is directly doing and saying among them. This is no different in principle than the Spirit working directly among the Deavers, allegedly enlightening their minds on the meaning of scripture and providing enablement in addition to the Spirit’s edification through God’s word. We ought to be presenting a united front to inform the brotherhood of God’s people and opposing this neoPentecostal influence among the liberal element. Our efforts are hindered, however, by the Deaverite cancer that rages among conservative brethren. The brotherhood suffers as a result.

—105 E. Planters
San Augustine, TX 75972



Spring Bible Institute Lecture Books

2003	“ISLAM-FROM GOD OR MAN?”*	\$17.00
2002	“Jehovah’s Witnesses”	\$16.00
2001	“Mormonism”	\$16.00
2000	“Catholicism”*	\$16.00
1999	“Pentecostalism”	Out of Print
1998	“Premillennialism”	\$14.00
1997	“Calvinism”	\$14.00
1996	“Isaiah” Vol. 2 Chapters 40-66	\$12.00
1995	“Isaiah” Vol. 1 Chapters 1-39	\$12.00
1994	“The Church Enters the 21st Century”	\$12.00

* Second Printing

SEND ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT TO:
(add \$2.00 per book S&H •TX residents add 7.25% tax)

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH
P.O. BOX 2357 • SPRING, TEXAS 77383-2357

DEAVER'S ACTS 2:41 ARGUMENT IMPLIES CALVINISM

Marion R. Fox

My book entitled "The Work of the Holy Spirit, Volume I" has been revised with a number of the errors taught by Mac Deaver being refuted. The second edition contains nearly 700 pages of material (about twice the length of the 1st edition). In the 2nd edition of my book I have added over a dozen separate answers to the Acts 2:41 argument. This argument is the source of the direct operation doctrine being taught by M. Deaver (and others) in the Lord's church today. The following are excerpts from the second edition of this book (linking the Acts 2:41 argument with the direct operation doctrine).

The eleventh reason to reject this argument on Acts 2:41 is that it implies there is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in sanctification. If a dwelling of the Holy Spirit by the word, in any manner, is allowed, the

implications are the same as the representative dwelling. The following outline sets forth the possible positions on the dwelling of the Holy Spirit:

- 1.—Literal dwelling separate from the word and without the word of God.
- 2.—Literal dwelling along with (in conjunction with) and dwelling through the word of God.
- 3.—Representative dwelling (only through the word of God).

If this argument on Acts 2:41 is sound, the second and third options are disproven and the advocate is forced to accept the first option. If the dwelling does anything (any view except the hibernation theory), this operation must be by a direct means, separate from the word of God. This doctrine is certainly Calvinistic, at least implicitly (cf. Appendix D). Additional evidence of the link between this doctrine and Calvinism is given in the following section.

CALVINISTIC IMPLICATION OF THE ACTS 2:41 ARGUMENT

This argument on Acts 2:41 implies there is no dwelling through the word of God in any manner. This argument is of the following form:

First Premise: If the Holy Spirit dwells through the word of God, then the Holy Spirit dwells in an alien sinner.

Second Premise: The Holy Spirit does not dwell in the alien sinner.

Conclusion: Therefore the Holy Spirit does not dwell through the word of God.

If this basic argument is converted by transposition, it becomes: "If the Holy Spirit does not dwell in the alien sinner, then the Holy Spirit does not dwell through the word of God." This proves that the one who uses this argument must deny there is any dwelling through the word of God.

If there is no dwelling through the word of God, then whatever the dwelling does is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. This direct operation (Calvinism) implicitly grants informational guidance to the Christian, if 1 Jn. 3:24 and 4:12 are references to the dwelling of the Holy Spirit. The following argument proves this assertion:

First Premise: If we know that God abides in us by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, then the dwelling of the Holy Spirit gives in-

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF
PREACHING AD HERE

formational guidance (1 Jn. 3:24 and 4:12).

Second Premise: We know that God abides in us by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit (assertion of those who use 1 Jn. 3:24 and 4:12 as proof texts for the dwelling of the Holy Spirit).

Conclusion: The dwelling of the Holy Spirit gives informational guidance.

The Calvinist plainly asserts that this knowledge comes by the naked human spirit being operated upon by the naked Holy Spirit (no agency). Those who deny any dwelling through the word of God are in the Calvinists' camp. This was discussed extensively by this author in Chapter Sixteen. Plainly, if these passages (1 Jn. 3:24 and 4:12) are used as proof texts for the dwelling, they either teach a direct operation to grant informational knowledge or knowledge by man's senses that God is in the Christian. Whatever it is, the Holy Spirit is doing it, but it cannot be through the word of God. The following dilemma clarifies this point:

Either the Holy Spirit influences in an immediate manner (by a direct operation)

Or the Holy Spirit influences in a mediate manner (either by the word of God or by some other means).

The Holy Spirit does not influence in a mediate manner (implication of the Acts 2:41 argument); therefore the Holy Spirit influences in an immediate manner (a direct operation).

If a personal indwelling is necessary for the Holy Spirit to bear fruit (cf. the following section), and the Acts 2:41 argument is sound (there is no dwelling through the word of God), then the fruit of the Spirit is produced by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit does not dwell by the word, the following syllogism proves this assertion:

Major Premise: All influences produced by a non-word dwelling are direct operations.

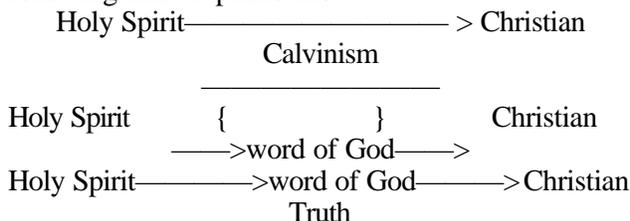
Minor Premise: The fruit of the Spirit is an influence produced by a non-word dwelling.

Conclusion: The fruit of the Spirit is an influence produced by a direct operation.

This is pure Calvinism!

ADDITIONAL PROOFS OF A CALVINIST INFLUENCE

There are only three possible interpretations of passages that refer to a dwelling of the Holy Spirit: (1) The Holy Spirit dwells literally, (2) The Holy Spirit dwells both literally and by agency, or (3) The Holy Spirit dwells only by agency [only through the word of God]. The following chart explains this:



The following disjunctive argument demonstrates the difficulty of proving the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit doctrine. Either the passages which refer to the dwelling of the Holy Spirit: (1) All teach the Holy Spirit dwells only personally, (2) All teach the Holy Spirit dwells only representatively [through the agency of the word of God], (3) All teach the Holy Spirit dwells both personally and representatively, or (4) Some passages teach the Holy Spirit dwells personally and some teach the Holy Spirit dwells representatively. Those who teach the third alternative must deny both the first and second alternatives. The denial of the first and second alternatives implies that at least one passage teaches the logically contradictory premise. This can be derived from the "Square of Opposition." [The contradictory premise of the premise "All S are P" is "Some S are not P."]

The argument set forth by some on Acts 2:41 (answered in the prior sections) implies that the first alternative is the only one that can be taught. The argument on Acts 2:41 implies that no passage teaches that the Holy Spirit dwells representatively (through the word of God). If the Holy Spirit does not dwell through the word of God, then He either dwells directly (Calvinism) or He does not dwell at all. A number of writers have written attacking the doctrine of the dwelling of the Holy Spirit through the word of God and have left their disciples with only one alternative, Calvinism.

It is axiomatic that a passage of scripture cannot be both literal and figurative at the same time, in the same way, with respect to the same things or persons. Therefore, it follows that no single passage teaches both a literal and a figurative dwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is logically possible that some passages (at least one) teach a literal dwelling and that some passages (as least one) teach a representative dwelling. If some passages teach a representative dwelling, the Acts 2:41 argument is unsound. The only way to negate this argument is to prove that no passage teaches a representative dwelling in any manner. If one admits that some passages teach a representative dwelling, then the question "what rules of hermeneutics prove that the dwelling is representative?" becomes important. What precludes the usage of these rules of hermeneutics to prove that other passages teach a representative dwelling? It is clear that those who deny any representative dwelling of the Holy Spirit are more rational in this respect than those who claim the Spirit dwells in both a literal and a figurative manner. (pages 484-486)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fox, Marion R. (2003) *The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. I.* 2nd ed. Oklahoma City, OK: Five F Pub. Co.

—4004 Twisted Trail
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73150-1910

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: NO ROOM FOR DOGMATISM

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

There are numerous issues concerning the activities of the Holy Spirit, but none more prevalent than the “how” of the Holy Spirit’s influence on saint and sinner. This article is dedicated to a review of divine activity and based on the facts presented in the Bible that the Spirit of God is a substantive being. The Holy Spirit is not an “it,” but is a Being with mind (I Corinthians 2:10, 11); speaking ability (I Timothy 4:1); love (Romans 15:30); a law (Romans 8:1-2); and the same essence as the Father and the Son (John 14:16-17; Hebrews 9:14).

It is common for “Christendom” to think of the Holy Spirit in different terms from the Father and the Son, yet, the Bible teaches that one’s relationship with all three Beings in the Godhead begins at baptism (Matthew 28:19). One is immersed “into” (Greek, *eis*; the King James and other versions have “in”) the name of the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is no distinction made in the verse between the three. Yet, many exegetes of the Bible insist that the Christian has a “special” relationship with the Holy Spirit and that without that relationship one is not a Christian.

One passage often asserted to be proof that one must “have” the Holy Spirit in order to be a true Christian is Romans 8:9. **“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”** First of all, the careful Bible student will be aware that commentators are not in agreement as to what the terms “in the Spirit” (note that it does not say the Spirit in you) and the “Spirit of Christ” signify. **A. T. Robertson**, a noted Greek scholar, suggests that it is “probably the Holy Spirit” (page 373, *Word Studies*). **Moses Lard** and **Robertson Whiteside** both insisted that it was the human spirit. A few try to be dogmatic and insist that Paul meant the Holy Spirit, but such Bible students are without a basis for such dogmatism.

First of all, Paul uses the terms spirit and flesh in Romans in different ways. At Romans 7:5, the word, flesh, is a synecdoche for the law of Moses. Further, Paul calls “being in Christ” as a walk, **“not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”** (Romans 8:1). If the term “flesh” is still a substitute for the old law, then Paul is contrasting one who would not be following the ancient covenant with one who would be following the new

covenant or gospel of Christ and thus could be said to be walking “after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4). One “walking after the Spirit” is then seen to be equivalent to one in whom the Spirit of God dwells and who would have the “Spirit of Christ.” In other words, Paul was describing the state of a New Testament Christian and did not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in view in Romans 8:9.

Some use Luke 11:13 as authority for daily prayer for the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is quoted as saying: **“If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.”** The same ones who so use Luke 11:13 insist that Romans 8:9 teaches the literal indwelling of the Holy Spirit and, if one does not have the indwelling, that one does not belong to Christ. A problem arises from such thinking, for in the parallel passage (to Luke 11:13) found in Matthew 7:11 the phrase “good things” instead of the “Holy Spirit” is found. The “good things” of the Spirit are not the Spirit himself but those things he teaches (Galatians 5:22-23). Too, if one is praying daily for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, did the Spirit leave the day before? If so, Romans 8:9 contains the information that one without the “Spirit” is “none of his!” If one is praying for the Spirit, one must not have him, and so there would be one who does not belong to Christ praying for the Holy Spirit. Such confusion is not taught in Holy Writ.

Another confusion about the Holy Spirit has arisen from a unique exegesis of Acts 2:38. The latter passage is one lifted from context constantly and made to teach in isolation more so than any other verse of the Bible. For example, faith-only advocates have long attempted to say that the word “for” in the verse means “because of” and thus one is baptized because one’s sins are already remitted. The passage reads, however: **“And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”** (Acts 2:38). The only other time the exact phrase “for the remission of sins” is found in the Bible is the context of the Lord’s supper: **“For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins”** (Matthew 26:28). Faithful Bible students have pointed

out for a long time that Jesus' blood was not shed because of sins already remitted, but his blood was shed in order to the remission of sins and those Bible students rightly compared Acts 2:38 and Matthew 26:28 where the two phrases, "for the remissions of sins" are used and, incidentally, the only times they are used.

However, advocates of the direct influence of the Holy Spirit do not use the above approved Bible method of comparing verses when they read Acts 2:38 and come to the phrase "the gift of the Holy Spirit." The only other time one finds the foregoing phrase in the Bible is Acts 10:45. **"And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit."** How did the Jews (the circumcision) know that the "gift of the Holy Spirit" was given to the Gentiles? **"For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God..."** (Acts 10:46a). The latter passage shows that the "gift" is one the Holy Spirit gave and that in a miraculous way.

But, according to the direct influence advocates, the phrase in Acts 2:38 is "different" for it is not a gift given, but the Holy Spirit, himself, as a gift. In the Greek language the case of possession is called the genitive. The Greek spoke of the house of the man rather than the man's house. There is ordinary genitive and

"epexegetical genitive" and the latter means that the two terms in the genitive phrase are identical. For example, one might speak of the city of Memphis where city and Memphis are similar terms. In Acts 10:45 the gift of the Holy Spirit, according to all Bible students, is the Holy Spirit's gift-tongues (Acts 19:46). But those same Bible students, by some exegetical sorcery, insist that the phrase in Acts 2:38 is not ordinary genitive but epexegetical so that the gift is the Holy Spirit himself. Such exegesis is at best inconsistent, and is not provable. Yet some are dogmatically insisting on their own assumptions as the basis for all of their views about the Holy Spirit. It seems that the phrase in Acts 2:38 is just ordinary genitive as it is in Acts 10:45 and at least, there is no room for dogmatism here. And, if the term *gift* is in an epexegetical phrase, there is another problem. Please consider that the Greek word *dorea* is translated "gift" in Acts 2:38. And in attempting to arrive at the meaning of the verse this fact dare not be ignored. Therefore if the phrase "the gift of the Holy Spirit" means the Holy Spirit is the gift (epexegetical genitive), then to be consistent those who believe such must contend for the miraculous. Why are so many dogmatic about Acts 2:38 and the "gift?" Because it has always been thought to be an "indwelling" verse. Such assumptions however, leave no room for dogmatism.

—4688 DeSoto Rd.
Walls, Mississippi 38680

BELIEF IN GOD'S WONDERFUL PROVIDENCE

Victor M. Eskew

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together (Genesis 22:6-8).

In this story, we read of a man's belief in the providence of God. Abraham knew that God would provide for their needs on this occasion. Abraham's belief was ultimately confirmed. As he raised the knife to slay his son Isaac, the angel of the Lord stayed his hand.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him

up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son" (Genesis 22:13).

The providence of God is a very intriguing concept. Seeking to understand it boggles the mind. Attempting to explain it accurately to others can cause confusion and conflict. Providence definitely involves the working of God in the lives of men and women. His working in a providential way, however, does not manifest itself in a miraculous manner. God provides, but He works through natural means and processes. Sometimes his intervention is so subtle that we never know he is at work. Sometimes his providential dealing with man involves years to bring things to pass. Although confusing to man, providence is a marvelous blessing. A firm belief that God is at work in our lives generates hope, spurs one's willingness to endure, and gives life to the mundane, seemingly routine activities of life. Let

us look now at other examples of God's providence in the Bible.

One of the most cherished examples of God's providence occurred in the lifetime of Joseph. In a dream, God revealed to Joseph that he would be elevated to a position of authority over his brothers (Genesis 37:5-10). This exalted position did not come overnight. God brought it to pass over a period of twenty-two years. We all know the story well. Joseph was sold into slavery. He became the chief steward in Potiphar's household. He was imprisoned on false charges. While in prison, he came into contact with the butler and baker of Pharaoh's house. He interpreted their dreams. He was forgotten by the butler for two years. When Pharaoh needed one of his dreams interpreted, Joseph was remembered and appeared before the monarch. After interpreting the king's dream, he was elevated to second in command in Egypt. A famine drove his brothers to the land of Egypt to secure food. Ultimately, Joseph's position enabled him to provide for his family and be reunited with them. At the close of the entire process, Joseph acknowledged God's hand in it all. Speaking to his brothers after their father's death, he said: **"Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"** (Genesis 50:19-20).

Another story involving God's providence is found in the life of Esther. Esther was a young Jewish maiden who lived in the days of the Persian Empire. The king of Persia had dethroned his wife because of her insubordination. The king grew lonely, and a search was made for a new queen. Esther's uncle placed her among the other maidens for consideration by the king. When the selection was made:

...Esther was taken unto Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tabeth, in the seventh year of his reign. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti (Esther 2:16-17).

In the process of time, a situation arose in Persian that called for the extermination of all Jews. Esther was called upon to approach the king. She feared for her life, but finally approached the monarch. It was Mordecai's words and his belief in the providence of God that convinced Esther to go unto the king.

Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (Esther 4:13-14).

Esther's actions enabled the Jews to prevail over their enemies. This account contains no miracles. God's name is not even found in the book of Esther, but God was there. God was working amid the shadows.

FROM THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

Another example of God's providence is revealed in the book of Philemon. A slave named Onesimus ran from his master. This slave crossed paths with Paul while the apostle was imprisoned in Rome. Paul taught Onesimus the gospel, and he became a child of God. Interestingly, Paul knew the slave's owner, Philemon. The letter written by Paul was his exhortation to his friend to receive the slave back as a brother in Christ. Was all of this luck? Did all of it happen by chance? Paul did not think so. In his short epistle, he acknowledges God's providence. In verse 15, he wrote: **"For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever."** Again, not one miracle was performed. The everyday events of the lives of three men were worked in such a way that a slave became a Christian and was reconciled to his owner as a brother in Christ.

We have set forth these accounts of God's providence to convince us that God's providence is real. Behind the scenes, or, in the shadows, God is at work in the affairs of men. His ability to work in such a manner proves that He is God. We want you to believe that God's providence is at work in your life. We know that it is difficult to do this at times. When we experience difficulties, it is hard to see God's hand therein. When long periods of time pass and our lives seem to change very little, it is hard to think that God is at work. Faith and patience seem to be the keys in experiencing God's providence. As life unfolds, we, too, can say: "God meant it unto good." As we look back on various events, we can assert that we were brought to the kingdom for such a time as this. When we piece together events that are too purposeful to be left to chance, we can assert: "Perhaps." Yes, God providence is real. If we can just wait upon the Lord, he will provide the sacrifice.

—9664 Highway 49B
Brookland, Arkansas 72417

Produce Your Cause is a free monthly e-newsletter designed to help preachers, elders, and concerned brethren understand how Satan is fighting against the word of God through destructive criticism. Subscribe today by sending an e-mail to Proveit-subscribe@yahoo.com. To receive free reproducible adult Bible class material send an e-mail to MtnCityReminder-subscribe@yahoo.com.

THE SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN

Wayne Price

In Ephesians 3:16 the Apostle Paul states that he wishes God would grant these Ephesians to **“be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”** Some would have the preposition “eis” pale into nothing more than an “in” showing location. In their judgment, this verse informs us that the Holy Spirit is “in” the inner man.

This verse does not even address the issue of the Spirit’s indwelling whatsoever. Instead, it merely tells us that the Holy Spirit imparts a strengthening, “directed toward” the inner man. The word “eis” signifies “into,” and there is no need to reduce it to merely an “in.” In other words, the inward man is viewed as the recipient and/or object towards which the strengthening is directed. How does that strengthening power come from the Spirit? **TROUGH HIS SWORD, THE WORD OF GOD** (Ephesians 6:17). The Holy Spirit, working through his word, is all that may be gleaned from this verse.

If the “inner man” is the object of the preposition “eis,” then what is the object of the verb “may grant or give?” Infinitives may be used as subjects, direct objects, et al. Just as in Acts 1:1, the text says that **“Jesus began to do and to teach”** and these two infinitives are used as direct objects of the verb “began,” so in

Ephesians 3:16 the infinitive “to be strengthened” may be the direct object of the verb “do.”

McCord’s translation **“that you may be strengthened mightily in the inner person by his Spirit,”** does a good job with the thrust of the Greek preposition in this verse. By the use of commas, Estes’ *The Better Version of the New Testament* points out the same fact this way: **“That he may grant you to be powerfully strengthened, by his Spirit, in the inner man.”**

Yet those impressed with the idea that the Spirit operates directly upon the hearts of people today continue to point to this verse as a proof passage bolstering their fallacious claim.

You don’t have the strength—but God does! You can’t change your life—but he can...! The Spirit helps us by showing us how we ought to live through the pages of the Bible, **AND HE WILL HELP US AS WELL BY GIVING US DIVINE STRENGTH TO RESIST TEMPTATION AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT** (Billy Graham).

That which follows the “and” in the above quotation is pure Calvinism, and unadulterated subjectivism!

—P.O. Box 760

McCloud, Oklahoma 74851

One Woman’s Perspective...

“LAST TRAIN INTO CHINA”

Annette B. Cates

Several years ago a young Chinese woman came to work for me as a student library assistant. “Siew Lee” [not her real name] had just arrived in the United States, fresh out of high school. She was extremely bright and a pleasure to be around. As we worked, we usually chatted. I learned much about her homeland in those conversations, as we talked about the likenesses and differences in our two countries. We talked about the things she missed, especially her family. Both of her parents were professional people. Her beloved grandmother had reared her. She had one older sister who had been in the States for several years.

One day I asked Siew Lee about China’s one child policy. I thought I remembered that a family could not have more than one child, especially if the children were female. If there were a second pregnancy, it was to be “terminated.” No “choice” would be involved. Her answer was straight-forward. She said, “I was on the last train into China.” She went on to explain that she had been born within

Annette Cate’s
picture

hours of the one child policy being made into law. As a knot built up in my heart, I probed, "What if you had been born a day later?" She replied that her parents could have applied to keep her, a little defensive about her homeland's policy. From her expression, I doubt she had ever thought seriously about the possibility of her having been murdered as an innocent newborn baby.

For me, Siew Lee put a human face on abortion. Rarely do we get to know someone who was spared from abortion. If one has come so close to having been murdered before or immediately after birth, we likely will never know it. But, here was someone who had been born within hours of a deadline after which her life would have been taken. While I doubt she will ever become a Christian, she has great potential to be an asset to society. However, no one will ever see the faces or recognize the potential of the millions upon millions of those who were not given the opportunity to live.

For over thirty-one years, women in the United States have thought that they have a "right to choose" to destroy the life of an unborn child. In China, there is no such choice. If our nation continues its downward trend of legalized abortion, partial-birth abortion, and the push for so-called "death with dignity" that will lead to lawful euthanasia, there may well be no choice for us; if the state deems a life is without value to the social system, it is worthless. Abortion and euthanasia could someday be the law!

Does anyone—individual or government entity—have a "choice" or a "right to choose" to end the life of an unborn child, or anyone else? Absolutely not! While those who would promote abortion would argue that 1) the baby is just alien tissue in a womb, 2) we do not know when the tissue becomes life, and 3) this tissue is unable to feel pain, they are wrong in every point. Further, and most important, they are totally ignorant of Biblical teaching on the subject.

What about the argument that what is growing in the mother's womb is just tissue? (Technically, it is known as a "fetus," a term that is so liberally used today that one notes the avoidance of "baby" or "child" in referring to the unborn.) Some will be generous and call the child a "potential person." Human life was created by God in his image (Genesis 1:26, 27). God knew us from before birth. **"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee"** (Jeremiah 1:5). Job spoke of God making and fashioning us in the womb (Job. 31:15). The Bible knows nothing about "potential persons." A baby's DNA is unique, distinct from that of the mother. That "tissue" is a living soul!

When does life begin? Some say that life begins at birth. Some say that it begins when the fetus is vi-

able (able to live outside the womb). Others think that it is when brain waves develop or when the heart begins to beat. There are other theories in addition to these. But, if what is within the womb does not have life, how can the first cells begin to divide as they do immediately upon conception? Non-living material cannot grow and develop. Life must be present in order for it to do so. Therefore, we do know when life begins!

Can the unborn baby feel pain? Pro-choice advocates attempt to placate any squeamishness or reluctance on the part of the mother with the lie that the "tissue" within her is incapable of feeling pain. Imaging techniques have proven that the baby moves in response to various stimuli or pressure applied to the womb. Chemical reactions measured by stress hormones also indicate that the baby can feel pain. Unborn children can have the hiccups. They can suck a thumb and derive comfort from doing so. They have the same capacity for pain and pleasure before birth as they will have after birth. Yet, by the millions they die an excruciating death, chosen not to live by the person who should be most protective of them.

More babies than we can possibly count have been snatched off "the last train" into this world. We will never see their faces or know what their accomplishments could have been. Mothers who thought they did not want a baby will never see its smile, hear the coo, revel in hugs and sweet, sloppy kisses, or listen to a tiny voice saying, "Mommy, I wuv you." The moral climate of this nation must be turned around before we all become expendable.

—9194 Lakeside Drive
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

*Check your address labels
If yours has the date*

2/01/04

It is Time to Renew!

Send your renewals to:

**P.O. Box 2357
Spring, TX 77383-2357**

**MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING
LECTURES AD HERE**

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.

Somerville-Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Somerville, Alabama, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

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! Andy Cates, Evangelist. (205)556-3062.

-England-

Cambridge-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

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-

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. Tel. 770-382-6775, www.cartersvillechurchofchrist.org. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist-email: bdgayton@juno.com.

-Indiana-

Evansville-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, Evangelist.

-Louisiana-

Chalmette-Village Square Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St., Chalmette, LA 70044. Mark Lance, Evangelist, (504) 279-9438.

-Massachusetts-

Chicopee-Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

-Michigan-

Garden City-Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Dan Goddard, Evangelist. (734) 422-8660. www.garden-city-coc.org

-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-

Memphis-Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

Rockwood-Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., Rockwood, TN 37854. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

-Texas-

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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February. www.churchesofchrist.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-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. Jason Rollo, Evangelist, (817) 282-3239.

Lubbock-Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00, 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

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.

Roanoke-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm. (817) 491-2388.

Schertz-Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., Schertz, TX. (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff and Stan Crowley, Evangelists.

-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., Gerald Reynolds, Tel. (307) 635-2482.

Enmity Because of Truth?

Kent Bailey

Truth is indeed essential to both one's becoming a child of God and living faithful to the Lord (John 8:32; 17:17; Romans 10:17; Revelation 2:10). Truth is therefore paramount in our having a proper relationship with God. By its very essence it is available, attainable, and ascertainable. It is therefore objective as it exists independent of the human mind. Because of the importance and nature of God's eternal truth, we must follow it wherever it leads. We must bear any burden, make any sacrifice, and pay any price to follow this God approved path.

When one is committed to that of following truth, one will also understand the necessity of opposing error regardless where such is found. This fundamental fact was deeply impressed upon me almost 30 years ago when I was convinced of my error in being identified with the Independent Christian churches. After renouncing my affiliation with that religious group and being baptized into Christ, I soon found myself amidst that of controversy with both my family and friends. I was greatly impressed by faithful defenders of the faith in their opposition to all forms of error both in and out of the church. The writings of **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** in addition to hearing great preachers such as **Guy N. Woods**, **G.K. Wallace**, and **Franklin Camp** left a permanent impression on my heart and soul. I did indeed see by their influence the God-given responsibility to be set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:15-17) and earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3).

Upon my moving to the State of Tennessee, it was indeed a great blessing to visit with Guy N. Woods on numerous occasions and be encouraged by him to stand firm in opposition to all forms of error. He correctly pointed out to me that such a stand will bring opposition to such efforts even coming from those whom we dearly love. The apostle Paul faced this very thing when dealing with error in Galatia. As the results of his efforts, brethren opposed him in his stand for truth. In the words of divine inspiration Paul raised a crucial question when he asked, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16).

In this particular issue of *Contending for the Faith* **Mac Deaver's** position regarding the influence of the Holy Spirit is reviewed. Such does not imply personal animosity. I have known and appreciated both **Roy** and Mac Deaver since my studies in Graduate School at Tennessee Bible College back in the early

1980s. Both of these men had a powerful influence for good in my own life especially in the area of Biblical Apologetics as well as the controversy relating to Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage. However, truly great men can be on the wrong side of a controversial issue. Such is the case with the position Mac Deaver is currently affirming regarding the influence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

The issue is not within itself directly related to disagreement regarding the *indwelling of the Holy Spirit*. Brethren have differed for years regarding the indwelling of the Holy Spirit without drawing lines relating to fellowship concerning this issue. Neither do we deny *God's Providence*. Indeed Post-Modernistic Deism is fatal error and must be opposed!

The real issue in this discussion is that dealing with the Holy Spirit's influence. Mac affirms that, in addition to his sanctifying influence through his word, the Holy Spirit operates directly to sanctify the heart of the faithful Christian. Although he does not deny that the Holy Spirit has an influence on the Christian through the word of God, he affirms that the Holy Spirit exerts a direct influence on the heart, or mind of the Christian *in conjunction with* the word of God and denies that the influence of the Holy Spirit is accomplished *only by means of the word of God*.

If such is the case, upon what basis do we contend that word of God is all sufficient to sanctify the heart of the faithful Christian (II Timothy 3:15-17)? If Mac is correct in his reasoning, then how would what he alleges to have from the Holy Spirit be any different (other than by degree) from that which the apostles had (John 14:26; 16:13)? Will Mac affirm that the Holy Spirit illuminates his understanding of the scriptures? Will he affirm that the Holy Spirit illuminates the understanding of the alien sinner regarding the scriptures? If he will illuminate the Christian but not the alien, would not such imply that the Bible can be understood by the alien without direct help but not by the Christian?

—124 Executive Meadows Dr.
Lenoir City, Tennessee 37771

Kent Bailey's
picture

Subscribe Today

Do you know of an individual or a congregation that needs to be made aware of the false doctrines and teachers that are afflicting the Lord's Church today? If so why not give them a subscription of *Contending for the Faith*.

THERE ARE MANY SUBSCRIPTION PLANS AVAILABLE:

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. Whole Congregation Rate: Any congregation entering each family of its entire membership with single copies being mailed directly to each home receives a \$3.00 discount off the Single Subscription Rate, i.e., such whole congregation subscriptions are payable in advance at the rate of \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

TO SEND A SUBSCRIPTION JUST FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW:

NAME _____	1 YEAR	2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____
NAME _____	1 YEAR	2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION TO:

P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383-2357

•fax:281.288.0549 • e-mail: jbrow@charter.net • phone: 281.350.5516

Contending for the Faith
P.O. Box 2357
Spring, Texas 77383

PRSR STD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
DALLAS, TX
PERMIT #1863