

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

## HAVING THE RIGHT ATTITUDE REGARDING FELLOWSHIP (A Review)

Bruce Stulting

The December 2008 issue of *The Christian Worker*, Vol. 94, No. 12, published by the Southwest Church of Christ in Austin, TX, was totally dedicated to a discussion of fellowship including withdrawal of fellowship. Considering the current digression in the area of fellowship, a detailed study of this subject is needed. Much of what was taught in said issue was Scriptural. However, there is an article by Kevin Cauley entitled "Having The Right Attitude Regarding Fellowship" with which we must take issue.

In this article, bro. Cauley discusses "two extremes" in the brotherhood. One extreme is to "...almost completely abandon any meaningful concept of doctrine." He continues with a brief discussion of this extreme to which we would agree. The other extreme (which is the focus of his article) is to "...almost completely abandon any meaningful concept of love." Regarding the latter extreme, Cauley states:

These seek to purge the church of all elements which display weakness, ignorance, frailties, and foolishness/stupidity. These have forgotten that Christ died for an imperfect people whom He desperately loves and for whom He was willing to sacrifice all that they might be saved (Eph. 5:25). Yes, it was and is His desire to perfect the church. However, that perfecting process involves patience, longsuffering, forbearance, and love. That process recognizes that individuals and churches need to grow and mature in Christ (2 Pet. 3:18) and that no one person, other than the Lord, has so lived as to claim perfect maturity.

Before we discuss the foregoing, we remind the reader that Cauley's article is dealing with "The Right Attitude Regarding Fellowship." His first extreme deals with those who allow just about anyone into fellowship by going beyond the Scriptural limit set by God. He then turns his attention to those who restrict fellowship by "unscripturally" withholding from some who deserve it. *Here we point out and emphasize that the only thing that disrupts Scriptural fellowship is SIN (Eph. 5:11; 2 John. 9-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13).* Now we will review some of the aforementioned statements.

### Can Christians Purge The Church And/Or Reach Maturity?

Cauley stated, "These seek to purge the church of all elements which display weakness, ignorance, frailties, and foolishness/ stupidity". It is true that Paul commands, "**Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men**" (1 Thes. 5:14). *However, this does not mean that we ignore brethren's sins resulting from "weakness, ignorance, frailties, and foolishness/stupidity."*

Such characteristics describe the one who is "**overtaken in a fault** ["trespass"– ASV. 1901]" (Gal. 6:1a). Vine defines "**overtaken**" as, "**...being overtaken in any trespass,**" Gal. 6:1, where the meaning is not that of detecting a person in the act, but of his being caught by the trespass

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

## Editorial...

### PURR WORDS AND SNARL WORDS

On page three of this issue of *CFTF* there is a statement from the Forest Hill (Hereafter FH) Church of Christ elders, Memphis, TN and a bulletin article from bro. Barry Grider. Their writings speak for themselves. Beginning on page four are responses from Dub McClish, your editor and the Spring Church of Christ elders, Spring, TX to the FH elders' statement and Grider's first article. These documents also speak for themselves. At this writing the closest thing to a response from FH is Grider's second bulletin article printed in this issue of *CFTF* on page seven. In it he continues to declare how wretched we are and, thus, unworthy of an answer—even though his article is an answer. Space forbids us from dealing with everything in Grider's articles in this issue of *CFTF*, but the Lord willing we will deal with them.

In the FH elders' statement and in Grider's articles *nothing* is said about the real problems—*Dave Miller's unrepented of errors on the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders, his marriage intent doctrine and the efforts on the part of Grider, FH, MSOP, et al., to fellowship Miller and those who advocate fellowshipping him although he refuses to repent of his errors. They hold the same view toward Stan Crowley of the Schertz, Texas Church of Christ regarding his MDR errors also.*

Because the FH elders, Grider, MSOP, et al., cannot show Bible authority for the r&r of elders, etc., and being unwilling to repent of the same, they have only one recourse left to them—to *deliberately attack the characters of those who expose them for their unscriptural actions and press them accordingly regarding their errors.* They abhor us of our steadfast exposure of the false fellowship they are advocating and defending. Therein is the reason that Grider wrote of us, "to be so preoccupied with the affairs of others is not normal." Not normal from whose perspective—the rebellious brethren who feel the sting of truth or those who love the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth on any subject? We are quite sure that the fornicating man and woman through whom Phinehas ran his javelin thought the fellow to be somewhat radical and acting to the extreme, but their thinking was not the thinking that mattered and in this life they had little time to think it (Num. 25:6-8).

In view of the fact that Bro. Grider has concluded that one is necessarily "not normal" if he is "preoccupied with the affairs of others", he needs to take a journey back through the archives of *CFTF* to see how much bro. Rice was truly "preoccupied with the affairs of others". Clearly, according to Grider's logic in this matter, he must conclude that bro. Rice was "not normal". If not, let him explain per his own logic, why he would conclude otherwise?

In the September 2005 issue of *CFTF*, p. 10. sis. Annette Cates reported a comment her husband, bro. Curtis Cates, made to her about the function of *CFTF*. Bro. Cates was ex-

plaining to sis. Cates why there was a need for a new paper (*The Gospel Journal*). He said to her that "...*CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH* fills the niche of dealing with specific issues threatening the purity of the church." He went on to say, "We need a general interest paper that does not compete with the role of *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*. There is room and need for both." Sis. Cates went on to write, "I, along with countless others, understood the unique, discrete purpose of

each periodical." *CFTF* continues to fill that "niche" even when we must expose and refute the errors of those who at one time approved of our actions. Of course, we were not dealing with their sins at the time they pointed out our "niche" and the importance of it in the brotherhood.

### **The Fallacy of *Special Pleading***

Among other things Grider's articles are prime exam-  
(Continued on Page 8)



### **From the Elders**

Because the Bible clearly teaches us to "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17) we, the elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, hereby, have found it necessary to mark David P. Brown and H. W. (Dub) McClish for their continual pursuit of sowing discord among brethren

and for their outright lies concerning our elders, evangelist, the Memphis School of Preaching, and this congregation. This was evidenced once again in the most recent issue of their publication, *Contending for the Faith*, October, 2009. While we pray for their repentance, we stand united in our opposition against their conduct and urge faithful brethren everywhere to do the same. (*The Forest Hill News*. Vol. 36, No., 48, Dec. 1, 2009, p. 4, Memphis, TN)



### **From the Preacher**

It has been a busy month of preaching and teaching. I had the opportunity to preach in two gospel meetings during October. One meeting was with the Lake City Church of Christ in Lake City, Florida and the other was with the Southwest Church of Christ in Austin, Texas. It was my privilege to close out the Spiritual Sword Lectures here in Memphis in mid October. I returned to Texas in early November to preach on the Schertz Lectureship near San Antonio. After that, I spoke two nights at the Willette congregation northeast of Nashville on subjects related to the home. Last week I preached in a meeting at the Jasper, Tennessee Church of Christ. All of these opportunities were a blessing for me and I pray a blessing to those who were present. It was good to be back in the pulpit at Forest Hill this past week. I appreciate those who have filled the pulpit during my absence and, especially I am grateful to my associate here at Forest Hill, Matthew Jones, for his work on a daily basis on behalf of this congregation.

the clear teachings of our Lord concerning love, kindness, truthfulness, and forgiveness. They cannot love the church for which Jesus died and behave as they do. They are rude and crude. They are hateful and haughty. Furthermore, to be so preoccupied with the affairs of others is not normal. In reality, they behave like spoiled children who don't get their way. We gave them one of their last platforms of influence, through our lectureship and *The Gospel Journal* and now that has been taken away and so they must pitch a fit in order to be heard. The fact is, however, no one pays them much attention nor should they. The two have been isolated and marked, as they should be. All we can do is pray that they will repent of their behavior before it is everlastingly too late.

What I will be doing at the beginning of the new year is something I am excited about. Had the opportunity not arisen, I would be continuing on as the local preacher of this church. However, this new opportunity still leaves room for much preaching and teaching, both at Forest Hill and in gospel meetings. More time will be devoted to writing, as well. Furthermore, no doubt to the dismay of Brown and McClish, I will continue to be a faculty member of the Memphis School of Preaching. The truth is our elders, this preacher, along with our faculty, have operated in peace and harmony to this present hour. For this reason it is right to identify and mark those, who, like Brown and McClish, through their lies, innuendo, and evil surmisings would seek to disrupt the unity of this congregation through seeds of discord. I salute our elders for this decision and stand with them.

—Barry Grider

("From the Preacher," *The Forest hill News*. Vol. 36, No., 48, Dec. 1, 2009, p. 1 Memphis, TN)

# RESPONSE TO THE FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST ELDERS’ “MARKING” OF DAVID P. BROWN AND DUB MCCLISH

December 18, 2009

## Introduction

In 2005, a great division occurred among brethren who formerly worked shoulder-to-shoulder in proclaiming the saving Gospel of Christ and defending it against those preferring a perverted gospel. The division involved primarily the defense by Memphis School of Preaching and others of Apologetics Press and its executive director, David Miller, the most renowned proponent of the doctrine of elder reevaluation and reaffirmation and perhaps the only proponent among brethren of the “marriage intent” doctrine.

Two things are certain. First, we have openly opposed both of these doctrines since becoming aware of them prior to June 2005, and we will continue to oppose them publicly. Second, MSOP and Forest Hill opposed the so-called elder R&R doctrine (and, we are confident, the “marriage intent” doctrine as well; if they did not do so, they can so declare) before June 2005, but have since either embraced this doctrine, or continue to verbally oppose it while fellowshiping those who uphold it.

Furthermore, MSOP and FH have assumed a stance of confidentiality and nondisclosure. We want transparency; they want to keep it quiet. The following statement and letters to the FH elders are made available to you in furtherance of our effort at transparency. We call upon the FH elders and MSOP faculty to make public all the documentation in their possession claimed to sustain their position, and to engage in an open discussion of the same. You, the reader, would thus be properly equipped to evaluate the evidence for yourselves.

## Statement Dated December 10, 2009

**By the Elders of the Spring Church of Christ  
Regarding the “Marking” of Brethren Brown and  
McClish By the Elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ**

The elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ (“FH”) announced in the December 1, 2009 issue of *The Forest Hill News* (“*TFHN*”) that they had marked brethren David P. Brown and H. W. (Dub) McClish. Both are overseen by the Spring elders.

In the announcement, the FH elders asserted that brethren Brown and McClish have engaged both in a “continual pursuit of sowing discord among brethren” and in telling “outright lies concerning” the FH “elders, evangelist, the Memphis School of Preaching,” and the FH congregation. The evidence for such was purportedly to be found “once again” in the October, 2009 issue of *Contending for the Faith* (“*CFTF*”). The “once again” descriptive would imply, at least, that evidence may be found in other issues of *CFTF*.

Since 2005, many brethren including, but not limited to, those at Memphis School of Preaching, Southwest School of Bible Studies, Schertz, Texas Church of Christ, and by implication at least, their overseeing elderships, have engaged in fellowship practices not authorized by the New Testament. *CFTF* has chronicled and exposed these compromises in scripturally authorized fellowship. We are fully aware of what brethren Brown and McClish have written in opposition to these compromises and commend them for their efforts.

In the February 10, 2009 issue of *TFHN*, Barry Grider, currently the pulpit minister of FH, wrote two articles entitled “I Got Used to It” and “I Drew My Circle Again”. These articles, which, in effect, question the singularity of the Lord’s church and its doctrine, were critically reviewed by Dub McClish in the April 2009 issue of *CFTF*. In his editorial in the October 2009 issue of *CFTF*, David Brown again referred to these two articles. In the same February 10<sup>th</sup> *TFHN* bulletin, Grider also included an article by Tyler Young excerpted from Young’s manuscript for the 2008 Lubbock Lectureship. The import of Young’s article supported Grider’s two articles and was likely included for that reason. Young was publicly and appropriately rebuked by Tommy Hicks, director of the Lubbock Lectureship, for presenting this material there when he had been expressly forbidden to do so by Hicks (Hicks had excised this material from Young’s manuscript prior to its inclusion in the lectureship book). As a matter of information, Hicks is in close fellowship with the staff of Memphis School of Preaching and likely the FH elders. We assumed that the FH elders were opposed to the sentiments expressed in these bulletin articles as were Hicks and others. We were wrong. Not only do the FH elders not oppose the loose views expressed in these articles, but by virtue of their “marking” action, they agree with and endorse these views.

With our assumptions now corrected, it is still the case that assertions are not proof. In order to be credible, the FH elders must provide adequate evidence to support the assertions made in their “marking” announcement. In a letter to them of this date, we have invited them to provide such proof. As a matter of record, previously we have invited the principals at MSOP, SWSBS, Schertz, Apologetics Press, et al, to participate in an Open Forum, but such efforts were spurned or ignored.

If the response to our letter to the FH elders is either silence, dismissal, or a soliloquy similar to the self serving lead article of the above mentioned December 1<sup>st</sup> bulletin, then we must assume that the “marking” has no merit.

As a further comment, we express surprise at the timing

of this “marking”, the necessity of doing it formally, and the limitation of the same. The fellowship issues that have divided us began in 2005. We have not had fellowship with MSOP, FH, SWSBS, Southwest Church of Christ (Austin, Texas), Schertz Church of Christ, AP, and others similarly disposed, from the time they demonstrated that they would condone or practice, or both, unauthorized fellowship. So why now? Also, they have “marked” brethren Brown and McClish but not the elders who oversee their work. Do the FH elders still consider themselves in fellowship with the Spring elders? Will they now mark all those who remain in fellowship with Brown and McClish? In the marking of brethren Brown and McClish, the proper approach would be to provide the Spring elders with the adequate evidence to substantiate their action. Once proved, they should then call upon us to act accordingly in a disciplinary action against Brown and McClish. In our humble opinion, their marking action will likely extend far beyond their expectations and result in consequences that are both unanticipated and uncontrollable.

Perhaps our aforementioned letter will prompt them to do what they have thus far failed to do. We wait, hopefully not in vain, but certainly not in idleness.

/s/ Kenneth D. Cohn, Elder

/s/ Buddy R. Roth, Elder

/s/ Jack T. Stephens, Jr., Elder

**Letter Dated December 10, 2009  
From Brethren David P. Brown and H. W. (Dub) McClish  
To the Elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ**

Dear brethren:

We are in receipt of your December 1, 2009, edition of *The Forest Hill News (TFHN)* in which you announced you have “marked” us as unworthy of fellowship on the basis of Romans 16:17. We assure you that we believe in following and count very important what the New Testament teaches regarding the marking and withdrawing of fellowship. You accused us of two things in your announcement: “sowing discord” among brethren and telling “outright lies” concerning yourselves, your evangelist, MSOP, and Forest Hill, serious allegations indeed. While granting for the moment that our words/deeds may have caused discord, as you brethren know, doing so is not inherently evil (Mat. 10:34–39; Luke 12:51–53).

We are truly thankful that you have clarified your position regarding your past, present and continued support of brother Barry Grider. Your public statement of implied support for brother Grider’s doctrine and conduct dispels any idea on our part (and should do so on anyone else’s part) that any one of you disagrees with and/or opposes him. Contrariwise, your statement implies to all that the Forest Hill eldership, the Forest Hill church and MSOP faculty **are in full support** of brother Grider’s doctrine and conduct. We assure you that any suggestions to the contrary we have made regarding the

same were based on information at hand (which we believed to be reliable) and with no intent to deceive.

We will publicly correct our misconceptions of this matter on the pages of *Contending for the Faith* and trust that you will forgive our erroneous suggestion. It has always been the policy of *Contending for the Faith* to make appropriate acknowledgments and corrections when we become aware of any misstatement. Regarding such matters, we have expected that same Scriptural attitude in and conduct from others, but have sadly found that, all too often, others are unwilling to make necessary corrections when they have not only been charged with error, but have been proven guilty of said charges. Lamentably, many who are guilty of sin and/or error seem to be far more interested in attempting to justify their erroneous conduct than repenting of it.

You did not specify the “lies” of which you accused us, making it difficult for us to repent of unspecified offenses and leaving us to guess at what they might be. In brother Grider’s article that accompanied your announcement, he pointedly expressed his frustrations with us, but in the venting of his spleen, he was no more specific in his charges against us than were you men. To simply throw out invectives as brother Grider did only proves (if it proves anything at all) that he can throw out invectives without specificity. It is strange that he did not deal with specifics, but chose rather to deal only in caustic generalities.

From reading brother Grider’s recent article, it appears that you and he were most disturbed by the following (which he termed a “lie”): Our suggestion that one or more of you men and/or one or more of the MSOP faculty members may have sorely disagreed with brethren Grider’s and Young’s February 10, 2009, *TFHN* articles. Brother Grider stated in his December 1 article:

*The truth is our elders, this preacher, along with our faculty, have operated in peace and harmony to this present hour.*

We accept brother Grider’s claim, and stand corrected as previously noted. We are in brother Grider’s debt for setting us straight. Taking him at his word **in writing, you and the entire MSOP faculty** “have operated in peace and harmony to this present hour.” Simply put, we did not think that any (much less, all) of you men could ever approve of the February 10 articles. While we have apparently **misstated** the case in this regard, this hardly makes us **liars**, for a liar is one who makes “a false statement with deliberate intent to deceive.” We ask your forgiveness for suggesting that there may have been disagreement within the eldership and that some of you and some of the faculty may have been displeased with brother Grider because of his February 10 articles.

We must therefore regretfully accept the fact that **all** of the Forest Hill elders and **all** of the MSOP faculty **are now on record** as being in **full agreement** with and as having **no objections whatsoever** to the following things advocated in

the Grider and Young articles: (1) Singing the song, “Sweet, Sweet Spirit” in your assemblies (which song directly addresses and prays to the Holy Spirit for his direct impact upon the singer), (2) allowing teachers, preachers, and preacher students to use whatever Bible version(s) they choose in your pulpit and classrooms (including MSOP), (3) dismissing your Sunday evening worship assemblies in favor of small group meetings in homes, (4) moving or canceling your Sunday evening worship period on “Super Bowl Sunday,” (5) serving coffee and doughnuts during your Bible classes, (6) teaching your members and preacher students that they may forsake the assembly in order to participate in sports activities, (7) enlarging your fellowship “circle,” and (by implication) (8) teaching in the classes at MSOP that the foregoing practices and teachings are mere incidental and optional matters.

With your official public statement, along with brother Grider’s December 1 article, we now know exactly where you stand and what you advocate concerning some of the things brother Grider advocated himself and that he defended in brother Tyler Young’s teaching in the February 10 articles. Your statement also gives us greater insight concerning your attitude toward brother Dave Miller’s errors and toward those who fellowship him.

While we continue to have difficulty believing that you brethren countenance such things, brother Grider’s declaration of your perpetual “peace and harmony” leaves us no alternative but to believe that you do. So that brethren may know of our admission of mischaracterizing you brethren as defined and set out in this letter, please distribute our admission in this regard as widely as you have distributed your statement of marking. This distribution, however, must include this letter in its entirety.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ David P. Brown

/s/ H. W. (Dub) McClish

P.S. We were a bit surprised that you took more than four years to mark us as unworthy of your fellowship. Because of your fellowship compromises, we have not been in fellowship with you since you began (in 2005) defending, endorsing, and extending fellowship to brother Dave Miller in spite of his errors and of his steadfast refusal to repent of the same. We know of nothing that proves brother Miller’s repentance, confession of sin, and/or his request for brethren to pray for his forgiveness. If you do know of such precise and specific evidence, please make that evidence available to us. We would greatly rejoice in his repentance as we would rejoice in your repentance as well for extending your fellowship to him and to those who fellowship him in his unrepented-of errors. Until such a time, even if you should “unmark” us, you will remain “marked” by us and by all who refuse to show “respect of persons for the sake of advantage” (Jude 16).

**Letter Dated December 10, 2009  
From the Elders of the Spring Church of Christ**

## **To the Elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ**

Dear brethren:

Thank you for informing the Spring elders by means of the December 1, 2009 issue of *The Forest Hill News* (“*TFHN*”) of your markings of brethren David P. Brown and H. W. (Dub) McClish. You sent the bulletin to the offices of *Contending for the Faith* (“*CFTF*”) with which we are associated as an eldership only by sentiment. (Brother Brown expeditiously hand delivered the bulletin to the elders. Please note above the correct mailing address of the Spring Church of Christ. [Letterhead in original letter omitted here]) Both brethren are, however, overseen by the Spring elders.

We, as well as brethren Brown and McClish, were operating under the assumption, proved by you brethren to be false, that you and perhaps some of the faculty of the Memphis School of Preaching (“MSOP”) were not in full agreement with the articles appearing in the February 10, 2009 issue of *TFHN*. As distasteful as it is to us, your action in marking these brethren has forced us to recognize the harsh reality that you indeed have endorsed and are in full agreement with said articles. What is further distressing is that the implications and repercussions of your endorsement and agreement extend far beyond the subscribers of *TFHN*. Please extend our gratitude to brother Grider for informing us that you elders, the MSOP faculty, and he are even to the present operating in peace and harmony.

Any marking is a serious matter. This one is especially so because its implications are broader than just the congregations of Spring and Forest Hill. For that reason, and in order for us to fulfill our obligations as elders having oversight over two whom you have marked, we respectfully request that you, collectively but endorsed individually, provide us in writing the specific information you considered and the reasoning from the Scriptures you employed in arriving at your decision. Surely you “proved all things” prior to your action. Prove it not only to yourselves, but to us, David, and Dub as well. If only for the sake of David’s and Dub’s souls, surely you are willing to do this.

We reference your announcement in the December 1, 2009 issue of *TFHN*. You accuse them of a “continual pursuit of sowing discord among brethren.” Even a “continual pursuit” must have a beginning. Please tell us just when this “continual pursuit” began. What were the actions, words, and the like, that constituted “sowing discord”? We are not concerned with sowing “discomfort” if such is deserved. Paul did not say “Have I become your best friend because I tell you the truth?”

You accuse them of telling “outright lies” concerning you, the Forest Hill elders, the Forest Hill evangelist (which we assume to be Barry Grider), MSOP (Did you mean just the faculty, the students, former students, or all inclusive?), and the Forest Hill congregation (Did you mean each and every member, individually, or the aggregate?). You further

state that the evidence of such lies (and perhaps respecting the “continual pursuit” statement as well) was to be found in the October 2009 issue of *CFTF*. Please enumerate each and every statement made by Brown or McClish or both, whenever or wherever made, but particularly in *CFTF*, known by you to be a lie respecting each group mentioned in your announcement. Also, please clearly state the reason such statement is a lie and the truth pertaining thereto. Although you may believe the task to be unduly burdensome, do not let that be a deterrent to an honest effort. In order that our understanding may not be lacking, your responses may be the occasion of further questions.

It is important for us in fulfilling our obligations as elders and for all faithful Christians everywhere to be provided the foregoing in order that all may consider the merits of your action. We certainly do not want such egregious conduct, if

indeed it is, to go uncontested.

Given the far reaching implications of your action and the need of the brotherhood to be adequately informed, in your response, do not invoke a right of confidentiality. It will not be honored. Likewise, we claim no right of confidentiality for ourselves. You may distribute our communications with you as widely as the distribution of *TFHN*. We stipulate only that our communications with you be reproduced in their entirety.

Trusting that your response will be timely and thorough, we remain

Yours truly,

/s/ Kenneth D. Cohn, Elder

/s/ Buddy R. Roth, Elder

/s/ Jack T. Stephens, Jr., Elder



## LET THEM ALONE

Our Lord Jesus Christ was the most courageous man who ever lived. He knew His mission and his mission was the cross of Calvary. Nothing ever deterred Him from fulfilling what He came to accomplish. Through His death He dealt a fatal blow to Satan, fulfilling that first Messianic promise (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14). Through His death salvation would be extended to all men (John 3:16; Luke 19:10). Through His death the church would be purchased (Mat. 16:18; Eph. 5:25). Through His death a new covenant would be provided (Mat. 26:28; Heb. 9:15). In the Garden of Gethsemane you remember His prayer, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39). The Father’s will was for Jesus to die and He submitted Himself to the will of the Father (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:7,8).

Jesus was courageous but He was also wise. In the book of divine wisdom we read, “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit” (Pro. 26:4,5) The two verses are not contradictory. Faithful children of God do not lower their standards and engage contentious people with frivolity. If they do answer them, they do so by exposing what such people are doing and moving on. The Pharisees were Jesus’ constant critics. They hated the Lord with every passion of their being. They were guilty of telling lies about the Lord. They engaged in evil surmisings and innuendo. They are well described in the following passage. “And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him” (Luke 11:53,54). Did these Pharisees really have an interest in truth? Absolutely not! They despised the Lord

and as a result would twist and pervert His words and actions to suit their own evil agenda, which was to try and destroy Him. Jesus was wise and gave us an example to follow when He refused to answer such individuals. “And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answer nothing” (Mat. 27:12).

Several years ago a publication ran an article about me that was filled with ugliness, sarcasm, and smartalackness (sic). I read some of the article to the late, great gospel preacher Wendell Winkler. Brother Winkler responded by saying, “see Barry there is nothing at all Christian about that.” I asked him, “Do you respond to something like that?” Without any hesitation or equivocation, he said, “Absolutely Not! Don’t even acknowledge such!” I appreciated what that seasoned veteran preacher shared with me and have tried to follow it. My heroes have always been and always will be faithful gospel preachers. Men who have proclaimed the truth faithfully, but who are also discerning and wise. Men whose lives are pure and are filled with kindness. Such individuals follow the model of our Lord and that is very good model to follow.

Yes, sometimes certain brethren have to be marked because they engage in lies, innuendo, evil surmisings, and divisive conduct. Do you get down in the dirt and wallow in it with them? No! We must follow the admonition of the Lord, who said of the Pharisees, “LET THEM ALONE: They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Mat. 15:14).

—Barry Grider

(“Let Them Alone,” *The Forest Hill News*. Vol. 36, No.51, Dec. 22, 2009, p. 1 Memphis, TN)

ples of the use of the *fallacy of Special Pleading*. Much of the efforts to defend fellowshipping Dave Miller fall into that category. In explaining this fallacy T. Edward Damer wrote.

This fallacy consists in applying principles, rules or criteria to another person, while failing or refusing to apply them to oneself or to a situation that is of special personal interest....If a double standard is to be applied, some reason must be given for treating differently what appear to be similar cases (*Attacking Faulty Reasoning*. 2nd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1987, p.82).

Damer hits Grider, et al., directly between the eyes in the following explanation of this fallacy as he describes how highly they think of themselves, but the very low estimate they have of us. Damer writes:

While I (and my friends) are confident, you are arrogant; I am aggressive, you are ruthless; I am thrifty, you are cheap; I am frank, you are rude; I am flexible, you are inconsistent; I am clever, you are conniving; I am thorough, you are picky; I am curious, you are nosey; I am excited, you are hysterical, I am firm, you are pig-headed; I am friendly, you are flirtatious; I am a free spirit, you take license (Ibid, p. 83).

Having no way they can successfully refute the facts, the Scriptures and the logic bearing on Dave Miller's unrepented of errors (Stan Crowley's MDR errors too); not being able to show New Testament authority for their continued fellowship of those who refuse to repent of their errors; unwilling to see the Truth exposing their actions in this matter; and, determined at all costs to remain in fellowship with Miller, Crowley, et al., they are left with only one alternative—**impugn the motives and attack the characters of those they cannot by fact, Scripture and logic refute.** Thus, while denigrating denigration, they denigrate those of us who oppose their unscriptural actions.

This denigration is readily seen in Grider's articles. In reading them please notice his:

- ♦ Strongly worded condemnation of us for engaging in strongly worded condemnation of Dave Miller, et al.
- ♦ Very negative comments made in opposition to those of us he condemns for our negative comments.
- ♦ Use of biting and devouring language on us for what he sees as our "biting and devouring" others.
- ♦ Judging of us for judging others.
- ♦ Being obnoxious and disagreeable while criticizing us for being "obnoxious and disagreeable".
- ♦ Use of caustic and radical terms in railing against us for being "caustic and radical".
- ♦ Seeking to "crush" us because he says we are "crushing" other brethren.

Indeed, bro. Grider has no problem in promoting himself and his friends as "loving, tolerant, kind, truthful, forgiving, open-minded, balanced and non-divisive, while, according to Grider, we are hateful, intolerant, close-minded, disruptive and divisive to peace and unity." In his Dec. 1,

2009 FH bulletin article appearing on page three of this paper Grider does not mind pursuing his own "vendetta" against us, making "outlandish comments" about us, writing "venomous" words to describe us, expressing his "disdain" for us, declaring that he knows we are liars — those who deliberately tell falsehoods with the full intent to deceive others, that we "have no respect for the truth whatsoever", that we are "devoid of anything Christ like", that we "cannot love the church and behave as [we] do", that we "are rude and crude", "hateful and haughty", etc., etc. ad infinitum, ad nauseam. Clearly bro. Barry thinks that God is most pleased with his behavior toward and his language describing us. *Even though he condemns and declares such conduct and language on our part to be unchristian and sinful, he has no problem employing it, thinking himself most holy in so doing.*

The real reason bro. Grider wrote as he did regarding us is a simple one—*his pride is hurt and he is very angry at not being able to refute the facts, scripture and logic condemning his and his friends' unauthorized fellowship of Miller, et al. The poor fellow is reduced to inconsistency and self contradiction in his actions and words. But, no one can correctly say that bro. Grider engaged in surmising at all—evil or otherwise—can one?*

Grider and friends have joined a host of erring brethren in their method of opposing *CFTF's* opposition to and exposure of error and false teachers over the last forty years. Proof of which is made crystal clear in the following letter to the late editor, Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

**Mac D. Culver**, minister, Front Royal Church of Christ, Front Royal, Virginia. "I received your special issue of *Contending for the Faith* in which you had a 'report' on the *Herald of Truth* and the *Highland Church of Christ*, Abilene, Texas.

"It is sickening and disgusting that anyone would print such for mass distribution to the Lord's church. Such actions seem to be in total violation of every passage of scripture given concerning how one should treat a brother and indeed seem to be an attempt to divide the Lord's body and to have them rally around one man. Was not this the same type of thing Paul wrote against in 1 Corinthians 3?"

"How anyone can place himself in the position of all-wise and all-knowing in opposition to the Bible and God is appointed elders of a local congregation is beyond me.

"I have in my possession a document signed by the elders of the Highland church that seems to be in direct opposition to those things you print. Who am I to believe, the elders of the Lord's church who have been 'ordained by the Holy Spirit' or a group of self-appointed malcontents who place self and self-pride above the welfare of the church?"

"It seems that to some, as long as they agree with your or 'my position' and will do exactly as that 'little group' says, all is well. However, when they exercise the principles of God's word with the liberty God allows in opposition to the 'doctrine' of the little group, they are written up.

"It is my prayer that we will cease listening to those who set themselves up as judge and jury over the Lord's body and

realize that there is but one Judge, God the Father.

“Further, since when does a group of preachers and elders in Memphis have the authority to tell the elders of the Highland church or any other church how they are to oversee the flock? Is this the beginning of a ‘denominational headquarters’ along with the ‘screening board of orthodoxy’? It certainly seems as such. Possibly you can tell me to which group of men we as local congregations have to answer to? Also, I am wondering just who it was that God gave the authority to to (sic) change the scripture—you or those of the Memphis group?

“It is my prayer that you will see the damage you are causing and the division you are creating within the Lord’s people and publicly repent and ask God’s forgiveness before it is too late “ (*CFTF*, Vol. IX, No. 10, Oct. 1978, p. 14).

Change a few facts in Culver’s 31-year old letter and direct it toward bro. Dub McClish and me and the FH elders along with Barry could have signed it. At the very least, before Culver began his attack on bro. Rice’s character, he mentioned the topic that had upset him—*CFTF*’s opposition to the errors within the *Herald of Truth*.

*In their documents addressed to us the FH elders and Grider would or could not be as specific as was Culver.* For instance, did Grider give the names of the “faithful brethren” we have attacked? The answer is a resounding No. Which of our comments were “outlandish”? No answer. In what way was my “whole article a fabrication”? No answer. What makes Grider surmise (evil or otherwise) that we have “no respect for the truth whatsoever”? Please be specific. But, there is no answer. Precisely what is it in our “writings and behavior” that “demonstrated an attitude that is totally devoid of anything Christ like”? Please be specific. But there is no answer. *Did our writings differ from Grider’s Dec. 1, 2009 FH bulletin article? Let him be specific and show us the difference in them. If Grider’s article is Christ like and ours unChrist like, please designate clearly the error in our articles and how that error is not to be found in Grider’s*

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*articles. Since Grider knows that such is the case, it should pose no problem for him to show us the difference in his and our articles.* On and on we could go, but does anyone seriously think that Grider and friends will respond at all to us, much less be specific? *Whether you answer a fool according to his way or not, in his second article, Grider certainly judged us to be fools and labeled us accordingly.*

If we had written the same article Grider wrote against us, only directing it to Grider, or Garland Elkins, or Bobby Liddell, or Curtis Cates, or the FH elders, or anyone else at MSOP, these brethren would have immediately demanded specifics and details from us—and they would have had every right to demand such from us. And, we would have been obligated to provide such to them. Although each one of Grider’s articles attacked our characters, he conveniently and completely ignored the real problem—Dave Miller’s unrepented of errors and their continued fellowship of a false teacher. And, since the FH elders have made it official that they support what all bro. Grider does and teaches, they must agree also fully with Grider’s approach in dealing with said matters.

*Let it be emphasized again, we are not the ones who taught and/or practiced these false doctrines.* Unlike Grider, et al., we have not advocated fellowshipping those in error, who, for going on five years, have refused to repent of the same. Grider, MSOP, et al., advocate the fellowship of at least two unrepentant false teachers—Dave Miller and Stan Crowley. Grider, FH, MSOP, et al., are the brethren who cannot stand it because we will not sit by quietly and say nothing against their sins.

In the Oct. 1978 *CFTF*, p. 2, bro. Rice posed the following question in bold print: **“Will somebody show us in the Bible where anyone EVER demonstrated patience with any wilful false teacher?”** Maybe the FH elders, Grider, especially Bobby Liddell, or someone else at MSOP will attempt to answer Rice’s question. After all their patience seems to know no end when it comes to Dave Miller’s unrepented of errors.

In the May, 1978 *CFTF*, p. 14, Rice printed the following in bold, placing it in the middle of his “Notes & Quotes”. **“When some well-intentioned, however misguided, brethren write that they ‘can’t hardly stand’ this paper, my reaction is that such should ‘stand all you can!’”** *My sentiments exactly!* (The Lord willing, there will be more for some people to stand next month.)

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# SUFFER LONG WITH MSOP AND OTHERS IN THEIR REFUSAL TO REPENT

(A response to Bobby Liddell's article in the December 2009 *Yokefellow*)

**Charles Pogue**

Editor, *The Issues of Life*

The mail of December 22, 2009, brought my December copy of the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP) publication, *Yokefellow*. On the front page, and continuing on page three, was an article by the school's director, bro. Bobby Liddell, entitled "Longsuffering (II)." This article is to be continued in the January 2010 issue, but, personally, I am not longsuffering enough to wait for that issue before responding to this cowardly piece of hypocritical fluff. The fourth paragraph of this article will be the focus of my remarks. It reads:

Note that longsuffering requires lowliness and meekness. Haughty egotistical men are not longsuffering, but sin in their anger and haste to accuse, and unwillingness to forgive. Such men destroy their own brethren (cf. Acts 9:4) by sowing discord and dividing congregations through malicious words and evil surmising, all the while claiming they are the only faithful ones, and assuring their deceived followers that they are ever on guard for the latest supposed heresy and heretics. Their attitudes are so disagreeable and so distasteful (to those who refuse to be gullible enough to follow them blindly) that they end up meeting with a handful in their own homes, or if they do stay with a church for any length of time, they decimate the congregation by their disagreeable hypocrisy and arrogance. What a difference longsuffering would make! Let us all learn from their ungodly lack of bearing fruit, and be patient with one another, willing to forbear, as taught by the Holy Spirit.

The very title of this article implies the guilt of the author's position. Who is it that must demonstrate longsuffering, a person who is in the wrong or one who is in the right? Manifestly, it is the person in the right. By attacking his unnamed, but whose identities are well known to all, brethren for their need to be longsuffering, he by implication admits that their position is right, and his is wrong. The author further admits this is the case by pointing out these "Haughty, egotistical men are" unwilling to forgive. Their unwillingness to forgive implies that these "haughty and egotistical men" have at some point been wronged, and therefore have someone they need to forgive. However, as we learn from Luke 17:1-4 and other passages, forgiveness cannot be forthcoming unless the offender first repents. Who is it the "haughty egotistical men" need to forgive? Is it Dave Miller for his false teaching? Maybe it is the longsuffering brethren who have flung about labels such as liars, toxic loyalty circles, and a vile group. Then again, maybe it is the Forest Hill elders they need to forgive, who inappropriately marked

Dub McClish and David P. Brown as brethren who are to be avoided. Evil surmising will be avoided here, but this writer cannot help but wonder why that eldership did not mark that other bro. David?

Does a longsuffering brother, whether he is right or wrong about his position, judge the motives of those he accuses? Bro. Liddell does just that. "Malicious words" are words that are deliberately harmful. They are words that are motivated by, or resulting from, the desire to inflict harm or pain. Our illustrious longsuffering brother might as well avoid mincing words. Let him say what he means, that these brethren are deliberately dividing congregations. No, they are trying to get brethren to see the facts of the case; the false teaching and practice that has transpired regarding the unscriptural reevaluation/reaffirmation of elders. *For one, this writer wonders how much more widespread the unauthorized practice might have become, if brethren loyal to the necessity for a "Thus saith the Lord" were not speaking out on this matter.*

The next thing that comes to my attention in this article, I take as a false charge against a number of brethren, myself included. Our lowly, loving, longsuffering brother cannot avoid the temptation to end his ad hominem attacks against just the "haughty, egotistical brethren." In his omniscience, he is able to discern that those who agree with the "haughty, egotistical brethren" are deceived followers; they are gullible and blind!

Speaking for myself, I arrived at my own decision about Dave Miller's involvement in the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders through my own investigation. I did see an article entitled: "The reevaluation/reaffirmation of Elders," but without reading a single word of the article, without any need to look up any verses of Scripture, but having sufficient knowledge of the Scripture, I immediately said to myself, "There is no authority for that." I then read the article which included the charges raised against bro. Miller, and what did I do? I went on the Internet and read the transcript of the sermon delivered by bro. Miller on April 8, 1990. Bro. Miller's own words both defended the practice and revealed his part in it at the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Bedford, Texas. I then heard that some brethren claimed that bro. Miller had admitted he was involved in the process, but had repented. They referred to a statement he released on September 23, 2005. Not wanting to reach a conclusion without seeing the evidence (as many are unwilling to do), I read the statement.

All the brother did in that statement was claim to do what the liberals do, only differently. He then defended what he did. The last time I looked up the meaning of fruits of repentance and a description of its fruits, it did not describe a penitent man as one who defended what he did. I will not engage in the evil surmising that those deceived, gullible, blind followers—endearing terms referring to former students of MSOP—who refuse to walk the line and utter the “newspeak” talking points of the school, but neither would we be excluded from the blind, gullible group just because we are graduates. No, bro. Liddell, I am not a deceived, gullible, blind follower of David Brown, Dub McClish, or any other man, but I trust I am rather a follower of the Lord and His inspired Word.

In the last paragraph, bro. Liddell writes:

Hateful, self serving men will not patiently endure with others, nor will they be slow to anger. They will not extend mercy, but will seek opportunity to advance themselves or to avenge themselves at the cost of others and the church.

I wish someone would explain to me how one taking an unpopular stand for the truth, such as opposing fellowship with a brother who has taught and practiced error, and who refuses to repent of it, but rather retains the fellowship of a large number of brethren, could possibly be characterized as advancing one’s self. It is totally ridiculous on the very face of it! I know of no brethren falling into Liddell’s sights who are unwilling to extend mercy. Bro. Liddell admitted at the beginning of the article that he, not the ones whom he describes as not being longsuffering, is in the wrong. The only people who need vengeance are those who have been wronged. Who is it that is a hateful man, one who warns brethren against error, or one who rejects the error and attacks the messenger? To ask is to answer. It is loving and longsuffering to point out error for 4½ years, maybe too

longsuffering. *It was certainly longsuffering enough for the guilty to finally decide to mark and avoid the innocent.*

Please notice that in the entirety of Bobby Liddell’s character assailing article, he never once addresses even a single facet of the facts and circumstances that have resulted in the present breach among brethren. *It is a truth, and it was pointed out to me when I was a student at the MSOP, that when an opponent in debate cannot answer the argument the only thing he has left to do is attack the messenger.* It is time for all of those long-silent brethren who continue to defend Dave Miller’s error to cease their ad hominem attacks, look at the facts, and come to repentance.

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### Newberry, Grider, Liddell—What’s The Difference?

CFTF Oct., 1982, p. 14, Ira Y. Rice, Jr, Editor—“Please remove our name from your mailing list immediately. Do not send us any further issues, special or otherwise. We have read “Contentions for the Faith” for the past few years. You fairly well strain out the gnat and swallow the camel. I have yet to witness such reckless abandon in the use of “facts” all in the name of faithfulness. You would destroy and entire field of wheat to uproot one weed.

“Such a shameful display of “Christian love” will not be allowed to permeate any spiritually minded Christian here. **“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessings and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet [water] and bitter. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish”** (James. 3:10, 11, 15).

“Once again, terminate immediately any future plans to send anything to this congregation. In the Master’s service, (signed) Ron W. Newberry, minister.”



(Continued From Page 1)

through his being caught off guard” (153). Here we have a brother who through “weakness, ignorance, frailties, and foolishness/stupidity” is **“overtaken in a fault”**. What responsibility does the faithful have toward such a brother? Paul commands, **“...restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”** (Gal. 6:1b). Vines defines

“restore” as “to mend, to furnish completely, is translated “restore” in Gal. 6:1 metaphorically, of the restoration by those who are spiritual, of one overtaken in a trespass, such a one being as a dislocated member of the spiritual body (290).

Notice that the person in the trespass is in need of “res-

toration”. This fact implies that fellowship is broken by sin and must be restored. We must not and cannot extend fellowship to those in sin, even during the restoration process. Thus, Paul cautions, **“considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”**.

Should we seek to “purge the church of all elements which display weakness, ignorance, frailties, and foolishness/stupidity”? *It depends on your definition of terms.* If the foregoing characteristics lead one to sin and refuse to repent, then the answer is: “Yes!” Regarding sin in the church at Corinth, Paul commanded, **“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump”** (1 Cor. 5:7). Of the

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individual, Paul stated, **“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work”** (2 Tim. 2:21).

Cauley stated, “These have forgotten that Christ died for an imperfect people whom He desperately loves and for whom He was willing to sacrifice all that they might be saved.” What does Cauley mean by “imperfect people”? Paul stated,

**But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us... For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life** (Rom. 5:8,10).

Thus, Christ died for “sinners” and “enemies”. Is this what Cauley means by “imperfect people”? While it is true that Jesus died for an “imperfect people”. He never intended for them to stay “imperfect”. Regarding the sacrifice of Christ, the Hebrews writer stated, **“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”** (Heb. 10:14). Jesus promised to save us from our sins – not in our sins.

It seems that Cauley is trying to make allowances for sin on the part of some who are “weak, ignorant, frail and foolishness/stupid”. His entire point is that we must not “purge” the church of “imperfect” people. Is he suggesting that we should ignore sins that are committed due to “weakness, ignorance, frailties and foolishness/stupidity”? Who is to decide which sins fall into this category?

Cauley stated, “Yes, it was and is His desire to perfect the church”. He amends this by stating that the process: (1) involves patience, longsuffering, forbearance, and love; (2) recognizes that individuals and churches need to grow and mature; and (3) no one person, other than the Lord, has so lived as to claim perfect maturity. Notice that it is Jesus’ desire to perfect the church, but according to the last point it is impossible for Him to do so. *Is bro. Cauley implying here that we must accept/tolerate some sin in the church because we cannot obtain “perfect maturity”?* Let us look at how the words “perfect” and “complete” are used in the Scriptures.

**“Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God”** (Gen. 6:9). “Perfect” means, “without blemish, complete, full, perfect, sincerely (-ity), sound, without spot, undefiled, upright (-ly), whole” (Strong’s H8552). If Noah could obtain “perfection” under the Patriarchal system, can those living in the church today obtain “perfection” under the Christian system, which is far superior? God told Abram, **“walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly”** (Gen. 17:1,2). Since God fulfilled His covenant, it must be true that Abraham obtained “perfection”. Other examples could be given, but these are sufficient to demonstrate that “perfection” was possible in the Old Testament.

Jesus stated, **“The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master”** (Luke 6:40). “Perfect” here signifies “right ordering and arrangement” and “points out the path of progress” (Vines 174,176). The “path of progress” for the disciple is to “be as his master.” According to Cauley, the disciple can “be as his master” in every way accept maturity! Yet, that is the very point that Jesus was making in this verse. Paul’s farewell words to the Corinthians were, **“Be perfect”** (2 Cor. 13:11). Was Paul asking for the impossible?

It is God’s desire that the church be perfected and the individual Christians reach maturity. To the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote:

**And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:** (Eph. 4:11-13).

All of this was done **“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”** (v. 14). Again, according to Cauley, we cannot obtain the level of maturity that God has provided. Contrary to what Paul wrote, Cauley would have us believe that the Christian will remain immature and susceptible to all of the above.

It is true that Paul stated, **“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect”** (Phil. 3:12). However, this is an entirely different word and indicates that Paul had not yet obtained his heavenly goal (Strong’s G5048 *teleioo* as apposed to *kataritzo* previously). Paul contrasts this with those who are on the journey with him when he states, **“Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded”** (Phil. 3:15). The meaning of perfect here is “complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); neut. (as noun, with G3588) completeness: – of full age, man, perfect” (Strong’s G5046 *telios*). Thus, those on the journey to heaven must strive for maturity. For this cause, Paul preached Christ **“warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”** (Col. 1:28). Paul reminded the church at Colossae that Epaphras was **“always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God”** (Col. 4:12). Many other verses could be used, but these are sufficient to prove that the church and/or Christian can reach maturity.

*Since every Christian is “complete” in Christ (Col. 2:10), they are everything that God desires them to be regardless of their level of maturity.* However, Peter says that those who fail to progress are **“blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old**

sins” (2 Pet. 1:9). It is thus necessary to “give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (2 Pet. 1:10). We must remember, the growth process is slow and we must be patient. *Yet, that is never an excuse to overlook or tolerate sin.*

### Can The Bride of Christ Be Without Spot and Wrinkle?

Cauley continues his discussion of fellowship by discussing the church as the Bride of Christ. In doing so, he asked the readers to consider their own marriage. In this regard he stated,

Do we constantly berate and criticize our spouses when they make mistakes or commit errors... Moreover, when our spouses make such mistakes, do we immediately threaten with the dissolution of the marriage?... And when we do consider dissolution of marriage it is only for the gravest of offenses and those conducted by an impenitent heart (Matt. 5:32, 19:9).

Notice that he uses the words, “errors”, “mistakes” and “offenses”. It is possible for one to make certain errors, mistakes, or offenses and not sin. However, his article is dealing with the limits of fellowship, which is determined by one’s relationship to sin. Thus, we must conclude that the above terms are synonymous with sin. There can be no doubt that the use of these words is intended to soften our attitude toward some sins. This is true because he states that it is only for the “gravest of offenses” that we would consider the dissolution of marriage. *As far as separating one from God, are some sins “graver” than others?* In marriage, do we tolerate some sins and not others? Since this is an illustration of “The Right Attitude Regarding Fellowship,” should we tolerate some sins and not others? Let us see how bro. Cauley answers this last question. Notice his application:

If we consider that there is any meaning to the relationship set forth by Paul in Ephesians 5:32, that the relationship between Christ and the church is like the marriage relationship, then we ought to consider that it isn’t for just any old reason that Christ would cut off a member of his body, that he would divorce himself from his spouse, the church and her members. That is not to say that there is no reason to ever do such, but rather, that such an action is so drastic that it is reserved for only those offenses so rank and grave and which are intentionally and knowingly committed.

Notice that Cauley states Jesus would not cut off a member of His body “for just any old reason” but such drastic actions are reserved for “rank and grave” offenses that are “intentionally and knowingly committed”. What we need to ask at this point is, “What constitutes a ‘rank and grave’ offense?” Once again, bro. Cauley needs to define his terms. It appears that he is making a distinction between sins. The fact that bro. Cauley indicates that Jesus will “cut off” only those who commit “rank and grave” offenses implies that He will overlook those who are guilty of “lesser” offenses. Remember, according to Cauley, Jesus will not cut off a member for “just any old reason.”

Cauley states, “One who is seeking to live faithful and

obey the Lord ought to be encouraged to grow and mature instead of being censured for his weakness, ignorance, frailties, and sometimes foolishness/stupidity.” In the following quotation we can see what Cauley means by this statement:

Yes, he has a responsibility to learn and repent, but he needs to be allowed to personally work out his own salvation (Phil. 2:12), not as a result of collective pressure placed upon him by external forces; otherwise, there is no growth.

While it is good that Cauley recognizes that the sinner has “a responsibility to learn and repent,” he greatly blunders when he states that the sinner “needs to be allowed to personally work out his own salvation”. His appeal to Philippians 2:12 does not help support his case here since, in the context, Paul is encouraging continued obedience even in his absence. Although repentance would be included in continued obedience, it was not the primary topic under consideration.

Cauley states that learning and repentance should not be “as a result of collective pressure placed upon him by external forces”. To this, we ask, “Why?” If what Cauley says is true, this would restrict: (1) elders from guiding/feeding the flock; (2) preachers from preaching the whole counsel of God; and (3) spiritually-minded brethren from restoring those overtaken in a fault. These activities are to be performed in the event that brethren sin—regardless of the level of maturity or the nature of the sin! When the activities are carried out, collective pressure is placed upon the sinner to repent. *Positive peer pressure is one of the greatest tools we have to use in our efforts to restore erring brethren ( See 2 Cor. 2:6).*

Cauley implies that those who encourage weak brethren to repent have “almost completely abandoned any meaningful concept of love”. In doing so, he misrepresents and/or judges the motives of others. It is love in its highest form that motivates the faithful to help restore the erring. Remember, “**For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth**” (Heb. 12:6). God chastens and scourges EVERY son whom he receives. Surely, Cauley would not say that God ignores the sin of some! In fact the context teaches that if God does not chasten us, we are not true children, but illegitimate!

Remember, we are discussing the beautiful Bride of Christ. Cauley has already implied that sins related to “weakness, ignorance, frailties, and sometimes foolishness/stupid-

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ity” do not qualify as “spots and wrinkles”. He emphasizes:

We should note that we are not discussing matters that would compromise the Lord’s worship, organization of the church, or the Lord’s plan of salvation. Nor are we considering sins done intentionally and knowingly by individuals seeking to undermine the doctrine of Christ (Heb. 10:26)

Here we have Cauley’s list of sins worthy of our attention. Are these the “rank and grave” offenses to which he keeps referring? What happens if someone commits one of these sins through “weakness, ignorance, frailties, and sometimes foolishness/stupidity”? Let us consider the example of Simon the former sorcerer (Acts 8). Simon and the other Samaritans were converted by Philip’s preaching (Acts 8:12,13). All would agree that Simon was a new, immature Christian. He sinned when he tried to buy the ability to impart the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. Did he know ahead of time that this was a sin? If not, he committed a sin of ignorance. Were his actions foolish and/or stupid? Yes, they were! Now, if he committed his sin in ignorance and/or acted foolishly/stupidly, then, according to Cauley, he should have been left to himself to “work out his own salvation”. If not, why not? However, we know that Peter rebuked him saying,

**Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity** (Acts 8:21-23).

Ouch! Was that too harsh for a young immature Christian to hear? Perhaps Peter should have taken “love lessons” from Cauley before he dealt with Simon! The fact is, and Cauley knows this, Peter acted lovingly and appropriately. Furthermore, Peter gained the desired result: **“Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me”** (Acts 8:24).

#### Cauley and “The Security of The Believer”

Cauley uses a lengthy quote from a sermon titled, “The Security of the Believer” by the late bro. Guy N. Woods. In this quotation, Woods is making application to 1 John 2:1, 2, which states,

**My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**

Although we will not reproduce this quote here, it is needful that we consider some of Cauley’s application.

If the Lord can be patient, forbear, and have love for us enough so that even when we sin, albeit through “weakness, frailty, ignorance, foolishness/stupidity”, His blood continues to cleanse us of our sins and He continues to be our

advocate before the presence of the Father, then may we not maintain such an attitude toward our brethren and maintain fellowship with them?

Cauley makes these comments based upon the fact that Jesus is our “mediator” and “propitiation”. Now this begs the question: *“Does the fact that Jesus is our mediator and our propitiation mean that He will ignore the unrepentant sin of the weak, frail, ignorant and foolish/stupid?”* If that is the case, what did Jesus mean when we said, **“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Lk. 13:3,5). Remember, Cauley is talking about faithful Christians maintaining fellowship with those in sin. And he tries to justify said fellowship, because (according to Cauley) Jesus is in fellowship with them. Cauley stated, “...we may extend fellowship to those who have committed sin unintentionally, through ignorance, as a result of weakness, due to frailties, or even on account of foolishness or stupidity.” It must be pointed out here that sin separates us from God and the wages of sin is death (Isa. 59,1, 2; Rom. 6:23). While it is true that the blood of Jesus will cleanse the sin of those walking in the light, this does not exclude repentance on the part of all Christians. In fact, part of walking in the light is to acknowledge one’s sins and turn from them (1 John. 1:7-10; Acts 8:22).

#### Conclusion

It seems that there is no end to man’s attempt to circumvent God’s fellowship law. Cauley’s position encourages people to ignore sin and compromise the faith. Furthermore, if his position is true, it would be better for all of us to remain weak, ignorant and stupid, for in doing so, we would never be lost even though we sin. No faithful Christian would ever believe such is the case. Rather, **“let us go on unto perfection”** (Heb. 6:1).

Cauley’s arguments are not new, nor are they surprising. This is just another vain attempt to justify the unscriptural fellowship practices of the Southwest congregation in Austin, TX where he is employed as an instructor at the SWSBS. They along with the Forest Hill congregation, Memphis, TN, and other like-minded churches are championing this error regarding fellowship. It is my hope and prayer that bro. Cauley and all who hold his false views will in all honesty restudy this matter and turn from it. Perhaps if bro. Cauley would do so, he might be in a position to encourage the Southwest elders to return and stand **“...in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein”** (Jer. 6:16) — *in all things spiritual and not just in some or most of them.*

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# 2010 SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST *CFTF* LECTURES

## “Profiles In Apostasy #1” FEBRUARY 28—MARCH 3, 2010

David P. Brown, Director

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

9:30 AM **David P. Brown:** *The Worldly Church* by Allen, Hughes & Weed

10:30 AM **Terry Hightower:** *Facing Our Failure: The Fellowship Dilemma in Conservative Churches of Christ* by Todd Deaver

**NOON MEAL PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION**

5:00 PM **Lester Kamp:** *Down, But Not Out* by Al Maxey

6:00 PM **Lynn Parker:** *Free In Christ* by Cecil Hook

### MONDAY, MARCH 1

9:00 AM **Skip Francis:** *The Core Gospel* by Bill Love

10:00 AM **Danny Douglas:** *In Search of Peace, Unity and Truth* by Olan Hicks

\*10:00 AM **Sonya West:** *Women in the Church: Reclaiming the Ideal* by Carroll D. Osburn #1

11:00 AM **Bruce Stulting:** *Shall We Splinter?* by James D. Bales

### LUNCH BREAK

1:30 PM **Daniel Denham:** *Errors on MDR* by Several Authors

2:30 PM **EXTENDED OPEN FORUM:** Barry Grider's Article in the December 1, 2009, *The Forest Hill News*

### DINNER BREAK

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM **Ken Chumbley:** *Our Heritage of Unity and Fellowship* by W. Carl Ketcherside & Leroy Garrett

8:00 PM **Paul Vaughn:** *The Stone-Campbell Movement: The Story of the American Restoration Movement* by Leroy Garrett

### TUESDAY, MARCH 2

9:00 AM **John West:** *Rebaptism* by Jimmy Allen

10:00 AM **Daniel Coe:** *Don't Shoot We May Be On The Same Side!* by Marvin Phillips

\*10:00 AM **Sonya West:** *Women in the Church: Reclaiming the Ideal* by Carroll D. Osburn #2

11:00 AM **Gene Hill:** *They Smell Like Sheep: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century* by Lynn Anderson

### LUNCH BREAK

1:30 PM **Doug Post:** *The Cruciform Church* by C. Leonard Allen

2:30 PM **Wayne Blake:** *Leadership in the Kingdom: Sensitive Strategies for the Church in a Changing World* by Ian Fair

3:30 PM **OPEN FORUM**

### DINNER BREAK

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM **Michael Hatcher:** *Sermon on R & R of Elders Delivered at the Brown Trail Church of Christ* by Dave Miller

8:00 PM **Johnny Oxendine:** *Come to the Table: Revisioning the Lord's Supper* by John Mark Hicks

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

9:00 AM **John Rose:** *What Would Jesus Do Today* by Mike Cope & Rubel Shelly

10:00 AM **Jimmy Gribble:** *Daring to Dance With God: Stepping into God's Embrace* by Jeff Walling

11:00 AM **Lee Moses:** *Righteousness Inside Out* by Mike Cope

### LUNCH BREAK

1:30 PM **Gary Summers:** *The Fire That Consumes* by Edward Fudge

2:30 PM **Jess Whitlock:** *The Peaceable Kingdom* by Carroll D. Osburn

3:30 PM **OPEN FORUM**

### DINNER BREAK

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM **Dub McClish:** *The Way of Salvation and The Gist of Romans* – KC Moser

8:00 PM **Gary Summers:** *Who Is My Brother?* by F. LaGard Smith

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## 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.

### -Colorado-

**Denver**—Piedmont Church of Christ, 1602 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 109, Denver, CO 80231, Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. www.piedmontcoc.net, Lester Kamp, evangelist. (720) 535-5807.

### -England-

**Cambridgeshire**—Cambridgeshire—Cambridge City Church of Christ, meeting at The Manor Community College, Arbury Rd., Cambridge, CB4 2JF. Sun., Bible Study--10:30 a.m., Worship-- 11:30 a.m.; Tue. Bible Study--7:30 p.m. www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk. Keith Sisman, Gospel Preacher. Contacts: Keith Sisman [From USA, Toll Free: (281) 475-8247]; By phone inside the U.K.: Cambridge (England): 01223-911243]; Alternative Cambridge contacts: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Matt. Shouey (Lakenheath) - 01638-531268. Postal/ mailing Address - PO BOX 1, Ramsey Huntingdon, PE26 2YZ United Kingdom

### -Florida-

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

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

**Pensacola**—Eastgate Church of Christ, 2809 E. Creighton Rd., {emsacp;a. F; 32504, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Tim Cozad, evangelist, (850) 477-4910

### -North Carolina-

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

### -South Carolina-

**Belvedere (Greater Augusta, Georgia Area)**—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, www.belvederechurchofchrist.org; e-mail belvecoc@gmail.com, (803) 442-6388, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Evangelist: Ken Chumbley (803) 279-8663.

### -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-

**Murfreesboro**—Church of Christ, 1154 Park Avenue, Murfreesboro, TN 37129, Sun. Bible class 9:00 a.m., Worship 10:00 a.m., Fellowship meal 11:00 a.m., Devotional 12:00 p.m.; Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. For directions and other information please visit our website at www.murfreesboro-churchofchrist.org. evangelist, Steve Yeatts.

### -Texas-

**Denton area**—Northpoint Church of Christ, 5101 E. University Dr. (Greenbelt Business Park). Mailing address: Northpoint Church of Christ, Greenbelt Business Park, 5101 E. University Dr., Box 6, Denton, TX 76208. E-mail: northpointcoc@hotmail.com. Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 1:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: 940.387.1429; tgjoriginal@verizon.net.

**Evant**—Evant Church of Christ, 310 West Brooks Drive, Evant, TX 76525. Office: (254) 471-5705; Jess Whitlock, evangelist (254) 471-5717.

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

**Hubbard**—105 NE 6th St., Hubbard, TX 76648, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Delbert J. Goines; DJGoines@Valornet.com.

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

**New Braunfels**—225 Saenger Halle Rd. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed. 7:30 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.