

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

## “BUT YE CANNOT DISCERN THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES”

### AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BOARD & EDITORS OF *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*

January 22, 2008

The Gospel Journal, Inc., Board:  
Curtis A. Cates, President  
Ken Ratcliff, Treasurer-Business Manager  
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*The Gospel Journal* Editors

Barry Grider  
John Moore

Brethren:

In December 1944 Nazi Germany was on its last leg in World War II. The fierce winter, Allied advances, and German losses had produced a lull in the fighting, and the Allies had largely taken a Christmas break from the war. Hitler sensed that the Allies along the front were relaxed and inattentive. He was right. Over-confident Allied generals ignored their intelligence reports of a large concentration of German forces in the area of the Ardennes Forest of Western Europe. On December 16, they launched a huge offensive action, catching our forces by total surprise. The Battle of the Bulge resulted in over 19,000 Allied deaths, many more injured, and about 30,000 captured as German forces overran them. Refusal to seriously consider the evidence led to an enormous and unnecessary Allied embarrassment and tragedy.

The Allied generals were neither the first nor the last to pay a heavy price for dismissing evidence. On one occasion, the leadership of Jewry challenged our Lord by asking for “a sign from heaven.” He ridiculed and rebuked them:

**When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the heaven is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times (Mat. 16:2–3).**

These blind Jews could read the weather signs, but obstinately refused the many signs the Savior had already given them. For refusal to “**discern the signs of the times**” that He was the Messiah, the Son of God, they, and all of those who followed them, met their doom (Mat. 15:14). Ignoring evidence is foolish and is fraught with great peril.

We remind you of the following matters, of which we know all of you men are now well aware concerning brother Joseph Meador:

- He ended his fourteen-year tenure as Director of Southwest School of Bible Studies (SWSBS), Austin, Texas, by resigning on July 20, 2007.
- He ended his seven and one-half year tenure as Vice-President of The Gospel Journal, Inc. (TGJ), by resigning on July 22, 2007.
- The elders of the Southwest Church of Christ led the congregation to withdraw fellowship from him on January 20, 2008—for impenitent adultery, in which he has admitted his involvement for four years.

All who have known the Meador family over the years are grieved beyond expression by this tragedy. We have great sorrow for Karen and all of the Meador children. We should pray for them. We sorrow also for Joseph, once a stalwart in the kingdom, but who has now jeopardized his own soul

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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*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

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### Joseph Meador's Recommended Reading List for Gestalt Therapy

On his website for his Gestalt Institute of Austin, TX (GIA) Joseph Meador provides a list of books recommended for reading and for the training of instructors in Gestalt Therapy for the institute. The caption reads: "GIA Training and A Gestalt Reading List." The heading also notes that, "This suggested Reading List was compiled from the personal library of Joseph Meador, PhD." It notes further: "Gestalt Institute of Austin offers training in Gestalt Therapy to qualified applicants. The educational program of GIA is practical and experimental in nature and culminates in the awarding of a Diploma in Gestalt Theory."

As to the "training" to be received, the introduction to this "Reading List" states:

Each student who is admitted to the training program will study privately, and in a group setting, with a selected GIA Faculty member. Students are required to pass the diplomat examination at the conclusion of the program, as well as to submit and read a research thesis related to the field of Gestalt Therapy. In addition, each student must undergo an individual training analysis with a certified Gestalt Therapist throughout the duration of the diplomat program.

The introduction then outlines the training curriculum to be used in the program. It states:

"The GIA curriculum provides a unique opportunity to study and experience Gestalt Theory from its early roots to its modern advances in the field of behavioral development. The student will become familiar with the foundations of Gestalt Theory and Gestalt Therapy by studying from the original source documents and texts written by first generation Gestaltists, as well as by studying with the GIA Faculty who have studied and trained with a number of outstanding first generation Gestalt practitioners.

It then gives the particulars concerning credits and then the outline of courses. It especially notes the classes on "Readings in Gestalt," saying of these with regard to the Reading List:

This selected bibliography is offered as representative of the formative, theoretical, social and historical constructs of Gestalt Therapy as it evolved during both the East Coast and West Coast periods from the late 1940's to the late 1970's and early 1980's. Because of our interest in the historical development of Gestalt Theory, it is important that our training students have access to earlier Gestalt and Gestalt related textbooks written in the Early and Middle periods of the development of Gestalt Therapy."

Now, why would that be of special fascination with the director of GIA? May it have something to do with the cultural background concerning the rise of Gestalt Theory? One must recall that the heyday for the early and middle periods of Gestalt was the rolling and rollicking "sock-it-to-me" 1960s, the period where slogans like, "let your hair hang down," "do your own *thang*," "burn, baby, burn," and "peace, sex, drugs, and rock and roll" were more than just slogans but were expressive of a cataclysmic rebellion against society and authority,

especially relative to moral absolutes, and expressive therefore of a faddish Bohemian lifestyle where “anything goes.” The rise of Gestalt Therapy coincided, but not so coincidentally, with the Sexual Revolution and the “free love” movement. Sex without consequences or moral limits was at the heart of the SR movement. Gestaltists tapped into and frequently promoted it for their own purposes, as we shall note in examining the very reading list provided from the “personal library” of Joseph Meador, and, as he is the owner and director of GIA and administrator of its website, without doubt supplied with his approval.

The GIA Gestalt Bibliography has the special notation: “The following booklist is given to our training students, as many of these texts are required reading for course completion at GIA. This list is also an excellent reference guide for those who wish to gain some familiarity with Gestalt Therapy.” Thus, Joseph admits that this list reflects in accurate terms and textures the very essence of GT. A brief look at three of his recommendations is sufficient to get the gist of what GT is really all about. *Those defending Joseph’s behavior in the past ought to have made themselves aware of this, if they already were not aware, before staking their reputations on his past good works.*

The first book is from Walter Truett Anderson, a liberal writer, whose book *The Upstart Spring: Esalen and the American Awakening* is filled with praise and promotion for the ultra-liberal Esalen program of Big Sur, CA. It arose in the 1960s as part of the counter-culture and seeks to promote “the miracle of self-aware consciousness.” Among the speakers on this program and its numerous workshops are Eastern mystics, wild-eyed postmodernists, New Agers, and other theoreticians espousing everything from rank humanism to amoral paganism. Baba Ram Dass, for example, has been a featured speaker/instructor for Esalen. He was originally known as Richard Alpert who was infamously associated with Timothy Leary at Harvard University and his “research” into psychedelic drugs on human subjects. He became associated later through his travels to India with a Hindu guru. Needless to say, he converted to Hinduism adopting the name Baba Ram Dass, the latter two words meaning “servant of god.” He promotes the false doctrine of the essential harmony of all religions. Ram Dass was listed on Eric Gayle’s MySpace.com webpage as one of his friends prior to his restricting it from public access. Gayle is the former youth minister of the Southwest church who was recently disfellowshipped.

Walter Truett Anderson is involved, among other things, in the “Tools for the Development of Humanity” project of former senator Gary Hart and others seeking to “facilitate rapid, large-scale, global, social value change” ([www.arlingtoninstitute.org](http://www.arlingtoninstitute.org); [TAICON2005@arlingtoninstitute.org](mailto:TAICON2005@arlingtoninstitute.org)).

Then there is Wilhelm Reich and his book *Character Analysis*. Reich theorized and promoted the wacky notion that the key to being a well-rounded individual and avoid neurosis and even many diseases was by having as many orgasms as one could possibly have in life. He speculated that the body in orgasmic bliss put off an essence or energy called orgone, which he claimed he could capture and store through a special box for the one experiencing these orgasms. He sold his “invention” widely but was ordered by the Food and Drug Administration to cease and desist in the activity. When he refused, he was sent to prison where he died several months later. He encouraged his subjects to be poked, prodded, and stimulated to have as many orgasms as possible to produce the maximum amount of orgone for their physical and emotional health! The wacky theory is known as organon or orgone theory.

Then there is Paul Goodman, bisexual, 60s radical and one of the principal founders of GT, who openly admitted that his efforts were for the benefit of aiding the emotional welfare of homosexuals by making them comfortable with their real feelings. Goodman’s essays are reproduced in the book Joseph recommends to his students, *Nature Heals, The Psychological Essays of Paul Goodman*. He described himself “politically as an anarchist, sexually as bisexual, and professionally as ‘a man of letters’” ([Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Goodman)). “In discussing his own sexual relationships, he acknowledged that public opinion would condemn him, but countered that ‘what is really obscene is the way our society makes us feel shameful and like criminals for doing human things that we really need’” ([Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Goodman)). He affirmed a Marxist view of the world and politics and was a promoter of the strife of the 1960s.

The remainder of the books are written principally by other Marxists, postmodernists, secular humanists, New Agers, and such like. Many of them are/were deep into Eastern mysticism.

One of Joseph’s heroes of psychotherapy was Carl Jung who combined Eastern mysticism with his approach to psychotherapy. Joseph’s board has secular humanist Randall Churchill as an advisor. One of his staff members has been an instructor at Esalen, and his Hutchins Institute for Education and Research is even named in honor of a self-avowed secular humanist, Robert Maynard Hutchins. Joseph has been patterning his approach to counseling, education, and even philosophy after humanists, New Agers, and Eastern mystics and gurus. That is what has brought us to the condition of things at the Southwest Church of Christ and the Southwest School of Bible Studies. The Southwest elders ignored the warning signs and the appeals by brethren who had the welfare of the cause of Christ at heart. Now, here we are! It is no accident that some of Joseph’s charges listed on their own webpage such folks as New Age priestess Marianne Williamson, who authored *A Course in Miracles*, Deepak Chopra, whose Hindu background influences his views on medicine especially in the role of the supposed seven chakras that affect one’s health, and even a Roman Catholic mystic and priest named Thomas Keating, who spends much of his time berating “fundamentalism,” which has become the catchword of Eric Gayle (who has at this writing some of Keating’s diatribes as video clips on his webpage) and company for those in the Lord’s church who do not like the new “freedom” they are espousing. But promising liberty, they offer instead bondage to the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof and have become the slaves to their own passions (cf. 2 Peter 2:10-22; Jude 3-19).

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[Joseph Meador’s GT School web page has been on line for many years. Information was available for the S W. elders, SWSBS faculty, TGJ Board, et al., to study and know what GT is—*others did, they did not*. If they had been concerned enough they would have seen the problem coming—*others did, they did not*. To warn them was and is to become their enemy—*we did, and became their enemy because we did* (Gal. 4:16).

When you read from Heather Sanders in this issue of *CFTF*, note that she has attended the Church of Conscious Harmony. The web address of the church is: <http://www.consciousharmony.org/index2.html>. Compare what they teach with what Meador teaches, and Heather, Eric Gayle, et al., believe.

—EDITOR

(Continued from page One)

and perhaps the souls of many others. We pray that he will repent. Like King Manasseh of old, while he can be forgiven, he likely can never undo all of the damage he has done. We sorrow for the injury his behavior has caused and will cause to the Southwest congregation, the SWSBS, and to the kingdom in general. There is no occasion for joy and no excuse for exultation in any of these awful events. All who love the Cause are bowed in sorrow because of them.

All of the regret and dismay we feel concerning the tragic apostasy of brother Meador aside for the moment, your reaction to brother Meador's resignation from TGJ Board is all but astonishing. All five of you men went out of your way to heap accolades upon him, some of which you Board members—if not you editors—**had to know were not true at the time you wrote them**. Except for the Southwest elders, you five men have likely been (over the past few years) in the best position to have called brother Meador back from the precipice over which he has now admittedly plunged. Instead, you have served as enablers of his mischief by your extended, inexcusable, self-imposed blindness and your recent unfounded tributes. Brother Meador, if still capable of embarrassment by the time of your plaudits, should have been embarrassed by your praise, knowing not one word of it was deserved and much of it was palpably false. We assume that none of you knew of his immorality before mid-January (as we did not), but evidence aplenty concerning his doctrinal and philosophical aberrations has been in wide circulation for years.

You board members eulogized him as follows (*The [New] Gospel Journal*, September 2007):

- He “served effectively and sacrificially as Vice President”
- He “brought...scholarship and soundness in the Scriptures”
- He “brought...administrative ability”
- He “brought...great ability as a gospel preacher”
- He gave “nearly eight years of distinguished service”
- “It has been a pleasure to work with him”

You editors were not to be outdone in the acclaim contest. You lauded him in the following similar terms, citing:

- “His many years of faithful service as a board member”
- “His insight, experience, and scholarship [on] *The Gospel Journal* team”
- “His love and concern for the Kingdom”
- “[His] biblically sound articles”
- “His many talents and good works [that have] refreshed the hearts of the saints”
- And stating that “He will be greatly missed”

We believe strongly in giving honor and praise where, when, and to whom they are due. It is enjoyable both to give them and to receive them. However, when one gives such, knowing they are not due or true, he not only engages in political flattery, pandering, and hypocrisy—he lies. Your praise was so far “over the top” that it almost appears that you were attempting to thereby justify your unwillingness to remove him from the board long ago.

We charge all of you men with the folly of ignoring abun-

dant evidence relative to brother Joseph Meador's flaws. His heresy and immorality aside for the moment, and long before you board members issued your gushing raves, you **very well knew** that your statements about his “effective,” “sacrificial,” and “distinguished” service to *The Gospel Journal* were far wide of the mark. From sometime in 2002 through June 2005, Joseph studiously avoided all board meetings, rarely responded to telephone or e-mail messages pertaining to the paper, failed miserably to do his board-assigned proofreading, and had little or no part in any board decisions. There is no evidence that he promoted the paper in any way during this period. His disinterest in *The Gospel Journal* was evident to the degree that he frequently was the subject of criticism and jokes in conversations between board members and editors, a fact of which all three of you are aware.

Brother Meador's complete apathy concerning the paper was so obvious that others outside of *The Gospel Journal* principals noticed it. Brother Cates, you surely have not forgotten that a member of your MSOP faculty, brother Keith Mosher, once asked if there were some “political reason” to keep brother Meador on the board. (In case you've forgotten, he asked the question as seven of us ate together one evening during the Bristol, Virginia, Lectures, May 2005. Among the witnesses were your wife and all three of us whose signatures appear below.) You dodged the question then, which should have tipped all of us off—including Keith Mosher, incidentally—that you were unwilling to go where the evidence led. Ironically, as it turns out, brother Mosher “nailed it.” It is beyond question that you men kept Meador on the board only as a matter of “good politics.” Even earlier, brother Eddie Whitten, at that time a member of TGJ's arbitration committee, had, with no prompting whatsoever, asked Dub McClish how Joseph Meador's continued board membership, in light of his total inactivity, could be justified. How then could you men with a straight face say that he brought “administrative ability” to TGJ, when he refused even to communicate with the rest of us for the most part over a three-year period? **We challenge you to name one thing he contributed to TGJ in the realm of “administration.”** The board met and functioned and the editors got the paper out every month **in spite of** his failure to participate in our efforts on even a minimal level, and yet you wrote as if just the opposite were true. On what basis could you say, “It has been a pleasure to work with him,” when he did not “work with” any of us on the paper after the first three years of its existence? To say “he served effectively and sacrificially” relative to TGJ in the period from 2002–2005 is ludicrous. It is way beyond hyperbole. While we three do not know his level of involvement and activity since that time, you men know, as do we, that your praise of his “nearly eight years of distinguished service” is a gross fabrication that bears no resemblance to reality.

You surely have not forgotten the first item on the agenda of the fateful July 19, 2005, board meeting. It read as follows:

#### Agenda For July 19-20, 2005

Organizational Items:

1. Joseph Meador: does he and should he continue to be on the board, is he an asset or a liability to *TGJ*?

The specific reason this item was on the agenda was (as indicated above) Meador's profound indifference toward our efforts, as noted above, which was a matter of common knowledge and conversation among us (editors and board members) and others as well. On that occasion you had ample reasons and opportunity either to remove him or ask him to remove himself from the board of an enterprise in which he clearly had no interest. Only Michael Hatcher expressed doubts that he should remain on the board, while the rest of you quietly pretended to see no problems with Meador's behavior. This unconscionable silence on your part reveals your irresponsibility. It has now come back to haunt you.

In what way did Joseph Meador bring "scholarship and soundness in the Scriptures" that had any bearing on *TGJ*? He certainly did not do so by any great volume of articles he contributed. Between January 2000 and July 2005, the 67 issues of the paper amounted to 2,416 pages. **His two articles filled a grand total of exactly five of those pages.** As to his contributing anything to the paper by means of his "scholarship," we suppose you were merely expressing your reverence for the PhD he earned four or five years ago. You men surely learned long ago that *scholar* and *PhD* are by no means synonymous, especially when it comes to Biblical and spiritual matters. We challenge you to name not two or three, but **even one way** in which he used his vaunted "scholarship" to help the paper or advance the Gospel. By the time he earned that cherished sheepskin, his interests were apparently far afield from both the paper and the Truth. We suggest that he is a classic example of one who has been "educated beyond his intelligence" (and apparently beyond his spiritual depth).

As to his "soundness in the Scriptures," you had to be thinking of his reputation for such several years in the past—the "old" Joseph, rather than the "new" Joseph. Had you opened your eyes to the evidence, you would have known better than to commend his non-existent "soundness in the Scriptures" of the last few years. Long before your exaggerated endorsements, he had given signals that he was migrating not only in his interests, but also in his faith. Brother Cates, Dub McClish, *TGJ*'s Editor at the time, sent you notice by e-mail on March 9, 2004, of Meador's deep involvement in the Humanistic-based school of Gestalt Therapy. He told you of Meador's Gestalt Website (and furnished you with its URL), which revealed the depth of Meador's enthrallment with it. You ignored this warning, which, as board president, it was your responsibility to investigate (at the very least). **His infamous reference to us and others of like conviction, way back on July 28, 2005, as part of "a small, but no less toxic, loyalty circle...a small negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have," alerted any who were not blind to where he had "progressed" in his convictions.** Why did this statement make no impression on you three men? (Was it because you agreed with his assessment of us?) On January 8, 2007, brother Kevin Townsend

compiled a fourteen-page document that revealed Meador's deep entanglement with not only Gestalt Therapy, but with Hindu-rooted Yoga. This document was widely circulated, and we do not doubt that some, if not all three of you are aware of, if not familiar with, that material. How can you justify attributing "soundness in the Scriptures" to one who has succumbed to these Humanistic and Hindu philosophies? (Talk about "toxic"! Who now is revealed as the kingpin of toxicity but the very one who hurled the "toxic" charge at those of us who then and now stand where Joseph Meador once stood [or at least, where we **think** he once stood, but who knows now for sure....])? It is clear that, at the time he blasphemed us as "toxic" and as those who "rupture fellowship," **Meador had for some time been wallowing in a philosophical sewer (by his recent confession, we now know that he had also been wallowing in a moral sewer).** Yet you still lionized his "soundness in the faith." Have you men no integrity?

Your praise of him as a Gospel preacher of "great ability" is also greatly overblown. The last few years we have heard him preach, he has seemingly felt it necessary to flaunt his "scholarship" you so highly value. This tendency was especially evident in his use of the Hebrew language and of esoteric terminology he learned from infidel Hebrew "scholars," much of which went right over the heads of most folks. In recent years he had taken on an elitist, condescending, self-promoting attitude in the pulpit that only the naïve and/or self-blinded could not see. Yet you deceive your readers by acclaiming him as a Gospel preacher of "great ability." Ironically, the last few years, even when he preached or taught the Truth, he was doing it as a stage show, all pretense, neither believing (nor practicing) what he was teaching. We are fearful of how much influence on his students his preaching may have had over the past few years.

Could you editors do no better than merely repeat the undeserved praise the board members heaped upon our apostate brother (even using some almost identical terminology)? Your reference to "his many years of faithful service as a board member" is appalling, for you have no firsthand knowledge whatsoever of the matter before the fall of 2005 when you became editors. You obviously simply parroted the false claim the board members made in this regard. Both of you, as Southwest insiders, were in a better position to observe the tragic transformation of Joseph Meador than were any of the board members. Brother Grider, you doubtless were in close contact with him during your tenure as the preacher at Southwest. Brother Moore, your many years of teaching on the SWSBS faculty (fulltime and part-time) placed you in intimate proximity to him. Surely, one or both of you brethren must have observed irregularities and/or deviations in his behavior. It is very difficult to believe that you did not.

Brother Meador's personality makeover seems to have coincided with his philosophical transition. This makeover had become obvious by 2003 at the latest, as by then SWSBS alumni were criticizing the extended length of his hair. By 2004, as mentioned earlier, he was so deep in Gestalt Therapy that he had his own Gestalt Website. Although only one of

you (John Moore) still had direct connections with Southwest by then, surely you (and other faculty members) had to be aware of (and likely discussed) this involvement. We have difficulty believing that the alteration of his persona, which he was “telegraphing” by 2004–2005 (as seen in such things as his small wire-framed glasses, his growing of a goatee, and the length of his hair) went unnoticed by you and your fellow faculty members. Coupled with your knowledge of his Gestalt Therapy involvement, how could you **not** deduce that he was headed for doctrinal, if not moral, disaster?

Furthermore, beyond his Gestalt fascination, his participation in Hindu-based Yoga instruction has been widely circulated for more than a year (as mentioned above), knowledge of which we believe both of you men must have had. (Although this participation did not surface until a year ago, he had to have become its disciple much earlier, likely years earlier. One does not rise to the “instructor” level in such schools of thought without considerable investment of time and training.) In spite of these facts, you, as did your board, still upheld him for his “soundness in the Scriptures” and for “his love and concern for the Kingdom.” So far as we know, none of you knew of his immorality at the time he resigned from TGJ board (which, we suppose he had the luxury of doing of his own will rather than being forced out by the board, incidentally). However, this brother sent so many signals of his “shipwreck concerning the faith” before this most recent shocking revelation that you are without excuse for not seeing them and/or for not acting on them. **The evidence was there in abundance well before his resignation.** That you would then commend him so unreservedly only multiplies your guilt.

All five of you men should be ashamed of yourselves for glorifying this apostate brother, given the extensive manifestations of his apostasy. Now, what will you do? Will you and your confederates (i.e., MSOP, GBN, AP, WVBS, Schertz Church of Christ—Schertz, TX, Southside Church of Christ—Lubbock, TX, Getwell Church of Christ—Memphis, TN, et al.) rally around Joseph Meador as you have rallied around Dave Miller and Stan Crowley? Will you ignore and/or rationalize the Meador evidence as you have ignored and/or rationalized the Miller and Crowley evidence? Will you tell brethren who question you about brother Meador’s errors and sins to call him and talk to him in person about them, as you have done concerning Miller? If you and Meador are invited to speak on the same lectureship, will you do so and thus extend fellowship to him, as you continue to do with Miller and Crowley? Will you endorse and defend Meador as you have endorsed and defended Miller and Crowley? (Meador ought to consider suing you for inconsistency if you don’t.) Will you just “hunker down” and “lie low,” as you have attempted to do concerning your ill-founded defense of Dave Miller and Stan Crowley, hoping all of this will soon blow over and be forgotten?

What **should** you do? In the same venue in which you so exalted this utterly unworthy brother (*The [New] Gospel Journal*), you (TGJ board and editors) should publish an

apology to your readers. Your *mea culpa* statement should include at least the following:

1. We have ignored the evidence concerning a fallen brother
2. We have defended (at least as early as 2005 when he first resigned) a brother who was/is indefensible
3. We have exalted and commended a brother whom we should have reproved and removed from “*The [New] Gospel Journal* team”
4. We have enabled a brother to prolong his charade of being a Gospel preacher and a faithful husband and father
5. We have done all of this because it was more politically expedient to do so than to obey Romans 16:17–18 and like mandates of Scripture
6. Therefore, we humbly ask brethren everywhere to forgive us for writing these deceptive words of commendation

You brethren have sinned, and we call upon you to repent and to announce your repentance as publicly as you committed your sin. Your forthright repentance in this regard might serve as the first step toward measures to heal the recent grievous alienation between once amicable brethren. To this end we sincerely and prayerfully submit this letter.

Faithfully yours,

/s/**Michael Hatcher** (former Secretary, TGJ, Inc., Board [January 2000–July 2005])

/s/**Dub McClish** (former and founding Editor, *The Gospel Journal* [January 2000–July 2005])

/s/**Dave Watson** (former Associate Editor, *The Gospel Journal* [June 2002–July 2005])

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It is with sincere regret that we accept brother's [*sic*] Meador's resignation. We express to him our gratitude for his nearly eight years of distinguished service to *The Gospel Journal*.

As editors, we extend our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to brother Joseph Meador for his many years of faithful service as a board member of *The Gospel Journal*. His insight, experience, and scholarship were an integral part of *The Gospel Journal* team. His love and concern for the Kingdom were keenly felt and exhibited through his many acts of goodwill, and biblically sound articles.

We will forever be indebted to him for his many hours of service, sage advice, and constant encouragement. We thank God for brother Meador and want him to know that the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by his many talents and good works. He will be greatly missed.

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# S. W. CHURCH & HEATHER SANDERS

## REVISTED

David P. Brown

In the Aug. 2007 issue of *CFTF*, p. 11, we printed Heather Sanders' email to us. In that email she strongly chided us for exposing Joseph Meador's errors in our Feb. 2007 issue of *CFTF*. She specifically made light of our opposition to Meador's Yoga and Gestalt Therapy activities, for lack of a better way to describe them. In doing so she joined the Southwest (SW) elders and other SW members in rejecting the adequate evidence that we revealed, proving that Meador was astray and had been on the road of apostasy for a number of years. But these brethren, being wise in their own conceits, saw only what they wanted to see. Thus, in anger they willingly ignored the evidence convicting Meador of his erring ways. In their "grape vine" response to us they sought to impugn our motives and character. And why? Simply because we identified at least one wolf in sheep's clothing prowling in their midst, removed his sheepskin, exposing Joseph Meador to be a wolf.

A good example of SW's disdain for our efforts in this matter and related ones is seen in a picture Heather ran on her MySpace web site. It is the picture of a partially burned copy of *CFTF* in a fire place. The caption under the picture was "Therapy." Thus, Heather makes it clear what she thinks of our efforts in *CFTF* and in that respect SW agrees with her about us. But we ask, is not Heather a longtime product of much of what has been SW's policy. Her family back to her grandparents are longtime members of SW. Her father serves as a deacon, her mother a Bible class teacher and until recently, her husband was also serving SW as a deacon.

*Cherchez la femme* is Heather's *Nom de Plume* on her MySpace Website. We seriously doubt she knows the origin of the term, what it means and when it is used. However, if she does know the meaning, but continues to apply it to herself, she reveals much about her confused and rebellious attitude. Loosely translated *Cherchez la femme* means "look for the woman." It is to be used when one is in, about to be, or has been in trouble. Then one says, *Cherchez la femme*—"Look for the woman!" Thus, when trouble is around, "Look for Heather!"

Heather's warped and insolent disposition is readily seen in her "blurb" quotation that appears later in this article. The quote is from Heather's MySpace web site, Thursday, Jan. 24, 2008. It appeared for a limited time on the site.

For reasons that will become apparent when it is read, we hesitated to print Heather's "blurb." But, we decided that people needed to read what comes from one who is guided by, for lack of a better term, a mixture of "Christianity," Hinduism/Buddhism, emotional/subjective/relativism, a self-will spirit, the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and the pride or vain glory of life. All of these have merged into a conglomerated mess

that favors the New Age Religion more than anything else of which we can think. This view is not peculiar to Heather, but is shared by Eric Gayle (recently disfellowshipped SW Youth Minister), his former wife Camille (SW withdrew from her in the summer of 2007) and with whom Joseph Meador has been and/or is involved in extra curricular activities, Joseph's daughter, Rachel Meador Bonnett (SWSBS graduate), who is now and has for some months been, at least estranged, from her husband (a SWSBS graduate).

Joseph Meador, Eric Gayle, Camille, Gayle's X wife, Rachel Meador Bonnett, Heather Sanders, Seth Lockwood (son of the apostate Bill Lockwood) and who knows who else of their company engage in a lifestyle that may best be described as one that turns the Grace of God into lasciviousness.

Putting it mildly, Heather and friends are not "happy campers," since SW withdrew fellowship from Eric Gayle, Joseph Meador and Camille—whatever name she goes by now. Further, she remains in fellowship with those from whom SW withdrew fellowship. As you read from Heather's own pen, she too seems to be heading for the same sad end.

Heather's "open letter" ("blurb") to and about me was taken from her MySpace website. To say the least, she is a 30 year old humdinger—albeit one to be greatly pitied. Nevertheless, she did not get this way in just the last few months. She obviously has been of this mind set for a long time, even while her husband served as a deacon at Southwest. Thus, we cannot but wonder why the Southwest elders and other members did not see the fruits of her heart born out in her conduct long before they did. Whatever the case regarding what the Southwest elders should have seen and done long before they did, get ready for one of the most loving, kind and gentle letters you will ever read (we write with tongue in cheek). Heather gives new insights into the qualities that make for a "Godly woman" and a deacon's wife—so much for Scriptural qualifications. Now read *Cherchez la femme's* open letter to me:

About me:

This is an open letter to David Brown, and anyone else who chooses to lurk here. Before I go any further, know that I am breaking an agreement with myself to no longer devote a moment of my time, or nugget of my energy to such useless, unproductive interactions. —and this is the last word I will say on the subject because I am blissfully finished with the nonsense. This part of my "About Me" section will only stay here briefly, so be sure to invite all of your friends to read it before it's gone. "limited engagement!!"—and I am only concerning myself with it because my mySpace address has been posted publicly on *CFTF* ... might as well give you all something to talk about.

Why is David so bent on the destruction of his brethren, and those from Southwest in particular? Let's examine D's past with Southwest for a moment... He was fired. Why? Well, I'm sure he would tell you that he resigned, but the truth is that his over inflated ego, arrogance, and lack of compassion, understanding, etc... ad NAUSEUM are the real reasons. Apparently, the little man has issues with "letting go" and continues to hold a grudge. Even after what almost 15 years? How sad. I was a pre-teen when he left if memory serves correctly, maybe younger. What I remember of him was through the eyes of a friend of his daughters. He was physically and verbally abusive. THAT sticks out vividly. I would go into specifics, but don't want to embarrass his poor kids any more than they surely already have been. Yes, his kids and I got into some minor trouble, and of course I was to blame. —no surprise there... nothing D ever did, parenting or otherwise was ever wrong. Again with the over-inflated ego. (no doubt a compensation for something else that is pitifully small). My most fond memory of him was my first visit to his home.—I must've been around 8 years old... his girls weren't in the room, he's lounging his fat lazy can on the couch and commands me to "make him a sandwich"—I didn't even know where the kitchen was at that point. Ah, such fond memories... I could go on and on, but this is a waste of my time as it is. So, why does he have it in for Joe and Eric? Other than being formerly in a leadership position at SW, Eric is a mystery. I doubt D has ever even met him in person (He hasn't shown his under-evolved red face at SW since he left, only sent "spies" in his place ) Joe, on the other hand is a much more blatantly obvious case. He occupied the position that D formerly held. And ran the school so smoothly that it continued to grow and flourish under his direction. D slunk off to south Texas with his tail tucked between his legs to start his "own" preaching school. A miserably grand failure by all accounts. Ah, that darn ego again... always D's demise. I'm sure it was a gleeful day for D when he heard of the "Scandal" at SW, but secretly, I suspect some jealousy on his part... I'm sure his sexual exploits have only been limited to porn, a sock, and a dark room... he would never have the nerve...of course that's an assumption on my part... I would never claim it as "fact" I'm not THAT sleazy, David. Rachel Meador also implicated by D, and Seth Lockwood seem to be only guilty by association. - I'm sure the "Meador" name was enough to warm the cockles of D's heart with images of the attention he would receive by continuing to slander the Meador family. (I picture the Grinch, sitting up in his cave rapping his finger together plotting and scheming with that wicked evil grin on his face. Meanwhile, the happy Who's down in Whoville continue to play and sing, unaware of their impending DOOM... dunno, maybe it's just my projection...) And Seth? Has been so far removed from all the drama, that it's kind of funny that people are still talking about him. Have you all nothing better to do? Honestly! And ME? I had the nerve to call D on his nasty behavior, so I'm sure he's been busy digging up dirt on me ever since... I'll make it easy for him... My husband stepped down as a deacon and I withdrew my membership from Southwest. For many personal reasons, which, quite frankly are no one's business but ours. We still attend there together on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights, however I have chosen to worship on Sunday mornings elsewhere. Again, no one's business but ours. I'm sure you can infer plenty about my personality just by perusing my Myspace page, but I'll give you a brief synopsis of "Me" here as well, just so that we're "clear." I do not practice Yoga, as I have been accused of, (funny that it is an "accusation!") although

I would like to. I do practice NIA 2-3 times a week. I love to drink coffee, tea, and the occasional glass of wine or something stronger, and consume massive amounts of Fiji water. I only mention it because I'm sure it will be an accusation, so might as well ferret it out now. Joseph Meador, Eric Gayle, Seth Lockwood, and Rachel Meador are not my "gurus," I actually take great offense to being considered of such weak mind as to blindly follow ANY man. (those who know me, know that "Heather the follower" moniker is laughable!) I'm a wife, mother, housekeeper, baker, cellist, artist, and good friend to many on the "outside." I spend a little too much time on the computer- a weakness, I admit. I read a LOT. I meditate. I burn incense because I like it. I spend as much time as possible swimming and hiking in the warm months with my munchkins, or my good friends, or both.—yes, in a swimsuit. I play with the Austin Wind Symphony. I am a professional muralist/faux finisher, and have been self employed for over 5 years now. I love what I do. See "Pink Giraffe Design" in my friends list. I love God, and am working on developing a closer relationship with him, without the binds of man. I love people, and for the most part, give them the benefit of the doubt until they prove that they don't warrant it. And I choose not to live my life motivated by fear, guilt, or any other negative tool that has been employed in the past to manipulate me. Any other questions or accusations regarding my personal life can be forwarded to, [noneofyourdamnbusiness@getalife.com](mailto:noneofyourdamnbusiness@getalife.com).

We will respond only to a couple of her comments, the reason being is this: *to read her message is to read the thoughts and intents of her heart*. It does not take a Solomon to see the confusion, hate and rebellion that exists in the poor young woman's life. *How her poor mother and father must suffer because of Heather's self-willed, rebellious, adolescent spirituality*.

For a person who does not practice "Yoga," why in the summer of 2007 did she recommend to me the following?

Perhaps a good Reiki session and a hot cup of Yogi tea would help to calm your angry, abusive little nerves. Meditation is good for everyone, and it's especially effective when seeking a clear, unobstructed, uncluttered path to the Creator (CFTF, August, 2007, Vol. 38, No. 8, p. 11).

When Heather says I was fired from being director of SWSBS, I do not know for sure where she came up with that false information, for such was not the case at all. Further, the men who were the Southwest elders at the time know that I speak the truth and lie not. Except for one man, the men who presently serve as elders were the same men who served as elders at SW when I resigned in Jan., 1993. There was no indication to me from the SW eldership that firing me was on their mind. And, unless they have thrown it away, the SW elders have my letter of resignation, specifying exactly why I did not chose to be a part of that work any longer—*the fundamental reason being I did not care to work with their preacher, who at the time was, Perry Hall*. (A few months after I left Southwest Perry Hall left SW and returned to Tyler, Texas, where in time he enjoyed himself with another woman other than his wife. Though we have never heard that he repented of that sin, we truly hope that he has, for if he has not, he certainly needs to do it.) When resigned I also informed the SW elders that I did not want my name ever associated with

the SW congregation again.

In our chapter in the 1994 Bellview Church of Christ Lecture book we wrote the following regarding preachers who refuse to evaluate all things in the light of the Bible, fail to keep up with what is transpiring in the brotherhood, and elders who employ such men.

Some time ago, I worked with a silly preacher who actually boasted that he did not try to find out what was happening in the brotherhood, he had too much to do locally to busy himself with such matters. When elders seek out such men to fill their pulpits while belittling those who labor to stay informed, they deserve everything they get. However, one of the very sad results of such a policy and character is that the church starves for the truth and is left to fend for itself. Furthermore, the way is paved into the church for all manner of inroads of error. That preacher today upholds divided worship assemblies, has little concern over what version of the Bible one uses and routinely associates with those who are involved in all manner of apostasy. More than this, he prides himself in such activity and leads the church in the same conduct (David P. Brown. "Changes in Preaching: Motivation to Preach." In *Changes in the Church of Christ*, p. 331. Edited by Bobby Liddell, Pensacola, FL: Austin McGary & Co., 1994)

*The preacher and elders I specifically had in mind in the previous quotation were and are respectively Perry Hall and the SW eldership.* To put it mildly the late Bill Jackson contributed greatly to the SW's elders' reputation for soundness, a reputation they did not and do not fully deserve.

When elders make decisions on the basis of keeping themselves and the church they oversee looking good to their constituents, even when they accidentally make some good choices, their motive for doing so is incorrect. The SW eldership and other brethren who believe and conduct themselves as they have done, have no one to blame but themselves for not seeing the numerous signs of impending doom in the conduct of Joseph Meador, Eric Gayle and others of their low caliber—but having eyes, they see not and hearing, they hear not.

Heather's lie is not the first time that we have heard that I was fired from the position of director of SWSBS. The first time I heard it was about ten years ago after the SW elders had been talking with Lindell Mitchell of Livingston, Texas about the possibility of brother Mitchell becoming the SW preacher. Lindell was adamant in declaring that I was fired by the SW elders. I told him to his face that he was wrong. Further, I did it before all who at that time and place heard him declare the same. Mitchell then took the position that the SW elders would have fired me if I had not resigned. *This too is false to the core.* If such is the case, the elders kept it to themselves and never intimated such a thing to me. And if they did think along those lines, I wonder why on the day following my resignation did one of the elders, Bert Powell, say to me that he thought I would be with SW indefinitely. *It makes one wonder if those who could stop such lies are, by their silence, allowing a falsehood to be believed and circulated because they think it serves their purpose.* After all the SW elders could put an end to such gossip immediately if they wanted to do so.

Why did the SW elders close their eyes to the various warnings that were available regarding the conduct of Meador and Gayle? Indeed, some of those reports came from within the SW

church itself. These reports were not from those they consider to be enemies of SW, but from those who loved and continue to love the work of that congregation. The reports of which I speak came from those who do not desire to see the SW congregation hurt.

Before I left Southwest there was a day when Marion Taylor (elder), Perry Hall (preacher) and I were together in the general office area visiting. We were talking about various things that trouble the church. I remarked to these brethren that while preachers go wrong, members sin and deacons become derelict in their duty, it is the eldership that God expects to deal with the various and sundry problems in the church and keep it as the Lord desires it to be. The best I remember, the only comment to what I said came from Perry Hall. He replied to me that there was enough blame to go around. Hall missed my point entirely. It is not a matter of will brethren sin regardless the position they occupy in the church. Elders must be vigilant as good shepherds in order to see the early warning signs of trouble lest the wolf has half of the flock eaten before the elders know anything is troubling even one sheep. But when elders make their decisions based on pleasing their constituents and trying to be appease rather than making decisions based solely on the Truth for the Truth's sake, because they desire to please God whether anyone else is pleased or not, then you can expect a crop such as SW is presently reaping—for we cannot but reap what we sow. And, that is not only true of SW, but Forest Hill, Brown Trail, the Southside church, Lubbock, Texas, the Schertz church, Schertz, TX and no telling how many others who have elders that would fit well into a politician's advisory committee on how to practice good politics.

Thus, if elders were really doing the job that God expects them to do, they would be on top of what is going on in the lives of the members they are charged with shepherding and whose lives they must give account to God. Instead, they wait until the building is almost burned to the ground before they start to look for a garden hose and a water facet. *All too often elders engage in reactive decisions because they have only become aware that there could be a problem after the fire storm of sin is burning the church alive, when they should have known enough to engage in proactive involvement and decision making before irreparable damage is done to the church.*

But we have not heard the last of Heather, so we will let her continue to convict her self with her own words.

### **Tis a fair court/ stop whining already**

I attended an impromptu meeting with the SW elders last night. It was a sneak attack but I believe I managed to maintain some of my integrity all the same.

If I were an elder, here's how I would have conducted said meeting, knowing what the agenda was:

Start the meeting with a prayer... possibly holding hands, I dunno... maybe that's too touchy feely. I then would have explained to the "wayward Christian" aka ME, that I was concerned about her soul, and those of her immediate family. I would have been loving in my approach, and told her that I cared very much about her, and didn't want to see her make a mistake. I would have also very gently explained to her that I was concerned about her influence on other weaker Christians. I would have asked her to consider that in her public image, i.e. Myspace, Facebook, etc... and asked her to please be careful that in her own search and struggle that she not cause others to question their own faith. I would have explained to

her that her recent public image was not conducive to what we here at SW teach, and asked her to repent and change her ways, or else we would sadly, and with much prayer and soul searching, have to publicly disfellowship her. [*That is an interesting approach, one of which she obviously did not judge me worthy of receiving in view of her open letter to me.—Editor*]

And had that been the tone of the meeting, here's how I would have responded: "yes, I understand that my influence on those around me could cause them to stumble, and that is the last thing I want to do, so in light of that, I will try to be more discreet in my journey unless asked directly. I'm sorry, but I disagree with where you draw the lines of fellowship on certain issues, and am not planning on changing my "ways" so if you need to mark me, then that is your choice and I respect that. Please be courteous enough to let me know when it is going to happen so that I can give my family fair warning"

NOW, having been raised in the church, knowing what CofC teaches regarding "marking those that walk disorderly" (according to US) this is the way I would have handled my own particular situation, and that of other recent dissenters... with love, concern, and prayer. And, knowing what SW teaches regarding certain matters of doctrine, I would understand, and even appreciate that they need to be consistent and mark me as well... believe it or not, I don't disagree with the decision in light of the doctrine taught, and don't blame or fault anyone for remaining true to what they believe. I actually respect consistency a great deal, and although disagree with the doctrine, do not dispute the need to hold fast that which is true. (even if what you believe is true is different from me... it's your truth, so do what you need to do).

HOWEVER, that is far from how it went down last night.

I recently withdrew my membership from SW not so that I would be exempt from the impending public humiliation, but because I choose not to be under the elders there any more. I know that they will still "mark" me even though I'm no longer a member. It wasn't a "trick" (using Brett and Marion's own words) or ploy to stay under the radar, it was because I could no longer subject myself to the leadership of men that have shown over and over again their true colors when it comes to motivation behind their actions.

These same two men have been the source of gossip that has gone to their wives, friends, children, and eventually back to me. —Do you think that is how God wants the overseers of his flock to behave? Why do you think that people like me have stopped seeking their counsel? On more than one occasion, I personally have confided in either a preacher, or one of our elders, only to find out that it was not kept in confidence, and not only that, but was discussed (apparently) in front of their children who made snide comments about me to people at camp, or to my OWN CHILDREN? Or, twisted in such a way as to be used as ammunition for the next "come to Jesus" meeting planned for me? Do I sound suspicious and a little paranoid? Ask around. If you haven't already been subjected to this brand of care and concern, better behave exactly as they expect you to, or you too will be the next "hot topic."

Last night, I was asked why I was still attending (Sunday nights and Wednesday nights ) if I wasn't a member there... actually one of Brett's opening lines, followed by a sarcastic palms outstretched and heaved up look. I tried to explain that I was there to keep some level of continuity and sanity religiously for my children's sake.—they also have good

friends there that they don't want to leave (I do as well) and I didn't want to tear them away from all they've ever known so abruptly. I then asked, "why, am I not welcome here anymore?" the response from Marion was, " Not if you don't straighten up and stop trying to influence our members" I was blown away. The fact of the matter is that still attending SW is a huge compromise for me that I made for Darryl and the kid's sake.— I don't want to be there, and wouldn't if it weren't for them. My intention all along has NEVER been to influence anyone, I've even been very delicate with my own husband as he's a much newer Christian than I am. I've never intentionally tried to persuade anyone to my "side" and would never. The last thing I want to do is to cause someone to question their own faith. It has been hard enough for me to own up to my own doubts. It has been terribly painful and gut wrenching, and I would never wish that on anyone. We all have a journey to take and we all reach certain points independently. What I have found, however, is that when certain people ask me questions about where I am religiously, it is because they too are searching, and needing to talk to someone. Motivation becomes very clear through conversation, and if I realize that they are asking me questions because they are concerned about me, then I am generally pretty honest about what it is that I believe. (lying is still wrong, no?) When it appears that they are asking me for "answers," I always direct them to do their own searching. —Because we all have to do it for ourselves. —And on that topic, I have not been influenced by any one person. This has been brewing in my soul for several years now, and finding that there were people out there that had the same questions did embolden me, but it's because I found something in common... not gurus.

The overall tone of the meeting was in my opinion, demanding, lacking in concern, and downright threatening. Let me pause and say that Brett and Marion did most of the talking. I find it a shame that Bill and Charles let themselves be represented by such abusive tactics because I know deep down, that that is NOT their nature. I have always had a great deal of respect for those two men, and was saddened that they didn't speak up more.—Not to defend me, but to handle this in the proper loving, Christ-like way that they should have. Perhaps it's naivety on my part, but I always felt a certain father/daughter fondness for them, and it pained me deeply to sit there subjected to Marion's arrogant, chauvinist ego, while they just sat silently and let him speak for the entire congregation. (Not wanting HIM to speak for ME anymore was one of the major reasons I withdrew) "You'd better straighten up, and behave, or we'll mark you too sister... you'd better believe it" " yeah, you had better keep your mouth shut" " If I find out that you've been talking to our members about all this nonsense that you are teaching (laughable) all this eastern philosophy bunk, I'll have you publicly escorted out of the building." "You know exactly what you're doing... we're not dealing with a naive person here, we're dealing with someone who's here to influence people, and we won't stand for it." "I don't care if you're here or not, but I'm not going to let you cause trouble" And the last straw that prompted me to push my chair away from the table was, "this is a waste of time." to which I responded, "I'm sorry to have wasted your time."

Let me ask you, the reader, a question now: If what you have at SW is the truth... the only truth... and you're so sure of it, then what is it that the elders are so terrified of? You don't think they're scared? Why else would

they place so much emphasis on the influence of people like me if they weren't worried about it affecting their tender little flock? "Circle the Wagons" (because there are wolves like me ready to eat your young if you don't WATCH OUT yeah... I'm so popular that everyone I talk to is going to drop their lifelong faith, and follow me... even I'M not that arrogant!!!) If you have the truth, shouldn't there be some certainty and security there, regarding what will ultimately win out? Why feel the need to manage one or a handful of people they (sic) way they do? Are we that intimidating? —I had no Idea I was so powerful! My goodness... what an ego boost! I think I'll throw myself a little party!

I'm here to be a little bit in your face now and tell you that it is about CONTROL. It is a case of power, and the fear of losing it. To what?? ME?? I don't want a following, and neither do any of my friends. We just want to live our lives, follow Christ, follow the Bible, and be happy. Or, follow whatever other truth we believe in. YES, I said other truth. Why is that such a threat? Is it because we are not hiding what it is that we all believe individually? Why should we????? DO YOU????? Would you not also recoil if told to keep your mouth shut? I certainly did! And it's the "not keeping my mouth shut" that is going to get me fired. Sorry to disappoint, but your opinion of me has ZERO bearing on my salvation, and cutting off my shallow relationships is not going to be enough to keep me under your thumb. It may have worked before, but I'm done with that. I made mention of the fact that I had never felt like I was able to make my own choice regarding what it is that I believe. You can argue with me till you're blue in the face, but the fact of the matter is that when you are raised in the CofC, you DO NOT have a choice. What were my options? I could follow a different path, and leave the church, but that would have meant being disfellowshipped by my entire family. No support, no meals together, nothing but the constant effort to win me back. Does that sound appealing to anyone? It sounds painful and exhausting to me. (just ask my brother about my mother's persistence in reeling him back in ... and she wonders why he never comes around! Go figure!) OR, I could dutifully get married young (we don't want any sex before marriage, so better to marry someone you're not really suited for and do it within the confines of that marriage, than to experience that taboo sin... and by the way, how are all those young marriages working out?) Have children, and be a good little stay at home, home schooling mommy in denim jumpers. Never mind if you're miserable, that's part of the sacrifice you make for Christ. News flash, people, SUFFERING'S NOT SUCH A BLESSING!!!! Now, of course, you're going to be inclined to tell me that we do not teach those things as doctrine, and if I made those choices, then it was of my own volition. Well, sure, of course they were. The fact that I was bombarded with "the woman's role in the church" guilted, and pushed by fear had nothing to do with the decisions I made as a teenager.—decisions that would direct my entire life. All the ladies classes I attended that were centered around being a better wife and mother had no effect on me. All the books I was encouraged to read about lovingly beating my children and obeying my husband had no bearing on my psyche. It was my own free will that guided me. BS. If you don't think that the threat of disfellowship/loss of relationship is cult like behavior, OPEN your EYES. Blackmailing people by telling them that they'll embarrass their family, or worse yet, Go To HELL, isn't the most effective tool for winning souls, although, apparently it was enough to hold me for much longer than I could stand.

Controlling people with fear and guilt only works so long before they become so jaded that they stop listening. —Or they become so complacent that all you have are a bunch of blind followers. Stop and look at my generation. Most of my peers have either left the church altogether, or are in a much more liberal CofC. Why do you think that is? I mean, you have the truth, so why are so many people rejecting your institution? Quoting Dr. Phil, "HOWS THAT WORKIN FOR YA?" It has been doubly hard for me because I have stayed here playing church for so long. Had I slipped out back when I was still single, this wouldn't even be an issue. But once you're in and committed, there's no turning back, unless you want a very public, bloody battle... it's what's happening now. Let me state this very clearly so that there is no question: I REFUSE to live a life ruled by a religious dogma that I do not fully agree with or embrace. I REFUSE to pretend anymore that I believe the CofC is the only way to salvation. And I REFUSE to live a life motivated by fear, guilt, angst, or any other negative emotion formerly used as a tool for my obedience. That is NOT what Jesus taught. I have spent way too much time as it is, beating myself up, trying to live up to the unattainable, and ever increasing standards that are being shoved down our throats at SW. I have left far too many Bible classes feeling like I would never measure up. Or, that there was no way I could ever live a life fully pleasing to Christ. I am breaking the pattern of brainwashing NOW, and will teach my children exactly what Christ taught... LOVE.

So, rumor has it that I've been attending the Church of Conscious Harmony. I'm using this opportunity to set the record straight. It's TRUE. I haven't become a member there, and will most likely attend other churches in the future. I will continue to try to compromise with Darryl in the interest of our children, but I will not compromise my own faith anymore. I have not turned away from God, or Christ's church, contrary to what you'll be told, but I have turned away from the manmade institution "The Church of Christ." The one that is run by men's egos and pride. The one that came into being far more recently than we like to admit, the one that breeds spawn like David Brown. The one that encourages people to get married young, make babies, and stay in that unhappy marriage, and then punishes them when they decide to get out. The one that is losing it's younger members in droves, because they no longer want to put up with having arbitrary rules made for them, and then imposed on them. The one that is so concerned about it's reputation in the brotherhood that is actually DIScourages it's own members from attending if they are even the slightest bit out of CofC line. —that is not a blanket statement... I have been discouraged from going back to SW, and I assure you that I will take that cue. Thank you for making it such an easy decision for me.

—Heather Sanders  
aka: *Cherchez la femme*  
11:11 AM, Feb. 7, 2008

Heather is wrong. She should repent. If she does not, because she is already out of fellowship with God and has been for some time, the church has no Scriptural choice but to withdraw fellowship from her. How terribly sad her situation is, but she is not alone in her guilt.

Further, she did not arrive at her condition overnight. Joseph Meador did not sink to his depth of depravity in the last few years. Eric Gayle and his former wife did not fall into their

spiritual degradation in the recent past. To one degree or another these brethren and those of like mind walked through the wide gate and started down the broad way as sin some where way back down the line. Evidently no SW elder, deacon, SWSBS faculty member, et al., could see any change for the worse in these people. But they want the church to entrust men to them for two years so they can make faithful Gospel Preachers out of them. The mindset that chose Perry Hall to follow the late Bill Jackson is alive and well at SW. Sadly, there is no evidence coming from SW indicating they have learned much if anything from their mistakes.

The differences in SW, TGJ Board, GBN, AP, MSOP, et al., and the universities operated by the brethren, as well as

other brethren of the same spiritual condition, is only a matter of degree. It comes down to this—*how much compromising of the Truth are brethren willing to make in order to keep their pet works, financial contributors, friends and/or positions?* With so many it seems that job security, money and prominence have come to be far more important than the admonition of our precious Lord for us to **“take up your cross and follow Me”** (Matt. 16:24).

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

## ERIC GAYLE, FORMER SOUTHWEST YOUTH MINISTER, AND RACHEL MEADOR BONNETT , REVEAL MUCH ABOUT THEMSELVES

On Wed., Jan. 9, 2008, in a “blurb” on his public MySpace Web site, the former SW Youth Minister, Eric Gayle wrote:

Well, as many of you may already know, my divorce is now final. Monday, January 7th, Camille and I made a trek to the Travis County Courthouse, stood before the judge, and were granted our much awaited divorce. It has been such a surreal experience. We then went back to her place (our old place) and ate a supreme pizza! We’re obviously still very close friends!

Camille put up with a lot of crap from me! Our marriage was really based on the ideals of fundamentalist Christianity. Fundamentalist Christianity is quickly going down the drain, which I believe is a good thing! In fundamentalist Christianity, people miserably live out their lives according to their checklist, hoping to placate the wrath of an angry and vengeful God. They maintain ideas they don’t believe, in fear of upsetting friends, family, and ultimately God. That is NOT God. Don’t get me wrong; I am a Christian just not a fundamentalist.

Back in May of 2007, I went to the elders of the church where I had served as youth minister for five years (and had been associated with for 11) and told them Camille and I were going to separate and that it would probably be permanent. Three weeks later (conveniently after I had directed their summer camp), they asked me to resign (they announced that I offered it, which is only partially true. I offered it because they asked me to. Had I not, they would have simply fired me). Less than a handful of them have contacted me since. I guess it is because they don’t know what to say, or don’t care. It’s okay. My faith is elsewhere.

Regardless, the last six or so months since Camille and I separated have been the most liberating months of my life. I feel more confident in my relationship with God, which translates into a relationship with myself, which in turn translates into my relationship with others. I’m becoming a better person.

My love to you all, especially those of you who have been supportive of Camille and me. You know who you are. Peace.



[For Timothy’s spiritual protection Paul listed certain identifying marks of false teachers. Of them he told Timothy: **“from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”** (2 Tim. 3: 2-7).—EDITOR]

On Thur., January 24, 2008, in a “blurb” on her public MySpace Web site under *Who I Really Am*, Rachel Meador Bonnett (Joseph Meador’s 25 year old daughter) wrote:

Those of you hearing things about me that are surprising to you...just please listen to your instinct, and know that you can ask me anything you want to. (*Where is her husband?—DPB*)

There are very sad, afraid & mean people trying to ruin my reputation base[d] on what were lies in the first place.

Look at my space page, (since that seems to be where David Brown – sadly a pawn of Satan—likes to go and get information to twist around) it is a reflection of who I really am—mother to an amazing sweet, little boy; friend to so many wonderful people; lover of good books; hard-worker and homemaker. (*Where is her husband?—DPB*)

That is me. And if you want to chat about things over coffee, come over and see me at my place (where yes there is a bottle of wine on my shelf—but for reasons like that should I be a part of this witch hunt?) or we can meet up at Starbucks.

Also, those of you surfing my page and others know that we have NOT altered things that were/are on here—there would be no reson(sic) to do that, I stand by everything I have ever posted myspace. (*Where is her husband?—DPB*)

I love and pray for all of you even you Mr. Brown.



To know Joseph Meador’s sinful beliefs and practices—the fact that he has forsaken and refuses to care for his wife and their children remaining with their mother, to realize at the same time that he was “piously” denouncing Godly men for their unwillingness to compromise the Truth while he was in an adulterous relationship, is bad enough. But, after reading from Heather, Eric (his X wife, Camille, is Joseph’s *close friend*), and Rachel (Joseph’s own daughter, Eric’s *close friend*), from their MySpace web sites, seeing who they fellowship and with whom they regularly party, are we to think that Meador had no influence on them at all? Then, are we to think that his influence ended with only these church members? But then to realize that for many years Joseph’s and Eric’s conduct was carried on while they were the director/instructor of SWSBS and, of all things, SW’s Youth Minister respectively, right under the SW’s elders noses, gives new but terrible meaning to what it is to shepherd the flock.

Now time and circumstances (maybe God’s providence) have revealed the real “toxic loyalty circle” in the form of the

SW elders (others like them), TGJ Board, TGJ editors, Dave Miller, Stan Crowley (both men Meador defended), MSOP, Tri-Cities School of Preaching, AP, GBN, et al.

But brethren do not have to be guilty of Meador's sins before they are guilty of equally heinous transgressions of God's Will—compromising the Truth and defending the compromisers, while at the same time, as Meador did, appearing to be faithful to God. To deny the same is to ignore the facts relating thereto. *But over the last few years ignoring the facts in a case has posed no problem to the self styled and elitist balanced brethren.*

—EDITOR

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## ABIDING IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST -- 2 JOHN 9-11

12th Annual Weakley County Lectures

**April 11-13, 2008**

The Dresden Church of Christ ♦ 501 Evergreen Street, Dresden, TN 38225 ♦ (731) 364-3622

### Friday, April 11

7:00 p.m.

*Guilt by Association*

Dub McClish

8:00 p.m.

*"Hath Not God"*

Harrell Davidson

### Saturday, April 12

1:00 p.m.

*What Does It Mean To Abide In the Doctrine of Christ?*

Jerry Joseph

2:00 p.m.

*Are Giving & Receiving Financial Support An Example of Bidding God Speed?*

Daniel Coe

3:00 p.m.

*Open Forum (Questions & Answers)*

David P. Brown

### Dinner Break

6:00 p.m.

*Does 2 John 9-11 Apply To All Brethren, Schools, Congregations, & Brotherhood Projects?*

Harrell Davidson

7:00 p.m.

*Examples of How 2 John 9-11 Is Violated By Some Who Speak The Truth*

Dub McClish

### Sunday, April 13

9:30 a.m.

*Do The Boundaries of Fellowship Matter?*

Gary Grizzell

10:30 a.m.

*The Consequences of Violating 2 John 9-11 and Not Abiding in the Doctrine of Christ*

David P. Brown

### Noon Meal Provided By The Dresden Congregation

1:30 p.m. **Congregational Singing**

2:00 p.m.

*Open Forum (Questions & Answers)*

David P. Brown

3:00 p.m.

### Evening Worship

*Prices and Rewards of Abiding In The Doctrine of Christ*

Danny Douglas

### Lodging

**Budget Inn**--8563 Hwy 22, Dresden, TN. (731) 364-3151 ♦ **Days Inn**--800 University, Martin, TN.

(731) 587-9577 ♦ **Econo Lodge**--853 University, Martin, TN. (731) 587-4241 ♦ **Hampton Inn**--5575

Skyhawk Pkwy, Martin, TN. (731) 587-5800

For more information--contact Lectureship Director: Danny Douglas

(731) 364-6746, [preacherdd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:preacherdd@sbcglobal.net)

# 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.

## -England-

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

## -Florida-

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

## -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](mailto:lawson@starnetok.net).

## - Tennessee-

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

## -Texas-

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

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

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

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

**New Braunfels**—225 Saenger Halle Rd. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. [www.nbchurchofchrist.com](http://www.nbchurchofchrist.com).

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

## -Wyoming-

**Cheyenne**—High Plains Church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tel. (307) 514-3394, evangelist: Roelf L. Ruffner

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